

TEKNOSASTIK

Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra

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Diterbitkan oleh :



Fakultas Sastra dan Ilmu Pendidikan
UNIVERSITAS TEKNOKRAT INDONESIA

TEKNOSASTIK

Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra

TEKNOSASTIK journal is published on January and July every year. It presents articles on English language teaching and learning, linguistics, and literature. We invite articles that have never been previously published. Please see the guidelines for article contribution on the inside back cover of this journal.

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Published by
Fakultas Sastra dan Ilmu Pendidikan
UNIVERSITAS TEKNOKRAT INDONESIA
 Bandar Lampung

Teknosastik	Volume 24	Number 1	January	2026	Page 1 - 74
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Representative Illocutionary Acts in Digital Communication: An Analysis of Marina Tasha's Utterances on TikTok

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Abstract

This study investigates the representative illocutionary acts used by Marina Tasha in her TikTok videos that promote Indonesian cuisine. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, the data were collected through document mining—three of her most-viewed videos—and analyzed using Searle's (1979) speech act theory. The results reveal that she used six types of representative acts: describing, stating, boasting, classifying and identifying, asserting, and complaining. Among these, describing emerges as the most dominant, reflecting her communicative aim to vividly present Indonesian dishes to both local and international audiences. Stating and asserting acts highlight her informative and persuasive roles as an influencer, while boasting and complaining add authenticity and engagement. Furthermore, classifying and identifying acts serve an educational function by introducing traditional dishes clearly. These results indicate that Marina Tasha's speech acts demonstrate how language can promote cultural identity, authenticity, and pride through digital media. This study contributes to pragmatic research on digital communication and underscores the role of social media influencers in preserving and popularizing national culture.

Keywords: Digital communication, cuisine, representative illocutionary act, TikTok

Introduction

In the digital era, communication extends far beyond face-to-face interaction. The rise of digital platforms such as email, messaging applications, social media, and web conferencing tools has created dynamic ways of exchanging information across geographical boundaries (Sklar & Harris, 2021). Among these platforms, TikTok has emerged as one of the most influential, offering users a visually engaging and interactive space to produce, share, and consume short-form content. Its format has transformed not only entertainment but also cultural expression and identity building in online communities.

Social media, including TikTok, has become an integral part of everyday life. Users frequently engage with diverse platforms that serve different purposes, such as gaming, information-seeking, and personal communication (Rahayu & Amri, 2023). TikTok, in particular, stands out for its concise and creative content, allowing individuals to gain popularity through distinctive ways of speaking and presenting themselves (Amalia et al., 2022). Through short videos, creators can capture global audiences' attention and even cross-promote their work across digital platforms (Marsela & Asnawi, 2024). As a result, TikTok functions as more than an entertainment medium; it is also a site for cultural representation and discourse.

Content creators, who produce and share original media, play a central role in this process. They utilize narrative techniques, descriptive language, and visual aesthetics to attract audiences and build influence. In the realm of food-related content, creators often transform social media into a space resembling a "virtual culinary tour," where traditional dishes are narrated and visually performed for viewers. These practices do more than describe recipes; they also communicate cultural values and identities. However, this raises a critical issue: while

the videos may appear casual and entertaining, the language employed carries representational and persuasive functions that shape how traditional cuisine is valued and remembered in digital spaces. Condensing complex cultural practices into short viral clips risks oversimplification or even misrepresentation. Thus, examining the speech acts in these interactions becomes necessary to understand how traditional food culture is framed and preserved.

Speech act theory provides an essential framework for addressing this concern. According to Searle (1979), utterances are not merely vehicles for conveying information but are actions that serve particular functions, such as stating, describing, or asserting. In the context of food content on TikTok, utterances can highlight cultural identity, reinforce values, or persuade audiences. This theoretical approach enables researchers to interrogate what creators are doing with their words, whether they are informing, asserting, or shaping cultural narratives.

Previous studies have applied speech act theory across diverse contexts. Sidik, Priyawan, and Ardiansyah (2022) investigated representative acts in motivational speeches on YouTube, while Muziatun, Bay, and Mukmin (2025) analyzed representative illocutionary acts in the film *Wonder Woman* (2017). Ahmed et al. (2025) examined speech acts in Socotri folktales, and Amalia, Setia, and Mono (2022) studied cooking tutorial videos. Research has also extended to private digital communication (Rahayu & Amri, 2023), fitness influencer discourse (Handayani & Yulina, 2024), podcasts (Permana, 2022), and news editorials (Maraan et al., 2024). Collectively, these studies highlight the versatility of illocutionary acts in shaping communication, but few address the role of food influencers on TikTok in representing cultural heritage.

This study addresses that gap by examining Marina Tasha, a TikTok influencer who frequently features Indonesian traditional cuisine. By focusing on her most-viewed videos, such as those showcasing *ayam gulai*, *telur balado*, and *nasi padang*, the research identifies the types of representative illocutionary acts she employs, including stating, describing, and informing. It further explores the functions of these acts in promoting cultural identity and engaging online audiences. Grounded in Searle's (1979) theory, this study demonstrates how speech acts function not only as tools of communication but also as mechanisms of cultural preservation and promotion in the digital age.

Theory and Method

This study applied the pragmatic approach as the main framework to analyze language use in communication, since pragmatics examines how meaning is constructed through context beyond the literal meaning of words (Yule, 1996). J.L. Austin (1962), in *How to Do Things with Words*, introduced the idea that utterances are performative as well as descriptive, classifying speech acts into locutionary (producing utterances), illocutionary (speaker's intention), and perlocutionary (effect on the listener).

Searle (1979) expanded Austin's ideas, presenting language as action governed by rules and categorizing illocutionary acts into representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations. Illocutionary acts, as the core of Searle's theory, highlight how speakers use language to perform social actions, guided by elements such as illocutionary point, direction of fit, sincerity condition, and preparatory condition. Within representatives, Searle identified subtypes such as stating, asserting, describing, hypothesizing, boasting, complaining, and classifying, all of which bind the speaker to the truth of a proposition but differ in tone and function. In digital communication contexts such as TikTok, these representative acts are highly relevant, as content creators often use them to share knowledge, describe cultural elements, or persuade audiences; for example, Marina Tasha, when discussing Indonesian cuisine, performs representative acts that simultaneously inform, characterize, and promote cultural identity.

To investigate this further, the study uses a qualitative descriptive approach (Creswell & Creswell, 2023), which focuses on words, experiences, and expressions rather than numbers, allowing language to be examined in real-world contexts. This design fits well because the goal is to closely analyze Marina Tasha’s three most viewed TikTok videos: ‘Nasi Padang Video Featuring Different Components’ (Video 1), ‘Eating Nasi Padang with Hands’ (Video 2), and ‘Eating Boiled Eggs with Six Types of Sauces’ (Video 3), where she describes Indonesian food. This choice of data source is significant because of her ability to present Indonesian cuisine engagingly and consistently in English to both local and international audiences, making her videos accessible and linguistically rich, offering valuable material for exploring representative acts in promoting cultural knowledge and identity through digital media.

The data were collected through repeated viewing, manual transcription, and detailed examination of verbal and non-verbal cues to ensure contextual accuracy, and then the representative illocutionary acts were identified, coded, and interpreted following Searle’s (1979) classification to uncover how language functions to inform, describe, and promote cultural identity. By focusing on representative illocutionary acts, such as stating facts, describing something, or expressing opinions, the research highlights how language communicates knowledge, conveys meaning, and expresses cultural identity in public platforms.

Findings

This study focuses on two main objectives such as identifying the types of representative illocutionary acts and the functions of Marina Tasha’s utterances using Searle’s representative illocutionary acts theory, as he proposed in 1979. The representative illocutionary acts found are summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Types of Representative Illocutionary Acts

Illocutionary Acts	Types	Numbers
Representative	Stating	10
	Asserting	5
	Describing	16
	Diagnosing	-
	Calling	-
	Characterizing	-
	Concluding	-
	Postulating	-
	Hypothesizing	-
	Boasting	8
	Complaining	3
	Classifying & Identifying	6
Total		48

Table 1 presents the number of representative illocutionary acts found in Marina Tasha’s utterances. Based on the table, the total of representative utterances is 48 out of 78. The types are described with 16 data, stating with 10 data, boasting with 8 data, classifying & identifying with 6 data, asserting with 5 data, and complaining with 3 data. The detailed descriptions and explanations are in the following.

However, the other six types, such as diagnosing, calling, characterizing, concluding, postulating, and hypothesizing, were not found, as these acts typically occur in more abstract

or specialized contexts that do not align with the descriptive and experiential nature of Marina Tasha's food reviews on TikTok.

Describing

To describe is to present the traits of a person, object, or situation as the speaker sees them. In Marina Tasha's TikTok videos, this act illustrates the characteristics of Indonesian cuisine so that viewers can imagine its taste, texture, or appearance. In total, there are 16 describing acts found in her utterances. The data samples below show the utterances.

Extract 1

"The one that takes like what, like 5 to 6 hours to cook." (Video 1)

Based on extract 1 (Video 1), the utterances were produced when Marina emphasized the long cooking process of rendang while showing and tasting the dish. Her statement highlighted the complexity and effort required in Indonesian cooking, situating it within cultural appreciation and culinary tradition. According to Searle (1979), describing involves providing details or traits about an object, person, or situation as perceived by the speaker. In this case, Marina pointed out the cooking process as a defining feature of rendang, helping her audience understand the effort and uniqueness behind preparing it.

The extract 1 (Video 1) was categorized as a describing act. Based on the context, Marina used this utterance to illustrate the characteristics of Indonesian cuisine by stressing its time-consuming preparation. On TikTok, this kind of description helps international viewers imagine the cultural and culinary value of the dish. By emphasizing the "5 to 6 hours" cooking process, Marina not only informed but also added depth to the viewers' appreciation, showing that Indonesian cuisine requires patience, skill, and authenticity.

Extract 2

"So it's kind of like a chicken curry...so it's like egg, deep fried, and then doused in red chilli." (Video 2)

Based on extract 2 (Video 2), the utterances were produced when Marina described Indonesian dishes with cues such as "So it's kind of like a chicken curry" and "So it's like egg, deep fried, and then doused in red chilli." The first utterance compared the dish to chicken curry, a food familiar to international viewers, while the second outlined its preparation step by step. These descriptions made the dishes more relatable and imaginable for her audience.

The extract 2 (Video 2) was categorized as a describing act. Based on the context, Marina used analogy and detailed description to enhance cross-cultural understanding of Indonesian cuisine. On TikTok, this strategy allowed viewers, especially those unfamiliar with Indonesian food, to visualize the flavor, texture, and appearance of the dishes. By combining comparison and sensory detail, Marina informed and engaged her audience, making the culinary content more vivid, relatable, and appealing.

Extract 3

"Doesn't it look like furikake? This one looks beautiful. I don't taste anything. Mmm? Oh, now, now it's hitting." (Video 3)

Based on extract 3 (Video 3), the utterances were produced when Marina highlighted her sensory impressions of Indonesian cuisine. She compared a dish topping to furikake, a Japanese seasoning, and remarked, "This one looks beautiful," emphasizing its visual appeal. These utterances were categorized as describing acts because they focused on the appearance

of the food, helping the audience imagine it through her perspective. By linking it to something familiar and praising its beauty, Marina blended cultural references with personal impressions.

The extract 3 (Video 3) was categorized as a describing act. Based on the context, Marina also gave taste-related descriptions such as “I don’t taste anything” and “Mmm? Oh now, now it’s hitting,” which reflected the evolving flavor of the dish. Rather than only identifying the food, she characterized how its taste unfolded over time, making the eating experience relatable to viewers. On TikTok, these descriptive utterances served to illustrate both the visual and taste qualities of Indonesian cuisine. By combining comparisons, praise, and sensory details, Marina invited her audience into a richer and more engaging food experience.

Stating

To state is to convey information or truth clearly and impartially based on what the speaker believes. In TikTok, Marina Tasha used stating acts to introduce Indonesian cuisine to her audience. There are 10 stating acts in her utterances. Boasting, on the other hand, was also found in her videos with 11 data. The data samples below show the utterances.

Extract 4

“The infamous rendang.” (Video 1)

Based on extract 4 (Video 1), the utterance was produced when Marina said “The infamous rendang” while presenting the dish visually to her audience. This showed her way of introducing rendang in a straightforward manner, highlighting its reputation as a well-known Indonesian dish. According to Searle (1979), stating is a representative act where the speaker commits to the truth of a proposition in a neutral way. Marina’s utterance did not evaluate or describe qualities of rendang but affirmed its recognition and cultural status.

The extract 4 (Video 1) was categorized as a stating act. Based on the context, Marina used this utterance to provide information and situate rendang within shared cultural knowledge. By calling it “infamous,” she emphasized its wide recognition, especially in a global culinary context. On TikTok, this helped establish common ground with both Indonesian and international viewers, ensuring they recognized the cultural significance of the dish before she elaborated further. Thus, the utterance functioned as an informative introduction to strengthen audience understanding.

Extract 5

“And now we have like chili potatoes at the back.” (Video 2)

Based on extract 12 (Video 2), the utterance was produced when Marina pointed out the presence of chili potatoes while showing the variety of foods available. This was categorized as a stating act because she conveyed factual information about one of the components of *nasi padang* in a neutral manner. According to Searle (1979), stating is a representative act in which the speaker commits to the truth of a proposition directly and straightforwardly.

The extract 12 (Video 2) was categorized as a stating act. Based on the context, Marina used this utterance to inform her audience about the food being showcased. On TikTok, such statements familiarize viewers, especially those new to Indonesian cuisine, with the different items included in a meal. By naming the dish without embellishment, Marina framed the utterance as purely informative, helping her audience identify and recognize the food clearly.

Extract 6

“Next we have wasabi...It looks like a caterpillar.” (Video 3)

Based on extract 6 (Video 3), the utterances were produced when Marina said “Next we have wasabi” and “It looks like a caterpillar.” The first utterance straightforwardly introduced the food item, while the second gave a factual observation of its appearance. According to Searle (1979), stating is a representative act in which the speaker commits to the truth of a proposition without persuasive or emotional force. Both utterances were categorized as stating because they simply conveyed what Marina observed in the moment.

The extract 6 (Video 3) was categorized as a stating act. Based on the context, Marina used these utterances to provide neutral information and guide her audience step by step through her food review. On TikTok, such straightforward statements helped orient viewers within the flow of the video while also making the appearance of the dish more relatable, especially for international audiences. By grounding her content in clear, factual propositions, Marina maintained coherence and ensured easy audience understanding.

Boasting

To boast is a representative act that not only asserts truth but also highlights personal pride or self-interest. On TikTok, Marina Tasha used boasting acts to emphasize her preference and enjoyment of Indonesian cuisine while presenting it as true information. There are 8 boasting acts found in her utterances. The data samples below show the utterances.

Extract 7

“It’s my favorite type of vegetable.” (Video 1)

Based on extract 7 (Video 1), the utterance was produced when Marina ate cassava leaves (*daun singkong*) while showcasing Indonesian cuisine. The statement emphasized her personal preference, going beyond factual information to highlight her attachment to the food. According to Searle (1979), boasting is a representative act that asserts truth while also expressing pride or self-interest. In this case, Marina presented her enjoyment as noteworthy, framing her taste as part of the message.

The extract 7 (Video 1) was categorized as a boasting act. Based on the context, Marina used this utterance to portray Indonesian cuisine positively by linking it to her own enjoyment. By declaring cassava leaves as her favorite vegetable, she conveyed enthusiasm and credibility, encouraging viewers to see it as special and worth trying. On TikTok, such boasting strengthened personal connections, promoted Indonesian food, and reinforced cultural pride for both local and international audiences.

Extract 8

“My favorite.” (Video 2)

Based on extract 8 (Video 2), the utterance was produced when Marina said “My favorite” while presenting and tasting the chili potatoes, rice, and cassava leaves in one bite. This showed her personal attachment to the combo beyond a neutral description. According to Searle (1979), boasting is a representative act in which the speaker asserts truth while expressing pride or self-interest. By calling the dish her “favorite,” Marina elevated it through her own endorsement, positioning her taste as something noteworthy.

The extract 8 (Video 2) was categorized as a boasting act. Based on the context, Marina used this utterance to present the dish positively by associating it with her admiration. On TikTok, this boasting served as a persuasive strategy, encouraging viewers, especially

international audiences, to see the dish as appealing. By declaring it her favorite, Marina both promoted her identity as an influencer knowledgeable about Indonesian food and highlighted the cultural value of the cuisine.

Extract 9

“One thing I like about hot sauce is that it has a hint of sourness to it. So, it adds another flavor.” (Video 3)

Based on extract 9 (Video 3), the utterances were produced when Marina expressed her preference for hot sauce by highlighting its “hint of sourness” and adding, “So it adds another flavor.” These remarks emphasized her personal enjoyment and framed her taste as part of the eating experience. According to Searle (1979), boasting is a representative act in which the speaker asserts truth while also showing pride or self-interest. By praising hot sauce in this way, Marina positioned her preference as meaningful and noteworthy.

The extract 9 (Video 3) was categorized as a boasting act. Based on the context, Marina used this utterance to share her personal evaluation while reinforcing her image as a food influencer. On TikTok, such boasting worked as both self-promotion and culinary promotion, showing her ability to identify flavor complexity. By emphasizing how hot sauce “adds another flavor,” Marina strengthened her credibility and appeal, guiding her audience to appreciate Indonesian cuisine beyond surface impressions.

Classifying & Identifying

To classify and identify means placing something into a defined category or confirming its identity based on knowledge or observation. In Marina Tasha’s TikTok videos, this act is used to introduce Indonesian cuisine by naming and categorizing the dishes for her audience. In total, there are 6 classifying and identifying acts found in her utterances. The data samples below show the utterances.

Extract 10

“This is what we call nasi padang...This scary-looking, slimy thing is what we call kikil...This is what we call liver...This thing is what we call daun singkong.” (Video 1)

Based on extract 10 (Video 1), the utterances were produced when Marina repeatedly introduced components of *nasi padang* with phrases such as “This is what we call *nasi padang*,” “This scary-looking, slimy thing is what we call *kikil*,” “This is what we call liver,” and “This thing is what we call *daun singkong*.” These utterances were categorized as classifying and identifying because Marina not only presented the foods visually but also explicitly named and categorized them within Indonesian cuisine. The repeated structure “This is what we call [X]” showed her systematic way of identifying the dishes.

The extract 10 (Video 1) was categorized as classifying and identifying acts. Based on the context, Marina used these utterances to help her audience, especially international viewers, recognize and label each dish correctly. By naming *nasi padang*, *kikil*, liver (*ati balado*), and *daun singkong* (cassava leaves), she bridged the gap between visual presentation and culinary terminology. On TikTok, this strategy served an educational and cultural function, making Indonesian cuisine more approachable and understandable. Through clear labeling, Marina positioned herself as a cultural guide who systematically introduced local food traditions to a global audience.

Extract 11

“This is what we call ayam gulai.” (Video 2)

Based on extract 11 (Video 2), the utterance was produced when Marina presented the dish to her audience and identified it as “ayam gulai.” This was categorized as classifying and identifying because she placed the food into a category within Indonesian cuisine while also confirming its identity. According to Searle (1979), classifying assigns an object to a category, while identifying confirms what it is. By naming the dish as *ayam gulai* and comparing it to chicken curry, Marina committed to the truth of its identity and made it relatable for viewers unfamiliar with the term.

The extract 11 (Video 2) was categorized as a classifying and identifying act. Based on the context, Marina used this utterance to help her audience, especially international viewers, accurately recognize and label the dish. On TikTok, such classification and identification served as both cultural introduction and educational explanation, bridging culinary and linguistic gaps. By naming and categorizing the food clearly, Marina ensured her viewers understood its proper place within Indonesian cuisine.

Extract 13

“Indonesia’s saos sambal.” (Video 3)

Based on extract 13 (Video 3), the utterance was produced when Marina referred to the condiment as “Indonesia’s *saos sambal*” while showing it to her audience. This was categorized as classifying and identifying because she not only named the product but also situated it within a cultural category as a uniquely Indonesian chili sauce. According to Searle (1979), classifying assigns an item to a category, while identifying confirms what it is. By labeling it “Indonesia’s *sambal*,” Marina distinguished it from other chili sauces while affirming its cultural identity.

The extract 13 (Video 3) was categorized as a classifying and identifying act. Based on the context, Marina used this utterance to clarify the cultural ownership of *sambal* and strengthen the audience’s understanding of its significance. On TikTok, this served to educate international viewers by highlighting *sambal* as distinctly Indonesian. Through this act, Marina promoted cultural awareness and reinforced the appreciation of Indonesian cuisine as authentic in the global culinary landscape.

Asserting

To assert is to express belief in the truth of a statement with strong conviction. It is used to affirm or defend a belief, especially when it might be doubted. In Marina Tasha’s TikTok videos, asserting often emphasized her personal judgment about Indonesian cuisine with confidence. There are 5 asserting acts found in her utterances.

Extract 14

“And even though it’s like a take-out, it still tastes good.” (Video 1)

Based on extract 214 (Video 1), the utterance was produced when Marina compared the food to take-out while affirming that its quality remained good. This was categorized as asserting because she spoke with conviction, defending the belief that the dish is still delicious even when purchased as take-out. According to Searle (1979), asserting is a representative act in which the speaker commits confidently to the truth of a statement.

The extract 14 (Video 1) was categorized as an asserting act. Based on the context, Marina used this utterance to reinforce the positive quality of Indonesian food and counter

skepticism about its authenticity as take-out. On TikTok, her confident assertion helped build credibility and persuade her audience, both local and international, that Indonesian cuisine maintains its taste and value in different settings.

Extract 15

“There are some things that you just need to eat with your hands. It’s much more enjoyable.”
(Video 2)

Based on extract 15 (Video 2), the utterances were produced when Marina demonstrated eating with her hands, highlighting an Indonesian dining tradition. This was categorized as asserting because she affirmed with conviction that eating with hands enhances the food experience. According to Searle (1979), asserting is a representative act used to defend or affirm a belief with strong commitment, especially when it might be challenged.

The extract 15 (Video 2) was categorized as an asserting act. Based on the context, Marina used this utterance to persuade her audience, particularly international viewers unfamiliar with the practice, that eating with hands is natural and preferable. On TikTok, this confident assertion normalized Indonesian dining customs, reinforced cultural pride, and encouraged viewers to appreciate the authenticity of Indonesian food culture.

Extract 16

“I would say it’s pretty good, like it’s not amazing.” (Video 3)

Based on extract 16 (Video 3), the utterance was produced when Marina evaluated the taste of Indonesia’s *saos sambal* while tasting it. This was categorized as asserting because she expressed her judgment with certainty and conviction, framing it as something she firmly believed. According to Searle (1979), asserting involves affirming a belief with strong commitment rather than merely stating an impression.

The extract 16 (Video 3) was categorized as an asserting act. Based on the context, Marina used this utterance to present a balanced evaluation of the *sambal*, saying it was “pretty good but not amazing.” On TikTok, this confident assertion reinforced her credibility as a food influencer, showing authenticity through honest and measured reviews rather than exaggerated praise.

Complaining

To complain is to express dissatisfaction while still presenting something as true. It often reports a negative experience or condition with an emotional tone, such as frustration or disappointment. In Marina Tasha’s TikTok videos, complaining appears when she shares dissatisfaction with certain aspects of Indonesian cuisine, adding authenticity to her content. There are 3 complaining acts found in her utterances.

Extract 17

“Y’all it got my nose. It got the back of my throat. No no no never again” (Video 3)

Based on extract 17 (Video 3), the utterances were produced after Marina tasted an egg topped with wasabi that was unexpectedly strong in flavor and spiciness. Instead of being a neutral observation, her words expressed dissatisfaction with the overwhelming reaction caused by the wasabi. According to Searle (1979), complaining is a type of representative act where the speaker commits to the truth of a statement while showing emotional dissatisfaction. Marina highlighted the negative bodily effects of eating the food, signaling discomfort and frustration. Her repetition of the word “no” further emphasized her rejection of the experience.

The extract 12 (Video 3) was categorized as a complaining act. Based on the context, Marina used this reaction to report a negative experience while also entertaining her audience. The act dramatized her struggle and invited viewers to empathize or laugh, turning discomfort into engaging content. By openly expressing dissatisfaction, Marina maintained authenticity, showed her personality, and strengthened her connection with viewers who might have faced similar experiences with strong flavors.

Discussion

The predominance of descriptive representative acts in Marina Tasha's TikTok videos indicates the main communicative purpose of her role as a food influencer, namely, to present Indonesian cuisine in a way that is vivid and accessible for both local and international audiences. Describing, which appeared 16 times out of 78 utterances, is the most frequent act. This finding aligns with Amalia, Setia, and Mono (2022), who noted that content creators in cooking tutorials frequently rely on descriptive and representative language to make cultural dishes more engaging and understandable. Similarly, Sidik, Priyawan, and Ardiansyah (2022) emphasized that representative acts are often used in digital communication to convey truth and establish credibility, a function also evident in Marina's informative tone.

The second most frequent act is stating, with 10 occurrences. This category reflects Marina's function as both an educator and cultural introducer. Stating is used to convey neutral, factual information that grounds her descriptions in truth. For example, when she utters phrases such as "This is cassava leaves" or "The infamous rendang," she is committing to the accuracy of her information straightforwardly. These acts serve as factual anchors, ensuring clarity and comprehension for her diverse TikTok audience, and thereby reinforcing her credibility as a food influencer. This supports Sidik, Priyawan, and Ardiansyah's (2022) findings that representative acts in digital discourse serve not only to inform but also to establish authority and trustworthiness among audiences.

Boasting appeared eight times in the data and demonstrates how Marina uses her personal preferences and enthusiasm as a tool of engagement. Through utterances such as "It's my favorite type of vegetable," Marina asserts not only the truth of her statement but also emphasizes her pride and personal taste. This form of representative act situates her as a confident authority, while also strengthening her persona. As noted by Handayani and Yulina (2024), such self-referential expression is common among influencers, as it enhances authenticity and relatability as the key elements for sustaining audience engagement. In the TikTok context, boasting acts contribute to authenticity and relatability, blending subjective enjoyment with cultural promotion to capture audience attention.

Classifying and identifying, found six utterances, showing Marina's efforts to systematize Indonesian cuisine for her viewers. Phrases such as "This is what we call *kiki*" or "This is what we call *nasi padang*" demonstrate her commitment to providing accurate naming and categorization. By situating dishes within cultural and linguistic frameworks, these acts make Indonesian cuisine more comprehensible for international audiences. This practice resonates with Rahayu and Amri's (2023) observation that language on digital platforms often serves an explanatory and educational function, helping audiences interpret cultural meanings in online interactions. In this sense, they carry a strong educational function, ensuring that her TikTok content operates both as entertainment and as a cultural learning platform.

Asserting, which appeared five times, reveals Marina's stronger stance in defending or affirming beliefs about food. For example, her utterance "And even though it's like a take-out, it still tastes good" demonstrates conviction beyond neutral stating. According to Searle (1979), asserting involves a higher degree of speaker commitment, and in this context, Marina positions herself as a reliable reviewer. Additionally, Permana (2022) found that stating and asserting

facts were central to building speaker credibility in podcast discourse, reinforcing the importance of assertive speech for influence and persuasion.

Finally, complaining was the least frequent act, with only three occurrences. Despite its rarity, it plays an important role in balancing her content. Utterances such as “Y’all, it got my nose” and “No no no never again” dramatize her dissatisfaction with overly strong flavors, turning negative experiences into moments of humor and authenticity. Complaining functions to enhance relatability, showing both the enjoyable and challenging aspects of eating Indonesian food. In TikTok’s performative setting, such acts increase engagement by allowing audiences to empathize with her struggles while being entertained.

These findings indicate that Marina Tasha employs representative acts strategically to achieve multiple goals: describing and stating to provide clarity and cultural knowledge, boasting and asserting to strengthen credibility and personal branding, and classifying/identifying or complaining to combine education with entertainment. The results align with previous research showing that representative acts dominate communicative contexts centered on knowledge-sharing and persuasion (Sidik et al., 2022; Muziatun et al., 2025; Halimah et al., 2025). Thus, her TikTok content not only promotes Indonesian cuisine globally but also reinforces her role as a cultural mediator and influential digital communicator.

Conclusion

This study indicates that Marina Tasha performed a total of 48 representative acts out of 78 utterances in her selected TikTok videos. These acts were divided into six types: describing with 16 data, stating with 10 data, boasting with 8 data, classifying & identifying with 6 data, asserting with 5 data, and complaining with 3 data. She mostly used representative illocutionary acts, mainly describing types, in her videos. This shows that her primary intention was to vividly present Indonesian cuisine in ways that both local and international audiences could easily imagine. Through describing, she emphasized the taste, appearance, and preparation process of Indonesian dishes, thereby promoting cultural appreciation. The use of stating and asserting acts highlighted her role as an influencer who not only provided factual accuracy but also reinforced her credibility and authority. Boasting acts allowed Marina to display personal pride and enthusiasm toward traditional dishes, strengthening her personal branding and engagement with viewers. Next is classifying and identifying acts, emphasizing her role as a cultural mediator by labeling food items clearly, ensuring that international audiences could recognize them. Lastly, complaining acts, although the least frequent, added authenticity, humor, and relatability to her content, showing both positive and negative aspects of food experiences.

The study’s findings are beneficial in several ways. First, the results provide useful insights for students and researchers in pragmatics, especially those focusing on speech act analysis in digital communication. Second, they offer further understanding of how representative acts function in food content, not only to inform but also to promote cultural identity and engagement. Third, the findings highlight the strategic use of speech acts by influencers to build credibility, authenticity, and audience interaction. Finally, this research contributes to the study of cross-cultural communication by showing how Indonesian cuisine can be promoted globally through digital platforms like TikTok.

This study has produced significant findings, but it also has some limitations. First, the analysis was limited to representative acts only; future research should explore other types of speech acts to provide a broader understanding. Second, the data were confined to three TikTok videos; subsequent studies could examine a larger dataset to capture more varied linguistic patterns. Further research might also apply different pragmatic theories or multimodal approaches to analyze not only verbal utterances but also gestures, visuals, and audience responses. These directions would help broaden the scope of understanding regarding how

influencers strategically use language and other modes of communication to engage audiences and promote culture in digital contexts.

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Lampungese Lexicalized Onomatopoeia

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Abstract

This study examines lexicalized onomatopoeia in Lampungese, a local Indonesian language whose sound-symbolic system has not yet been systematically described despite its longstanding contact with multiple linguistic communities. Onomatopoeia, understood as the creation of lexical items through the imitation of natural sounds, demonstrates both universal cognitive tendencies and language-specific phonological shaping. The purpose of this research is to identify Lampungese onomatopoeic items that have undergone lexicalization and to analyse their phonetic resemblance, morphological patterning, and semantic characteristics. The data were obtained through naturalistic observation of spontaneous Lampungese interactions, guided lexical elicitation based on Dingemanse's sound-source categories, and verification through the method of depiction, in which speakers responded to auditory and visual stimuli to confirm the iconic basis and contextual use of each form. All items were analysed using detailed phonetic comparison and interpreted through the degrees of iconicity framework. The study identifies 28 sound-imitating forms in Lampungese, yet only eight display stable usage, semantic consolidation, and structural regularity sufficient to be considered lexicalized. These lexicalized items share a consistent structural pattern: each contains an iconic core that approximates the natural sound source and an empty morpheme that attaches without contributing semantic content but aligns the form with Lampungese phonotactic constraints. All eight forms fall under direct onomatopoeia and belong to the domains of animal sounds and object-interaction sounds, while the remaining items function only as descriptive sound expressions in discourse. Overall, the findings provide a systematic account of how sound imitation becomes integrated into the Lampungese lexicon.

Keywords: Onomatopoeia; lexicalization; Lampungese

Introduction

One key source of language development is the sounds found in nature (Darwin, 1871). As a result, it makes sense that signs of imitating natural sounds can show up in words. This phenomenon is known as onomatopoeia. Onomatopoeia is typically defined as a process where new words are created by imitating sounds made by natural elements or living things, including animal sounds or movements, environmental events, human voices, and activities that produce sound (Akita, K & Mutsumi I, 2022; Dingemanse, 2018; Ferber, M, 2019; Fitriana, I and Suparno, D, 2025; Laing, C. E., 2019). In simpler terms, this word formation involves changing sounds we hear into words that closely resemble those sounds. Ferber (2019) summarizes onomatopoeia as words that sound like what they refer to. In English, many examples illustrate this word formation, such as tap, tick, clap, and pip (Flaksman M.A, 2018). These words are spoken in ways that closely match the sounds they represent. Together, these viewpoints emphasize the important role of sound imitation in creating onomatopoeic expressions.

Creating onomatopoeic expressions is seen as a basic and universal human skill. It shows the close link between our senses and how we use language. Dingemanse (2018) claims that onomatopoeia appears in all known spoken languages and follows a basic principle of sound imitation. This suggests that people have a shared ability to turn sounds into words, which lets

speakers connect concrete sounds with language. These forms are also important for development. They often appear among the first and easiest words that infants learn to say, as shown by Kimi Akita and Mutsumi Imai (2022) and Laing, C.E. (2019). Their early presence in child language supports the idea that iconicity aids early word learning. It gives children a way to enter the world of words based on what they perceive. Together, these observations highlight the cognitive, perceptual, and developmental roots of onomatopoeic forms.

Even though the basic idea is imitating sounds from the environment, the actual words can be quite different across languages due to structural and sound rules. A well-known example is how people express rooster calls: English speakers say “cock-a-doodle-doo,” French speakers say *cocorico*, Germans say *kikeriki*, Hungarians use *kukuriku*, Japanese speakers say *kokekokkō*, Persian speakers say *ghughuli-ghughu*, Hindi speakers say *kukruukuu*, Sudanese speakers say *kongkorongok*, Thai speakers say *ake-e-ake-ake*, and Tagalog speakers say *kukaok* (Ferber, M, 2019). This variation happens because each language interprets sound imitation through its own sound system, including allowable consonants, vowels, syllable structures, and patterns of sound. As Ferber (2019) and Qinghua (2018) point out, speakers recreate environmental sounds in ways that fit their language’s phonological rules, leading to systematic but varied words. Therefore, onomatopoeia shows both the universal human urge to imitate sounds and the linguistic differences that shape how those imitations become words.

Since each language has its own onomatopoeic words, research in this area, especially in languages that haven't been studied much, is important for several reasons. First, as Sidhu (2024) notes, documenting onomatopoeic expressions could reveal how speakers map natural sounds onto words. This analysis can help us understand how perception, categorization, and language interact within a specific speech community. Second, studying onomatopoeia enriches the linguistic resources available for the language being studied. This is particularly important for languages that frequently interact with others or are at risk of disappearing. For these languages, a systematic study of onomatopoeia not only preserves a unique part of their vocabulary but also supports broader efforts in documentation, revitalization, and comparative linguistic research (Eberhard et al., 2023).

Even though onomatopoeia is a universal language feature, research on this topic, especially within Indonesia's local languages, is very limited. This is surprising considering that Indonesia has around 700 local languages, many of which are becoming increasingly endangered due to globalization and changing social dynamics (Eberhard et al., 2023). To date, systematic studies on onomatopoeia in Indonesian local languages have focused only on Javanese (Alfarisyi, Fitri et al., 2022 and Fitriana & Suparno, 2025), Devayan (Kustina, 2020), and Indonesian (Nurhidayati, S. A and Mulyadi, 2024). Beyond these examples, most research relies on data that doesn't accurately reflect local linguistic diversity, such as Indonesian webtoons (Fadhilah, Suwandi, & Sugianti, 2024), Indonesian comics (Muin, Rauf, & Hidayat, 2016), and Indonesian children's songs (Apriliandini et al., 2025, and Laili, N. M and Putri, F, 2021). As a result, the current research provides only a partial view of onomatopoeia in Indonesia and emphasizes the urgent need for more thorough documentation across its many under-studied local languages.

One of the local languages in Indonesia is Lampungese, the ancestral language of the Lampungese ethnic group. They mostly live in the Lampung Province and nearby areas (Reranta, 2021). The language has interacted with at least five other local languages due to large-scale migration programs in the region (Badan Pengembangan Bahasa dan Perbukuan, 2019). Despite this multilingual context, current documentation and revitalization efforts for Lampungese remain limited and inconsistent, raising concerns about the long-term health of the language.

Given these circumstances, this study focuses on Lampungese as an interesting area for linguistic research, especially in the largely untapped area of onomatopoeia. While many

Indonesian local languages employ diverse sound-related expressions, detailed descriptions of these forms in Lampungese are still missing. This research aims to identify and analyze the language's onomatopoeic words regarding their structure and meaning. Unlike previous studies that tried to catalog all sound-imitating expressions, including those representing animal sounds like meow or woof and environmental sounds like splash or rustle, this paper focuses on onomatopoeic forms that have become fully recognized as words, similar to English *buzz*, *ring*, and *knock*. This narrower focus allows for a deeper analysis since fully lexicalized onomatopoeia is more stable, commonly used, and culturally embedded. This makes them better for identifying clear patterns in structure, sound, and meaning in Lampungese. The findings are expected to contribute to both the descriptive linguistics of Lampungese and broader discussions on sound symbolism in Austronesian languages.

Theory and Method

Given that this research aims to construct a theoretical framework for onomatopoeia in Lampungese, a qualitative research design is employed. Qualitative methodology, which centres on the interpretive analysis of social and behavioural phenomena, is particularly suited for examining, explaining, and clarifying linguistic patterns for the purpose of theory building (Creswell, 2018). In accordance, the method will be applied to investigate the data, which consists of audio recordings containing Lampungese utterances in which lexical items identified as onomatopoeic occur.

McLean and Dingemans (2025) said that onomatopoeia can be found in both everyday language and at the highest levels of verbal art. Deeper verbal narratives contain more (Choksi et al., 2021). To obtain the data, the researcher employed covert naturalistic observation to record spontaneous conversations among selected Lampungese speakers, allowing onomatopoeic forms to surface naturally in everyday interaction without researcher influence. As a stimulus, the researcher regularly requested informants to tell any personal story. Informant selection was necessary to ensure that the data represented authentic Lampungese usage rather than interference from other languages. The criteria established required that informants be native speakers who use Lampungese as their dominant daily language, fall within the age range of 40–60 years to ensure stable long-term linguistic acquisition and cognitive reliability, and reside in traditional Lampungese hometown areas. Based on these criteria, five communities were identified, and three of them were chosen due to practical limitations and the researcher's familial access. The researcher spent approximately one week in each community observing naturally occurring speech events and recording utterances that contained potential onomatopoeic items.

In addition to observation, the researcher applied guided lexical elicitation as a supplementary technique. A list of potentially onomatopoeic words was prepared based on McLean and Dingemans's (2025) classification, which identifies four major types of onomatopoeia: animal sounds, bodily sounds, environmental events, and object interactions. Informants were asked to provide the Lampungese equivalents for each word on the list, enabling the researcher to compare elicited forms with those found in natural speech. To avoid influencing their responses, the purpose of the elicitation was not disclosed to the informants, allowing the data to reflect their spontaneous lexical knowledge rather than metalinguistic reasoning.

Having compiled a substantial corpus of recordings, the researcher proceeded to identify Lampungese lexical items with potential onomatopoeic characteristics through detailed phonetic examination. At this stage, the analysis centred on evaluating the degree of resemblance or iconic imitation between each word's phonetic form and the natural sound it is assumed to represent, as determined through systematic transcription. To classify these forms,

the researcher applied the phonetic degree categories of onomatopoeia proposed by Dofs (2008), who distinguishes three types: (1) direct onomatopoeia, referring to lexical items whose phonological shape closely replicates the actual sound source, such as *bang* and *cluck*; (2) associative onomatopoeia, in which the sound–meaning connection arises through conventional or context-based association rather than direct imitation, such as *whip*, associated with the sound produced by a whip; and (3) exemplary onomatopoeia, derived from speakers’ articulatory efforts to produce a sound-like representation. Nevertheless, unlike several previous studies discussed in the preceding chapter, the researcher did not classify phonetically similar forms as onomatopoeic by default. Additional verification was undertaken to ensure that any phonetic resemblance was not coincidental nor merely the result of regular phonological processes that do not reflect intentional sound imitation.

To verify the data, the researcher applied the method of depiction, a mode of representation that involves showing rather than telling (McLean and Dingemans, 2025; Zlatev, 2023). This method is commonly used to analyse ideophones, including onomatopoeia, by presenting visual stimuli—such as pictures, videos, body gestures, and facial expressions—and auditory stimuli—such as sound recordings or direct speech—to elicit sensory-based responses from speakers. In this research, data from the previous steps are adapted into a sequence of nuance which is then shown to native Lampungese speakers. After that, they will be asked to produce lexical items they associate with the perceived sound or event. The elicited forms will then be examined to determine whether (1) the items are naturally used by speakers in everyday contexts, (2) they accurately represent the sound or event depicted in the stimuli, and (3) they exhibit iconic or imitative properties consistent with onomatopoeia, with brief follow-up questions used to clarify meaning, context, and semantic nuances. In this step, informants are different people but with the same criteria, and they knew the purpose of the ask. Finally, the responses were taken into consideration to decide the findings.

For data presentation and analysis, all verified onomatopoeic items were organised into a structured dataset that includes their phonetic transcription, semantic description, usage context, and classification according to McLean and Dingemans’s (2025) categories. The analysis followed an iterative interpretive approach, beginning with descriptive categorisation and progressing to thematic and functional interpretation aimed at identifying phonetic, morphological, and semantical patterns. Instances from natural conversation, elicitation, and depiction-based verification were cross-referenced to ensure internal consistency and to capture variation across contexts. These analytic steps collectively support the development of a theoretically grounded account of onomatopoeia in Lampungese, allowing the findings to be presented in a coherent, systematic, and analytically transparent manner.

Findings and Discussion

From the combined procedures of data collection, phonetic analysis, depiction, and final interpretation, this study identifies 28 Lampungese onomatopoeic forms. Of these, only eight of them function as established lexical items, while the remaining forms operate solely as descriptive sound expressions in discourse. For instance, forms such as *gemeghitok* /gəməʔitoʔ/ and *gemeghitas* /gəməʔitas/, both denoting the sharp sound of raindrops striking a hard surface, appear only as spontaneous descriptions of natural phenomena and do not show evidence of lexicalization. This pattern aligns with distinctions commonly observed cross-linguistically, where some onomatopoeias evolve into stable lexemes while others remain context-bound. In English, for example, *buzz* represents a lexicalized form, whereas expressive imitations like *brmmm* (engine sound) typically remain non-lexical. Accordingly, the present analysis focuses exclusively on the eight Lampungese items that meet the criteria for lexical status.

Based on their sound sources, these lexicalized forms fall into two categories: animal sounds and object-interaction sounds. Morphological examination further reveals a consistent structural pattern across all items, characterized by the presence of an iconic core that directly reflects the imitated natural sound, accompanied by an empty morpheme that attaches to the iconic base without contributing semantic meaning. This affixational pattern constitutes a stable morphological strategy in the formation of onomatopoeia in Lampungese. Each lexical item is examined in detail in the sections that follow.

Animal Sounds

First, the lexical item for ‘dog’ offers a clear illustration of onomatopoeic formation. Lampungese employs two terms for this animal: *asu* /asu/ and *duguk* /duguʔ/. The form *asu* is widely distributed across Indonesia and is therefore not regarded as a native Lampungese creation. Conversely, *duguk* is considered an indigenous Lampungese lexeme, as it is not attested in neighboring regional languages. Phonetically, the final segment /guʔ/ in *duguk* is suspected to derive from imitation of canine barking due to its perceptible resemblance to the natural sound. To substantiate this association, elicitation sessions were conducted in which native speakers were encouraged naturally and respectfully to imitate the sound of a dog. All speakers produced the imitation /guʔ-guʔ/. One consultant further remarked, “Yu ngeduguk wuy” (‘of course, it sounds /ŋəduguʔ/’). The morphological verbal form *ngeduguk* ‘to bark’ shares the same lexical root *duguk*, providing additional morphological evidence of an iconic link between the lexeme and the animal sound. Based on these phonetic and morphological correspondences, *duguk* can be classified as an onomatopoeic animal name. Morphologically, the sequence /du-/ functions as an empty morpheme that attaches to the iconic base /guʔ/ without adding semantic content.

Second, the Lampungese designation for ‘tiger’, *lemawong* /ləmawoŋ/, likewise indicates an onomatopoeic origin. Phonetic examination suggests that the final constituent /woŋ/ echoes tiger-like vocalizations. This interpretation is supported by testimonies from three informants who had previously encountered tigers; their elicited imitations included forms such as /woŋ/ and /wɔŋ/. Despite minor phonetic variation among the imitations, the forms exhibit structural and auditory similarity to the final syllable of *lemawong*. These convergent patterns point to an iconic relationship between the lexeme and the natural sound, indicating that the name for ‘tiger’ also arises at least in part from sound-based imitation. In this form, the sequence /ləma-/ operates as an empty morpheme preceding the iconic core /woŋ/.

Third, the term *agas* /agas/ ‘mosquito’ presents an additional example of an onomatopoeic animal name. During elicitation, speakers consistently reproduced the mosquito’s buzzing as /gas/, a high-pitched and continuous sound closely aligned with the final segment of the lexeme. The strong phonetic parallel between the natural buzzing and the segment /gas/ suggests that this portion constitutes the iconic core of the word. Accordingly, *agas* can be interpreted as originating from auditory imitation that later underwent lexicalization. Here, the initial vowel /a/ functions as an empty morpheme attached to the iconic root /gas/.

Fourth, the Lampungese word for ‘elephant’, *liman* /liman/, also reflects an onomatopoeic basis. Speakers imitated the elephant’s call with an extended, high-pitched vocalization rendered as /ma:n/ or /man/. This elicited form corresponds closely to the final syllable of *liman*, indicating that /man/ represents the iconic nucleus derived from the animal’s natural vocalization. The phonetic alignment and consistent speaker imitations support the conclusion that *liman* incorporates an onomatopoeic component. In this case, the segment /li-/ serves as an empty morpheme that precedes the iconic element /man/.

Object Interaction

First, the lexeme *peting* /pətiŋ/, denoting the action or sound associated with the verb ‘picking’ a guitar string with the fingers, exemplifies onomatopoeic formation. During elicitation, the researcher prompted native speakers to imitate guitar-string sounds by asking them to distinguish between low- and high-pitched strings. In response, the informant produced /dub/ for the low string and /tiŋ/ for the high string. The segment /tiŋ/ aligns directly with the final portion of the lexeme *peting*, representing the iconic core that captures the sharp, resonant sound of a plucked high string. The initial syllable /pə-/ functions as an empty morpheme attached to the iconic base /tiŋ/ without contributing semantic content. The selection of the high-string sound as the lexical basis indicates that Lampungese speakers perceptually prioritize the high register over the low one, a preference consistent with observations in classical Spanish guitar tradition, where treble strings are described as the “melodic” or “singing” line (Tyler & Sparks, 2002). This preference is also reflected in Lampungese musical practice, particularly in Lampungese Classical Guitar, characterized by its distinctive string tuning and predominant fingerstyle technique.

Second, the lexeme *cetik* /cəti?/ designates a traditional Lampungese bamboo instrument, played by striking it with two sticks. When played, the instrument produces the sound /tik/, which is mirrored in the lexical form, indicating an onomatopoeic origin. To verify this interpretation, the researcher asked native speakers why the instrument is called *cetik*, and they spontaneously responded that the name derives from the sound it produces, /tik-tik/. Notably, the word ends with a glottal stop /?/ rather than a velar /k/, reflecting a consistent phonological pattern in Lampungese. Morphologically, the initial syllable /cə-/ functions as an empty morpheme attached to the iconic base /tik/ without adding semantic content.

Third, the lexeme *canang* /tʃanaŋ/ refers to a traditional Lampungese metallic instrument, typically round and hollow with a diameter of approximately 15–25 cm, played by striking it with a rounded stick. The instrument produces sounds approximating /taŋ/ or /naŋ/, which are directly reflected in the lexical form and indicate an onomatopoeic basis. Confirmation was obtained from native speakers, who spontaneously associated the name *canang* with the sounds produced during performance. Morphologically, the initial syllable /tʃa-/ functions as an empty morpheme attached to the iconic base /naŋ/ without contributing semantic content.

Finally, the lexeme *caghik* /tʃaʁik?/ denotes the action of tearing, typically applied to paper or cloth, and demonstrates onomatopoeic formation. The researcher confirmed the iconic basis of this form by secretly tearing a piece of cloth near native speakers, simulating a natural ripping sound. Upon hearing the sound, the informants immediately asked, “Whose clothing is torn?” When the researcher inquired about what they had heard, informants responded that the perceived sound was /ʁik-ʁik/ and /ʁi?- ʁi?/. The segment /ʁi?/ aligns with the final portion of the lexeme *caghik* and constitutes the iconic core representing the auditory impression of tearing. The initial syllable /tʃa-/ functions as an empty morpheme attached to the iconic base /ʁi?/ without contributing semantic content.

Conclusion

The findings of this study show that lexicalized Lampungese onomatopoeia is shaped by systematic phonetic, morphological, and semantic principles. Phonetically, all established lexemes contain an iconic core, a segment whose sound pattern approximates the natural auditory source. When examined through the three degrees of iconicity, all lexicalized items fall under direct onomatopoeia, as their phonological forms closely replicate the sounds speakers naturally produce during imitation tasks. No lexical items exhibit features of associative onomatopoeia, in which meaning arises through cultural or contextual association, nor exemplary onomatopoeia, which emerges from speakers' heightened articulatory efforts.

This distribution indicates that, in Lampungese, only forms with strong, observable phonetic resemblance undergo lexicalization, whereas forms with weaker or more abstract sound–meaning connections remain non-lexical.

Morphologically, all lexicalized items follow a stable pattern in which the iconic base is combined with an empty morpheme, a prefixed syllable that contributes no semantic meaning but confirms the structure to Lampungese phonotactic requirements. Semantically, these forms retain a direct auditory motivation, linking the iconic core to a specific natural sound source. Importantly, the study also shows that not all onomatopoeic expressions develop into established lexemes. Of the 28 forms identified, only eight are lexicalized, while the rest function solely as descriptive sound expressions in discourse. This pattern suggests that lexicalization in Lampungese depends on strong direct iconicity, consistent community usage, and semantic stabilization. Collectively, these phonetic, morphological, and semantic patterns provide a coherent account of how sound imitation becomes integrated into the Lampungese lexicon.

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Discovering Indonesian Local Traditions through the Film *Pabrik Gula* (2025)

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Abstract

Local traditions constitute a vital aspect of culture that must be introduced and comprehended by the general public, particularly the younger generation. As a nation renowned for its vast and diverse local traditions, Indonesia provides a rich context for such exploration. This study, therefore, aims to identify and analyze the local traditions depicted in the Indonesian horror film *Pabrik Gula*, released in 2025. The findings of this study will serve as a valuable resource for readers seeking to deepen their understanding of local traditions as represented in films. The primary data for this analysis were drawn directly from the film itself. The data gathered from the film, which pertains to local traditions, is thoroughly examined and analyzed through the lens of Stuart Hall's theory of representation. This approach allows for a nuanced understanding of the meanings conveyed by these traditions. The analysis reveals that there are four local traditions prominently influence the film: the *Wayang* performance tradition, the custom of making offerings (*sesajen*), the *Kuda Lumping* dance, and the *Manten Tebu* tradition. They represent human personalities, the interplay between humanity and the natural world, as well as themes of resilience, prosperity, and overall well-being. The local traditions depicted in the films significantly contribute to the evocation of horror, as they are deeply intertwined with themes of mysticism within their cultural contexts.

Keywords: local tradition; Indonesian horror film; *Pabrik Gula*; representation

Introduction

Cultural richness is one of Indonesia's characteristics that can contribute to the development of the entertainment world, especially film. Films, as a popular form of entertainment, aim to captivate and impress audiences by exposing a variety of attractions. One of the methods that filmmakers use to achieve this is by combining cultural elements into their works. Many Indonesian films include a number of regional cultures from Indonesia. Javanese, Batak, Sundanese, and other cultures are often featured in Indonesian movies across various film genres. One aspect of culture that can be found in Indonesian films is tradition. It is undeniable that every region in Indonesia has its own traditions.

Local traditions may manifest as dances, traditional ceremonies, songs, lifestyles, beliefs, local legends, and more. These local traditions are regarded as capable of enhancing a film's value (Suryanto, 2021). The incorporation of diverse local traditions into Indonesian films during a time marked by technological progress appears to be a fascinating trend for Indonesian society. Film audiences from various ethnic and cultural backgrounds can experience traditions from different regions through films. In addition to serving as a form of entertainment for viewers, films have the ability to picture diverse facets of human life, including cultural elements (Ulinuha et al., 2018). Different cultures undoubtedly possess distinct local traditions, with each region showcasing its own unique practices. This diversity presents an opportunity for individuals to expand their understanding and knowledge of regional wisdom.

Indonesian cinema frequently portrays a wide array of local traditions from different areas, often employing them as themes, titles, or central plot elements. Many of these local

traditions are closely linked to myths, superstitions, or supernatural beliefs held by specific communities (Kurniawan & Santabudi, 2023). Consequently, it's not surprising that horror films, particularly those with ghost themes, frequently incorporate aspects of local traditions through myths or mystical rituals. Indonesian horror films, in particular, often highlight local customs as key elements of their narratives. Discussing the rituals that are integral to local traditions, some rituals may be widely recognized, others remain obscure to many. For instance, numerous customs from Java might not be familiar to those from Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, or Irian Jaya. Conversely, traditions from regions outside Java may also be unknown to Javanese audiences.

By featuring specific local customs in horror films, filmmakers can capture viewers' interest and shine a light on these lesser-known practices. Some studies have explored the aspects of tradition and culture in horror films, as conducted by prior researchers. For instance, a film study conducted by Ulinuha et al. (2018) revealed that the film *Golok Lanang Wanten* features an image of a Banten machete, symbolizing local cultural identity and conveying a deeper moral message. There was also a study on Javanese culture presented in the short film *Tilik*, conducted by Wuwung et al. (2021), reveals that the film effectively reflects key aspects of Javanese culture, emphasizing the significance of values such as kindness, religious devotion, mutual assistance, and polite communication in Javanese tradition.

Additionally, Mineri & Riyanto (2023) which involved gathering responses from viewers of the film *Yowis Ben* also indicated the presence of local cultural elements, such as the use of the Javanese language and the depiction of traditional *pecel* food, which are effective in preserving the regional cultural heritage. Next, Nugraheni's (2023) study highlights the frequent use of Javanese props, costumes, and makeup in these films. Kurniawan & Santabudi (2023) conducted a study exploring local culture in the film *Mangkujiwo*, emphasizing that the cultural elements portrayed in the movie reflect patterns associated with myths, magic, and Javanese *Kejawen* beliefs. After examining several sources as outlined earlier, it is evident that the current study stands apart from previous research in several key aspects, the films selected for analysis, the analytical methods employed, the theoretical framework for interpretation, and the findings. This study utilizes the ghost-themed film *Pabrik Gula*, directed by Awi Suryadi and released on March 31, 2025, as the primary data for analysis. Set in a historic sugar factory from the Dutch colonial period, the film features intriguing elements of local Javanese tradition that are fascinating to discuss.

Considering the details provided earlier, this study aims to uncover the local traditions represented in the film and to explore the importance of these traditions as depicted in the narrative. This research was carried out with the intention of adding to the theoretical frameworks in literary, cultural, and media studies, serving as a supplementary resource for film analysis and also encouraging readers' appreciation of local Indonesian traditions. Since the study explores local traditions, deepening the understanding of the term "tradition" is essential. The concept of local tradition is often intertwined with the term culture, as tradition fundamentally constitutes a component of culture. Defining "tradition" can be challenging due to its wide-ranging implications. As a result, there are numerous interpretations of what tradition encompasses. Nonetheless, there is a core foundation that serves to clarify the essence of tradition. To gain a clearer insight into the concept of tradition, various definitions have been gathered.

Tradition can generally be perceived as a lifestyle comprising the customs and beliefs that are passed down and practiced from one generation to the next within a tribe or society (Adibah, 2015). Similar to the earlier definition, Rangel (2022) noted that traditions are customs handed down from one generation to another, commonly embraced by most individuals within a society or culture. Tradition can be understood as a hereditary practice that covers every aspect of human existence and serves as a means to uphold the human

experience (Kartini & Zed, 2023). The three interpretations of the concept of tradition outlined above indicate that its defining feature lies in its creation by individuals to meet their needs and its transmission from one generation to the next. Thus, tradition can be defined as the collection of activities or practices undertaken to support different parts of human life, which are subsequently handed down to future generations. When examining traditions in relation to their geographical scope, they can be categorized into several types, such as state traditions, local traditions, and family traditions.

Given its extensive territory, Indonesia is rich in local traditions. Each of these local traditions possesses unique traits that set it apart from others. The film *Pabrik Gula* is set in Central Java, a region that serves as the heart of Javanese civilization and culture. It presents some local Javanese traditions that can be explored. *Pabrik Gula* (2025) is a horror film centered around a group of friends who take up a job at a haunted old sugar cane mill constructed during the Dutch colonial era in Indonesia. As they settle in, they are tormented by the spirits that inhabit the place, experiencing a range of horrifying events including mass possessions by malevolent entities, terrifying apparitions, and the tragic deaths of several coworkers. Although this is a horror film centered on ghosts, it includes several distinctive local Javanese traditions that offer a rich area for further exploration. Therefore, this study does not delve into the horror elements of the film; instead, it focuses on the aspects of local tradition depicted in the movie.

Theory and Method

This descriptive qualitative study employs Awi Suryadi's film *Pabrik Gula* (2025) as its primary source of data. The information collected consists of textual explanations regarding the local traditions depicted in various scenes of the film. Given that the focus of this study is to investigate the local traditions, they are thoroughly described and elucidated with the aid of several pertinent references. The data collection process through the film consists of two primary stages: (1) The film is viewed multiple times attentively to identify elements of local tradition. (2) The identified local traditions are documented and organized systematically to streamline the data analysis process. The text, which included various local traditions featured in the film, was subsequently analyzed by offering comprehensive explanations of the definitions, characteristics, meanings, and symbols associated with each tradition. In order to understand the meaning and symbolism of the traditions, this study draws upon Hall's theory of representation, which focuses on the construction of meaning. Regarding the creation of meaning, Hall (1997) theory of representation posits that humans generate meaning through a system of representation that incorporates concepts and signs. Hall's concept emphasizes that an object does not hold its own meaning without humans interpreting and defining that meaning. Thus, through the application of Hall's representation theory, this study intends to uncover the underlying meaning of Javanese local traditions as portrayed in the film.

Findings and Discussion

The analysis of the film *Pabrik Gula* reveals that it features some local Javanese traditions, including *wayang* performances, Tradition of Making Offerings (*Sesajen*), the *kuda lumping* traditional dance, and the tradition of *Manten Tebu* (the sugar cane wedding ritual). These traditions contain meanings that can illuminate broader concepts. By applying the theory of representation to the process of meaning-constructing, the four local traditions can be understood in the following ways:

Table 1. The Construction of Meaning in Local Traditions as Depicted in *Pabrik Gula*
Table of Representation

No	Local Traditions from the Film	Meaning-Constructing
1	<i>Wayang</i> Performance	Diverse categories of human personalities
2	Tradition of Making Offerings (<i>Sesajen</i>)	The inseparable relationship between humans and the natural world
3	The <i>Kuda Lumping</i> Traditional Dance	Strength
4	the tradition of <i>Manten Tebu</i> (the sugar cane wedding ritual)	Blessings and prosperity

Each local tradition can undoubtedly be analyzed from multiple viewpoints, allowing the to represent a diverse array of meanings. Beyond their explicit definitions, these traditions can also be understood in a connotative sense by synthesizing various ideas and interpretations related to them. Below is an exploration of these traditions to uncover their significance.

1. *Wayang* Performance

Wayang, a significant artistic performance in Javanese culture, has become a tradition intricately integrated into the daily lives of the people of Java. *Wayang* performances are typically held as entertainment during cultural festivals, traditional ceremonies, or weddings. This form of puppetry has a rich history and has been handed down through generations within Javanese society, serving as a hallmark of Javanese culture. *Wayang* performance is known as a traditional shadow puppet show conducted by a puppeteer (*dalang*) who uses Javanese dialogue and is accompanied by gamelan music. *Wayang* is crafted from various materials, including skin, wood, and bamboo puppets, and so on. The prevalent type of puppet (*wayang*) in Javanese culture is the shadow puppet, typically made from the skins of buffalos, cows, or goats. These hides are processed into thin leather sheets that can be intricately carved. *Wayang* performances utilize a white cloth screen and a lamp as a light source to cast the shadows of the puppets. Therefore, these performances are typically held at night or in dimly lit settings, allowing the audience to see the puppet shadows more distinctly.

The ritualistic blend of shadow puppetry, the Javanese language, and unique gamelan music has made *wayang* performances increasingly associated with spiritualism and mysticism. This quality lends a mystical atmosphere to the performances, which horror filmmakers often leverage to intensify the sense of horror for their narratives. According to Saptodewo (2013), shadow puppets, commonly found in Central Java, initially served as elements of religious ritual ceremonies. Nugroho (2021) notes that in ancient times, the Javanese paid homage to the gods and ancestral spirits by making offerings in hopes of receiving safety, peace, and success in their endeavors and this practice gave rise to various ritual traditions. Additionally, Nugroho also mentions that *wayang* performances were frequently incorporated into these ceremonies.

Wayang features a diverse set of characters, including both male and female roles, protagonists and antagonists, as well as gods and goddesses. Performances often entail stories or legends, such as the Mahabharata, which includes notable characters like *Kresna*, *Arjuna*, *Indra*, *Gatotkaca*, *Srikandi*, *Bima*, *Sadewa*, and more. The Ramayana is another significant story, featuring characters like *Rama*, *Hanoman*, *Bharata*, etc. Additionally, the *wayang* tradition includes popular figures such as *Bagong*, *Gareng*, *Petruk*, *Semar*, and *Togog*, who are especially cherished by the Javanese people. Therefore, these shadow puppets are typically designed to depict human figures that embody a mix of positive and negative characteristics (Rohman et al., 2020). The habits, thought patterns, life experiences, attitudes, and behaviors of people are reflected in the narratives portrayed in *wayang* performances.

These performances are not merely forms of entertainment; they also serve as a mode of communication.

In addition, wayang is also considered an educational tool, as the content imparts valuable messages to the audiences, providing moral lessons, enhancing knowledge, and promoting self-improvement, among other benefits (Maharani et al., 2019). *Wayang*, a quintessential Javanese cultural art form recognized globally, must be preserved and sustained to ensure that its cultural values are handed down to future generations, allowing wayang art to continue representing the identity of the Indonesian nation (Lumenta, 2023).



Figure 1. The Scene of Wayang Performance in the Film *Pabrik Gula*

Overall, the inclusion of the *wayang* performance portrait is intended to evoke a distinct Javanese essence in the film *Pabrik Gula*. Nevertheless, emergence of this scene invites further examination, particularly regarding its significance.

The interpretation of wayang within the film is inextricably linked to its philosophical foundations. As a revered art form within Javanese cultural heritage, *wayang* embodies a range of noble values and moral teachings that are not easily recognized by everyone. *Wayang* performances, steeped in Javanese culture, reflect the philosophy of human existence. With a diverse type of characters, *wayang* can function as a representation of the duality inherent in the human spirit, illustrating both its virtues and vices. The unique characteristics and significance of the wayang depicted above can convey a representation of meanings connected to human existence. *Wayang* performances, frequently linked to traditional ceremonies or religious rituals, exemplify a fundamental aspect of Javanese culture. They can also illustrate the interrelationship between humanity and the natural world, with nature or the universe symbolizing the Creator in this context.

2. Tradition of Making Offerings (*Sesajen*)

In ancient times, the Javanese people held a belief in gods and supernatural beings that required respect and offerings. This practice constituted an essential aspect of ancient Javanese culture. Even in contemporary times, the tradition of making offerings remains prevalent in various cultural activities. Offerings are presented in several sacred locations, such as large trees, revered heirlooms, or rooms and houses believed to be inhabited by supernatural entities. The practice of making offerings is commonly seen in various activities, including harvest celebrations, housewarming ceremonies, traditional rituals, as well as events related to births and deaths, and interactions with supernatural powers, and so on. The contents of offerings may differ significantly based on the cultural practices of each region. In Javanese tradition, offerings typically include flowers, fruits, eggs, food, beverages, candles, incense, and more. They are commonly part of traditional ceremonies.

Based on the preceding discussion, it is evident that the tradition of offerings is fundamentally associated with the belief in supernatural forces inherent in nature, which significantly impact human existence. Consequently, this act is regarded as a sacred ritual, imbued with profound meaning and philosophical significance within Javanese culture

(Kholis & Sudrajat, 2022). In Javanese traditional wedding ceremonies, for instance, the act of making offerings is a longstanding custom passed down through generations. Thus, the examination of offerings is intrinsically linked to the underlying philosophy and significance embedded within them. In essence, the offerings associated with each activity may convey distinct interpretations and meanings. As noted by Septia (2024), each item included in the offering holds symbolic significance, embodying sacredness and serving as a gesture of reverence toward God, ancestors, and spiritual forces.

In the film *Pabrik Gula*, the tradition of offerings is vividly illustrated through a scene featuring ritual activities performed by a male and a female shaman. They placed offerings beneath a large tree and near an old warehouse within the sugar factory premises. This scene also captures the two shamans reciting a mantra in Javanese while gesturing with their hands.



Figure 2. The Scene Showing Two Shamans Presenting Offerins to Perform a Sacred Ritual in *Pabrik Gula*

Drawing on the role of offerings, which are frequently linked to rituals directed at spirits or supernatural entities as previously discussed, their presence in the film can undoubtedly contribute to an enhanced element of horror. However, the significance of making offerings in contemporary times has experienced a considerable transformation. The philosophy of *sasejan*, which traditionally embodies concepts of harmony, aesthetics, and noble values serving as a guide to a life of sanctity, is increasingly viewed as a misleading practice or ritual. This shift in perception arises from its perceived contradiction to established religious values (Hendrawan et al., 2015).

The evolving interpretation of offerings gradually becomes entrenched in societal perspectives, wherein they are increasingly linked to practices that diverge from traditional religious teachings. Consequently, the portrayal of offering rituals in horror films serves to reinforce the notion that such acts are meant to venerate supernatural entities, thereby implying that these entities are appeased and less likely to cause disruption or harm to humanity. The discourse surrounding the practice of making offerings is not intended to engage in a debate regarding the moral standing of this tradition, nor is it meant to assess its alignment or misalignment with religious principles. Rather, offerings represent a significant cultural practice within Javanese society, rich with meaningful messages and valuable life lessons for individuals. At its core, the significance and symbolism of an offering are intricately connected to the intentions and mindset of the individual presenting it.

Numerous ethnic groups across various regions of Indonesia acknowledge and engage in the tradition of presenting offerings for religious ceremonies, prayers, and acts of worship. This practice is, in essence, an significant element of Indonesian cultural heritage. From ancient times, the ancestors of the Indonesian people have created offerings as expressions of their spiritual beliefs and devotion. Furthermore, it is evident that the Hindu and Buddhist kingdoms that thrived in ancient Indonesia also embraced the tradition of making offerings, solidifying its importance in the country's historical and cultural landscape. Despite the diminishing prevalence of the "*sesajen*" tradition in urban areas and its decline in practice among younger generations, the tradition of *sesajen* continues to serve as a vital expression of

cultural identity and embodies the local wisdom of traditional communities in Indonesia (Adam et al., 2019). Thus, the depiction of offerings within the horror film functions not only as a mechanism to intensify the atmosphere of fear but also illustrates "*sesajen*" as an expression reflecting human reverence and devotion for nature. This image symbolically illustrates the intrinsic relationship between humanity and the cosmos. Furthermore, it emphasizes "*sesajen*" as a cultural tradition that warrants acknowledgment, respect, and preservation.

An offering, fundamentally an object, acquires its meaning through cultural frameworks shaped by human beliefs. Consequently, when an offering is intended for a concept associated with the supernatural or directed towards spirits, that specific meaning is inherently retained. An analysis grounded in the theory of representation reveals that the scenes depicting offerings to supernatural entities in the film serve to evoke not only a sense of mystique and horror but also convey deeper cultural significance. These offerings, which have been integral to Javanese tradition for generations, symbolize the intricate relationship between humanity and the natural world. Nature, as a powerful force, underscores the necessity for humans - who occupy a minor role within it - to cultivate a harmonious and respectful coexistence with their environment.

3. The *Kuda Lumping* Traditional Dance

Javanese culture boasts a vibrant tradition of dance, among which the *Kuda Lumping* dance stands out as one of the most recognized. Predominantly practiced in Central Java, Yogyakarta and East Java, the origins of this dance remain undocumented. However, it is commonly expressed among Indonesians that the *Kuda Lumping* dance has its roots in East Java. According to Laraswati et al. (2023) there are various accounts that recount the origins of the *Kuda Lumping* Dance, for example, there is a version suggests it serves as a tribute to the cavalry forces of Prince Diponegoro, who resisted Dutch colonialism; another narrative claims the dance draws inspiration from the efforts of Raden Patah and Sunan Kalijaga in their battles against invaders; and additionally, some believe that the *Kuda Lumping* dance represents the military training conducted by the Mataram kingdom's troops during the reign of Sultan Hamengkubuwono I. In various regions of Java, this dance is alternatively referred to as the *Kuda Kepang* dance or *Jaranan*. A distinctive characteristic of this performance is the use of a woven bamboo horse as a prop. Nevertheless, the *Kuda Lumping* has firmly established itself as a significant element of Javanese heritage, frequently showcased during various traditional events and ceremonies.

In Javanese tradition, the *Kuda Lumping* dance is typically characterized by group dance formations adorned in vibrant costumes that reflect the cultural customs of each specific region (Hardiarini & Firdhani, 2022). In addition to serving as a form of entertainment, the *Kuda Lumping* art is frequently regarded as a mystical performance. This perception stems from the presence of ritual offerings, the burning of Benzoin incense (*Kemenyan*), and the observable phenomena of spirit possession among the dancers (Wahyudi et al., 2023). This perspective further amplifies the enigmatic allure of the *Kuda Lumping* dance. Dancers believed to be possessed by a spirit frequently demonstrate extraordinary abilities, including the chewing glass, traversing hot coals, rolling on the ground, and exhibiting resistance to sharp objects, among other feats. Such displays contribute to mesmerizing and entertaining spectacles that enthrall audiences.

Various iterations of the narrative surrounding the origins of the *Kuda Lumping*, along with the perilous behaviors exhibited by the dancers in a trance-like state, illustrate that the dance embodies strength. This representation of strength emphasizes the significance of resilience in overcoming the challenges and obstacles encountered in human life. The *Kuda Lumping* dance can be viewed as a powerful emblem of resilience, reflecting the historical narrative of the Indonesian people's fight against colonial domination. This dance reflects the

essence of strength, which is vital in the pursuit of triumph. Consequently, *Kuda Lumping* stands as a symbol of defiance and fortitude in the face of adversity.

In the *Kuda Lumping* dance, possession is a prevalent phenomenon that enhances the artistic expression of this performance. Such occurrences not only captivate spectators but also provide an exhilarating experience. This unique aspect imbues the *Kuda Lumping* dance with an otherworldly and creepy aura. It is therefore not surprising that this dance has been incorporated into horror films to amplify the eeriness. A notable example can be found in the movie *Pabrik Gula*, where a scene illustrates two shamans conducting a *Kuda Lumping* dance ritual aimed at communicating with the spirits residing within the factory, thereby mitigating potential terror and averting catastrophe.



Figure 3. The Kuda Lumping Dance Portrayed in A Scene of *Pabrik Gula*

The phenomenon of spirit possession in *Kuda Lumping* emphasizes the philosophical belief that humans occupy a minuscule role within the vastness of the universe. This tradition reveals that the ultimate strength resides in nature, rendering humans relatively powerless in comparison.

Through the *Kuda Lumping* dance, participants establish a connection between the human realm and the supernatural, highlighting the reverence that the Javanese people have for these supernatural entities. Such veneration is considered essential for maintaining balance in life, as individuals often acknowledge their limitations and seek the support of external forces to realize their aspirations (Suryaningputri et al., 2022). In conclusion, the traditional *Kuda Lumping* dance can be viewed as a representation of strength, encompassing both internal and external dimensions. This embodiment of strength is frequently intertwined with supernatural elements that hold sacred significance within Javanese culture.

4. The Tradition of *Manten Tebu*

The phrase *Manten Tebu*, which translates to "Sugarcane Wedding", might not be well-known to individuals outside of Java. This local custom involves two key groups: the sugarcane farmers and the sugar factories located in the region. In basic terms, this tradition involves a ceremonial act of uniting two sugar cane stalks, conducted annually just prior to the commencement of the sugar cane milling season for sugar production. It is a traditional practice rooted in Central Java, widely recognized by many Javanese, particularly those residing in proximity to sugar mills. This annual event holds significant cultural importance in Central Java due to the proliferation of sugar mills during the Dutch colonial era. The tradition is celebrated as a ceremonial expression of gratitude preceding the commencement of the sugar milling season.

In certain regions of Java, this tradition is referred to as "*Cembengan*". It is typically commemorated through a sequence of activities, including wayang performances, offerings, sugar cane bridal processions, and a variety of evening entertainment options for the local community. In this context, the *manten tebu* tradition employs the symbolism of human marriage to represent the union of two sugarcane stalks within a sacred ceremony.

Additionally, it is important to note that each region in Java possesses its own distinct interpretation of the *manten tebu* tradition. Similar to many weddings in Java, the *Manten Tebu* ceremony incorporates traditional Javanese wedding customs. According to Abdila et al. (2024) this ritual comprises several key phases: selecting two stalks of the finest sugar cane, assigning names to them, adorning them to resemble a bridal couple, parading them from the sugar cane field to the sugar factory, conducting the Javanese wedding ceremony, and ultimately placing the two stalks into a sugar cane mill to signify the commencement of the sugar cane milling season.

The local community holds the view that the *Manten Tebu* tradition possesses the ability to bestow favorable outcomes upon sugarcane farmers and sugar factories and there is a prevailing belief that neglecting this tradition could result in negative consequences (Antikasari, 2023). Symbolically, the *Manten Tebu* tradition, typically celebrated in April or May, embodies the development of a constructive cooperative relationship between sugarcane farmers and sugar factories (Mauritio, 2025). In essence, this serves as a representation of gratitude and positive aspirations, as its purpose is to foster advantages and well-being for both local sugarcane farmers and the sugar factory from their endeavors. The symbolism inherent in *Manten Tebu*, as previously discussed, illustrates that this tradition is seen as a representation of success and harmony. Such interpretations undoubtedly evoke a positive connotation.

Within this tradition, the collaboration between sugarcane farmers and sugar factory proprietors exemplifies a constructive partnership, symbolizing a mutually beneficial relationship. The existence of sugar factories can significantly benefit the community, particularly sugarcane farmers. This tradition portrays this relationship and shows considerable significance. While the *Manten Tebu* ritual may exhibit aspects of mythology or sacredness in its ceremonial practices, Putra (2025) underlines that it is a symbolic representation of the community's aspirations for a successful sugar production process. This, in turn, fosters abundant yields and prosperity for the community. Therefore, it is essential to preserve this local tradition as a defining characteristic of Javanese society.

The depiction of the *Manten Tebu* tradition in the film *Pabrik Gula* plays a role as a potent symbol for the reinforcement of local cultural practices while simultaneously enhancing the film's overarching themes. Within this horror narrative, the unsettling supernatural occurrences set against the backdrop of a sugar factory effectively cast the *Manten Tebu* tradition as a ritual identical with sacredness, mystique, and an element of fear.

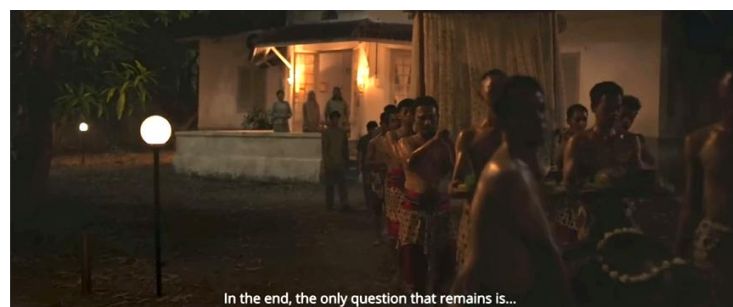


Figure 4. The *Pabrik Gula* Film Version of the *Manten Tebu* Ritual

One of the most intense scenes in the film revolves around the *Manten Tebu* tradition. This ritual necessitates that a couple found guilty of infidelity within the factory's hallowed warehouse become sugarcane brides, destined to be sacrificed in order to placate the spirits of the factory. It is important to note that this portrayal significantly diverges from the authentic *Manten Tebu* ritual concerning its meaning, intent, and practices.

It is essential to emphasize that the film adaptation of *Manten Tebu* portrays a marriage between a male adulterer and a female adulteress as a form of sacrifice. In contrast,

the original *Manten Tebu* tradition symbolizes the union of two sugar cane stalks, representing prosperity for sugar cane farmers and sugar factories. Nonetheless, the scene, along with the evolving interpretation of *Manten Tebu* within the film, is essential in cultivating a sense of horror and mystique. While the portrayal of *Manten Tebu* in the film diverges from its original tradition, its representation holds considerable significance for the film's audience. The film has facilitated the recognition of this local tradition among audiences from various regions in Indonesia as well as international viewers. Moreover, it enables the younger generation to recognize and value the richness and distinctiveness of Indonesia's diverse cultures, which encompass artistic, philosophical, moral, sacred, and mystical values.

Conclusion

The preceding discussion focuses on several key insights regarding the depiction of local traditions in the film *Pabrik Gula* (2025). It features four distinct local Javanese traditions, depicted through various scenes. These traditions include the *Wayang* performance, the practice of making offerings (*sesajen*), the traditional *Kuda Lumping* dance, and the *Manten Tebu* ritual. *Wayang* performances, which show a diverse array of puppet characters, encapsulate a range of human traits and qualities. Additionally, the ritual of making offerings (*sesajen*)—typically placed in sacred sites—serves as a poignant reflection of the connection between humanity and the natural world. Moreover, the traditional *Kuda Lumping* dance, characterized by the trance-like states experienced by its performers, can be understood as a manifestation of strength. Lastly, the *Manten Tebu* tradition may be viewed as a symbol of success and prosperity.

These four traditions are predominantly found in Java, particularly in the regions of Central Java, Yogyakarta, and East Java, and they play a significant role in various activities and ceremonies, including those related to births, weddings, and cultural events. The commonality shared by these four Javanese traditions lies in their association with rituals that embody mysticism and a sense of the sacred. The viewpoint that equates these traditions with the supernatural presents a significant opportunity for their incorporation as scenes in the horror film *Pabrik Gula* to enhance the eerie atmosphere of the film. Additionally, they also serve to introduce film audiences, particularly the younger generation, with Javanese local traditions, thereby reflecting the cultural richness and pride of Indonesia. Finally, this study indicates that films have the potential to highlight diverse local traditions and cultural values, which are essential for enriching the audience's understanding. Additionally, it is anticipated that this study will inspire further investigation into the influence of representing local traditions in cinema on fostering a greater knowledge and appreciation of Indonesian culture.

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Comparative Analysis Between *Carpe Diem* and Japanese *Ma* through Disney and Ghibli's Animated movies

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Abstract

The Western idea of *Carpe Diem* and the Japanese idea of *ma* as they are portrayed in Disney and Studio Ghibli animated films are compared in this research. The study looks at how cinematic signals and narrative structures create culturally distinctive perceptions of time, action, and moral values using Christian Metz's film semiotics and Zepetneck's comparative literature paradigm. In order to examine *Carpe Diem* as a temporal ideology that sees time as a finite motivating factor propelling urgency, bravery, and quick action, the research focuses on two Disney movies: *The Lion King* (1994) and *Mulan* (1998). On the other hand, an analysis of *Spirited Away* (2001) and *Howl's Moving Castle* (2004) reveals the Japanese notion of *ma*, which emphasizes deliberate delay, patience, and meaning gained from unhurried experience and views time as a natural flow to be experienced rather than chased. The findings demonstrate that these differing constructions of time shape contrasting models of character agency: Disney narratives privilege decisive, action-oriented heroism, while Ghibli films foreground moral growth through stillness, restraint, and temporal openness. This study concludes that animated films function as culturally embedded semiotic systems through which divergent ethical orientations toward time and action are communicated to audiences.

Keyword: Carpe diem, comparative analysis, film semiotics, Japanese Ma

Introduction

Movies are an effective type of multimodal storytelling because they create immersive stories by skillfully combining visual images, audio components like conversation and soundtracks, textual overlays like subtitles or titles, and kinetic action (Kim, 2016). Movie transforming book narratives into visual storytelling that captivates large audiences and fusing literary complexity with cinematic techniques to impact culture and emotion, film serves as a dynamic type of popular literature (Duarte, 2010). As demonstrated by adaptations that increase interest in original texts or increase book sales, scholarly investigations show how films inherit literary characteristics like story and character while transcending them through visual imagery, inter-textuality, and parody (Boyd, et al, 2010). This interaction establishes film as a powerful medium that, like literature's linguistic power, transmits abstract concepts so iconic, creating cultural resonance across places and periods, rather than just as a derivative. In particular, popular films use narrative frameworks to enthrall audiences, emulating literary storytelling traditions while expanding their audience through emotional and visual appeal (Bettetini, 2018).

Significant differences between Western animation and Japanese anime in terms of narrative organization, character focus, and visual style, Japanese anime, on the other hand, frequently uses the *kishōtenketsu* four-act model introduction (*ki*), development (*shō*), twist (*ten*), and conclusion (*ketsu*) emphasizing ensemble casts or "*nakama*" (group bonds), internal emotional growth, slower pacing, philosophical themes, limited animation techniques like variable frame rates, and symbolic expressions (Oh, 2025). Western storytelling is based

on heroic victory and resolution through "good vs. evil," but anime emphasizes harmony, collectivism, and complex world-building without always needing a defined villain or unchanging hero. These differences reflect cultural foundations (Shah, et al, 2022). As a form of interconnectedness with the nature and harmony of their environment, Japanese movies, especially anime, usually apply "*Ma*," a concept that makes Japanese anime so different from its Western competition. The term "*Ma*" in Japanese animation refers to a significant void or pause in which stillness, silence, and negative space become active components that enhance mood and story rather than being merely pauses in action (Pilgrim, 1986). In Japanese anime, "*Ma*" can also refer to the artistic principle of interval, space, or emptiness, which includes temporal pauses in action or music, physical spaces between objects, and pauses that give stillness deep significance (Boyd, 2011). People might consider the Japanese "*Ma*" concept to be the same as the Western concept "*Carpe Diem*." *Carpe Diem*, which has its roots in Roman humanism, emphasizes seizing the present through intentional action, productivity, and immediate experience, framing time as a finite resource that must be actively utilized before it is lost (Wang, 2020). In contrast, "*Ma*" refers to the meaningful space or interval between events, sounds, movements, or moments, valuing stillness, pause, and absence as essential components of meaning (Yudanto & Setiawan, 2024). Despite this, both *Carpe Diem* and the Japanese concept of "*Ma*" engage with human awareness of time and the present. "*Ma*" urges attention to what happens in stillness and suspension rather than calling for action, letting significance develop organically and without coercion (Akama, 2015). *Ma* respects restraint and reflection, while *Carpe Diem* promotes intensity and involvement with the moment, implying that presence is attained by giving room for awareness to grow rather than by doing more (Salmon, et al, 2020). When taken as a whole, they show the cultural difference between actively appropriating time and receptively inhabiting it.

Disney movies, Such as *The Lion King* (1994) and *Mulan* (1998)"clearly expresses colorful spectacle, exemplify a "*Carpe Diem*" mentality through high-energy scenes, musical numbers, and continuous action that inspire individuals to embrace opportunities and follow ambitions fearlessly. In contrast, Studio Ghibli uses the "*Ma*" concept intentional pauses, silences, and space intervals to foster introspection and emotional depth. This is demonstrated in the silent train ride in *Spirited Away* (2001) and *Howl's Moving Castle* (2004). Those movies used as data to compares the Japanese "*Ma*" concept of meaningful pauses and spatial intervals with the Western "*Carpe Diem*" philosophy of urging instant action and seizing fleeting moments.

Theory and Method

This study, "Comparative Analysis Between "*Carpe Diem*" and Japanese "*Ma*" through Disney and Ghibli's Animated Movies," uses Christian Metz's semiotics of film, specifically the *grande syntagmatique*, to interpret narrative sequences that represent Western urgency in Disney's movies versus reflective moments in Ghibli's movies. It also uses comparative literature theories to explain cultural rhythmic differences. A Comparative literature studies literary works from many languages, cultures, countries, genres, and historical eras. It frequently draws inspiration from philosophy, history, film, and other artistic mediums. By contrasting texts from various traditions, colonial and postcolonial narratives, it highlights "literature without borders," allowing academics to examine common themes, influences, and cultural exchanges (De Zepetnek, 1998). By using structural linguistics specifically, Ferdinand de Saussure's ideas of signifier and signified to examine film as a system of signs rather than a direct language, Metz invented film semiotics. the "Grand Syntagmatique," a model that divides narrative films into eight independent segments, such as the alternating syntagma or descriptive syntagma, to show how sequences create meaning through

paradigmatic substitutions (vertical choices) and syntagmatic relations (horizontal combinations) (Metz's, 2011). By analyzing these disparate temporal aesthetics, the study highlights cultural narrative differences and connects philosophy and film studies to show how Ghibli welcomes peaceful stillness while Disney promotes urgency. This perspective enhances comprehension of the rhythmic impacts on international animation

Findings and Discussion

There are notable philosophical differences and similarities in animated storytelling between the Japanese concept of "Ma," the profound art of interval and negative space reflected in Studio Ghibli's contemplative masterpieces like *Spirited Away* and *Howl's Moving Castle* meanwhile the "Carpe Diem a Western imperative to seize fleeting moments, as embodied in Disney's vibrant, action-driven narratives like *The Lion King* and *Mulan* In literary, philosophical, and psychological research, the idea of carpe diem which comes from Horace's Odes has been thoroughly studied as an ethical command to cherish the present in the face of future uncertainty (Lill,1997). Carpe diem is interpreted in modern research articles and scholarly journals as a contemplative attitude that stresses existential responsibility, temporal awareness, and mindful engagement rather than just hedonistic immediacy. Philosophical and literary studies present carpe diem as a reaction to human frailty, urging people to take meaningful action within a finite amount of time instead of giving in to fatalism (Lill,1997). Carpe diem is a subtle call to intentional living that encourages people to take advantage of current opportunities while maintaining an ethical and intellectual awareness of human vulnerability, consequence, and purpose. Meanwhile what actually the Japanese idea of "Ma", is frequently translated as "interval," "gap," "pause," or "negative space," denotes a dynamic interplay of space, time, and absence that permeates philosophy, architecture, aesthetics, and everyday life. It emphasizes a charged void that is full of potential and relational meaning rather than just emptiness (Goda,2011). Comparing Carpe Diem and Ma in the study of Western and Japanese animated films, especially in film studies, cultural studies, visual semiotics, and cross-cultural film esthetics, is highly relevant academically.

Carpe Diem, which has its roots in Western tradition (especially Rome), highlights the importance of time, personal decision-making, and proactive action in the face of life's fleeting nature. Narrative arcs focused on character choices, conflict, and dramatic momentum such as when a character is motivated to "act now" before an opportunity is lost reflect this idea in film (Krznicaric, 2017). On the other hand, in Japanese animated movies, Ma is used as a narrative and aesthetic device to introduce significant silences, pauses, and empty spaces. Ma slows down cinematic time to allow the audience to experience moments, emotions, and atmosphere rather than pushing for faster action (Goda, 2011). Without the need for dialogue or action, Ma functions as a medium for promoting existential awareness, human-nature relationships, and introspection in the context of Japanese animation, especially Studio Ghibli's productions.

Force Vs Pause

Disney's high-energy animated films like *The Lion King*, *Mulan* and *Moana*, which give the spirit of carpe diem expressed through stories that value audacious momentum, decisive action, and the urgency of self-realization, Time is portrayed in these movies as a finite and urgent force that forces protagonists to face fear, accept responsibility, and take action before the opportunity passes. One way to conceptualize carpe diem is as a temporal force in a movie story that forces characters to take decisive action after hesitating (Guinness,2019). in compare with Studio Ghibli's contemplative works like *My Neighbor Totoro* *Howl's Moving Castle* and *Spirited Away*, where "Ma" embodies the profound interaction of time and space, especially as a purposeful pause that gives moments rhythm and meaning. This temporal

pause goes beyond simple silence, functioning as an active void that permits surrounding elements to resonate more deeply between actions, sounds, or thoughts much like the breath between musical notes or the hesitation in speech (Goda, 2011). "Ma" is a time-pause that promotes harmony by preventing overload, encouraging contemplation, and emphasizing the beauty of what is unsaid or undone. It has its roots in Zen philosophy and is evident in arts like theater, ikebana, and architecture not to mention movie (Har, 2025). The idea of Carpe Diem where time acts as a catalyst for proactive action is demonstrated throughout Simba's journey in Disney animation *The Lion King* (1994), as he is continually reminded to fulfill his moral obligations. Following the escape and denial phase denoted by the motto "*Hakuna Matata*," the storyline of the movie creates temporal tension as *Simba's* past, present, and future collide with *Rafiki*, *Nala*, and *Mufasa's* vision. These instances demonstrate that time cannot be stopped or avoided; rather, it necessitates quick decisions and tangible actions. The phrase "Remember who you are" acts as a catalyst for *Simba's* insight that delaying action would only make the moral imbalance in the Pride Lands worse, thus he must act now, go back, and face *Scar*. Thus, *The Lion King* represents Carpe Diem not merely as an invitation to enjoy life, but as an ethical imperative to take timely action for the restoration of social order and leadership responsibility. According to Carpe Diem, time is a finite resource that needs to be used to its fullest before it expires (Sneed, 1997).

In contrast "Ma" in Japanese philosophy sees time as a flow that should be lived and felt rather than pursued. The narrative and visual rhythm of Ghibli's *Spirited Away* (2001) effectively convey the Japanese idea of "Ma", a "pause" or passive time gap that permits quiet, waiting, and reflection (Goda, 2011). This movie frequently has scenes when time seems to slow down or stop, in contrast to stories that are motivated by a feeling of urgency. One such scene is when *Chihiro* sits lost in thought on a train crossing water, taking in the quiet surroundings without any overt conflict or dialogue. Instead of serving as narrative holes, these pauses serve as significant places when characters and viewers may progressively process events, feelings, and internal transformations. Instead of putting *Chihiro* under pressure to act right away, Time in *Spirited Away* allows her to develop by tolerance, composure, and acceptance of the process. As a result, *Ma* develops as a productive passive time a pause that reflects Japanese aesthetics that see silence as a source of meaning and is precisely the basis of moral development and character identification. "Ma" is a time-pause that promotes harmony by preventing overload, encouraging introspection, and accentuating the beauty of what is unsaid or undone (Bachnik, 2002). Additionally, in *Spirited Away* (2001), the concept of Jepang "Ma" as a "pause" when time functions in a passive manner is seen in the scene where *Chihiro* is with a family member at the beginning of the movie. Miyazaki composes this sequence with a leisurely tempo and shots that offer room to motions, the sound of eating, and facial expressions without clear spoken explanation, even if narratively it looks straightforward and modest in thoughtful conversation. Without the need for overt confrontation, this visual halt signifies the passage from the material world to the spirit realm and evokes a mild sensation of anxiety. Time lets the audience progressively experience the changes in atmosphere rather than pressuring them to behave quickly. Furthermore, the scene in which *Chihiro* cleans the body of the River Spirit similarly demonstrates "Ma" as the patient, repeated rhythm of labor without undue dramatic strain. Time is transformed into a meditative environment rather than just a tool for achieving objectives by concentrating on slow motions, pauses between operations, and the stillness that surrounds the cleaning process. "Ma" fosters the organic emergence of ethical concepts about tolerance, compassion, and balance with the natural world (Carter, 2001). Both instances demonstrate that pauses and passive time in *Spirited Away* are vital moments for moral development that are vital to *Chihiro's* character growth rather than empty gaps.

Two opposing philosophical stances in interpreting the presence of time in film narratives are revealed by contrasting the idea of time as a pause in the Japanese concept of “*Ma*” in *Spirited Away* (2001) with the idea of time as a driving force for action in *Carpe Diem* in *The Lion King* (1994). Time serves as a moral pressure in *The Lion King*, forcing people to take urgent action. The past, present, and future are interwoven to highlight the ethical failure that results from procrastination, so *Simba* must “seize the moment” to return and mend the damaged social order. In contrast, *Chihiro's* character growth takes place through waiting, stillness, and a reduced narrative pace in *Spirited Away*, which presents time as a passive and reflective stop. Time in Miyazaki's works permits awareness, empathy, and inner development to develop gradually rather than imposing quick action. Therefore, *Spirited Away* views time as a transitional place that permits silent and ongoing moral reform, whereas *The Lion King* depicts time as a catalyst for immediate change and vigorous action.

Deliberate Delays vs Quick Decisions

Carpe Diem, a Latin adage from Horace that means “seize the day,” encourages people to act quickly, bravely, and decisively by encouraging them to seize chances while life is short. This idea appears in cinema studies in stories where people take risks and act fearlessly in the face of limitations, encouraging personal development. *Carpe Diem's* original advice is to live in the moment while the time flies by, subtly promoting quick, courageous participation with life rather than reluctance (Wang, 2020). Because time is fleeting and beneficial use of the present is required, this admonition challenges fatalism by emphasizing prompt action. Its urge for decisiveness in poetry and fiction, where delays risk lost delights, is emphasized in scholarly interpretations. The idea of *Carpe Diem* is well expressed in Disney’s *Mulan* (1998) through a story that presents time as an urgent moral force requiring quick judgment, bravery, and prompt action. *Mulan's* decision to enlist in the army in her father’s name is an example of a determined seizing of the moment because there is no time for extended contemplation or indecision due to the looming conscription. *Mulan's* split-second tactical judgments during battle and her determination to disobey military tradition to warn the Emperor of impending danger are examples of how this urgency persists throughout the story, as survival and honor depend on quick thinking, flexibility, and audacious action (Smeyers, 2001). Instead of depicting action as careless, the movie links prompt decision-making with moral clarity, implying that bravery arises when people identify the crucial time and act quickly. Through *Mulan's* journey, *Carpe Diem* is reinterpreted as an ethical need to take decisive action when time offers a brief chance to defend others, question unfair conventions, and change one's fate, rather than just as a call to live completely.

In *Mulan* (1998), the concept of *Carpe Diem* is embodied through the narrative construction of time as a decisive force that urges characters toward rapid judgment, courage, and immediate action. The announcement of imperial conscription creates an urgent temporal condition in which delay is not an option, compelling *Mulan* to make a swift and life-altering decision to replace her father in the army. This moment illustrates *Carpe Diem* as the recognition of a critical present in which moral responsibility demands instant action rather than cautious postponement (Smeyers, 2001). Instead of depicting action as careless, the movie links prompt decision-making with moral clarity, implying that bravery arises when people identify the crucial time and act quickly. Through *Mulan's* journey, *Carpe Diem* is reinterpreted as an ethical need to take decisive action when time offers a brief chance to defend others, question unfair conventions, and change one's fate, rather than just as a call to live completely.

The notion of “*Ma*” in Japanese philosophy and aesthetics is a deliberate wait in which restraint, patience, and the rejection of hurry become sources of meaning rather than indicators of passivity (Goda, 2011). *Ma* is the deliberate gap or pause between sounds,

activities, or occurrences when meaning is revealed by paying attention to pause and absence (Watanabe, et al, 2008). According to this paradigm, meaning is created by giving oneself time to breathe, which enhances consciousness and allows for a more complete perception of relationships—between oneself, others, and the environment Studio *Ghibli* uses a narrative rhythm in *Howl's Moving Castle* (2004) that emphasizes patience, deliberate delay, and the development of meaning via leisurely experience in order to express the Japanese notion of “*Ma*”. Character development, especially in *Sophie's* transformation, is shaped by the film's use of patient observation, repetition, and periods of silence rather than relentless urgency or linear growth. Her emotional development takes place through gradual acceptance, everyday household gestures, and persistent attention to people within the moving castle rather than through abrupt acts of heroism. Time seems to slow down during these temporal pauses, which invite both the actors and the spectator to stay in the present moment without feeling compelled to find a quick solution. Examples of these sequences include traveling over wide landscapes, cleaning the castle, or just sitting in silence.

The scenes when *Sophie* discreetly cleans and rearranges the floating castle have languid tempo, little conversation, and a focus on everyday gestures rather than dramatic action. Domestic chores are given time to linger, transforming routine movement into a contemplative pause where *Sophie* progressively gains self-assurance and a sense of community. Another instance of “*Ma*” is found in the recurring walking scenes across open landscapes, particularly when *Sophie* travels alone or with *Howl* in silence, allowing the environment and the passage of time to speak without narrative urgency. By encouraging reflection and emotional attunement, these pauses add emotional significance without immediately advancing the story. The concept that comprehension and acceptance cannot be hurried is further reinforced by allowing *Sophie's* physical age to gradually change from youth to old age without any quick explanation. Through these scenes, *Howl's Moving Castle* portrays “*Ma*” as a temporal ethic in which delay and patience are necessary conditions for moral clarity, personal development, and empathy rather than barriers to advancement. This shows how meaning arises most potently when time is given room to breathe rather than being pushed forward.

Comparing *Mulan* (1998) and *Howl's Moving Castle* (2004), which both represent a different philosophy of time and action, highlights the contrast between *Carpe Diem* and the Japanese notion of “*Ma*”. *Carpe Diem* is shown in *Mulan* via a story of urgency in which time necessitates prompt decision-making, bravery, and prompt action. This is especially evident when *Mulan* quickly decides to replace her father in the army, turning reluctance into moral conviction. The movie presents decisive action as an ethical need, implying that prompt response during times of crisis forges fortitude and identity. *Howl's Moving Castle*, on the other hand, describes the Japanese concept of “*Ma*” as a deliberate wait in which self-improvement depends on patience, self-control, and the rejection of hurry. *Sophie's* development occurs through peaceful routines, pauses, and leisurely exchanges that enable meaning to gradually emerge rather than through hurry. Together, these movies show two conflicting but complementing temporal ethics: *Howl's Moving Castle* respects the moral understanding and depth that emerge when time is allowed to evolve naturally, whereas *Mulan* promotes action taken in the present.

Conclusion

This study indicates that two essentially distinct cultural constructs of time, action, and moral agency are revealed by comparing *Carpe Diem* with the Japanese idea of “*Ma*” in *Disney* and

Studio *Ghibli's* animated films. The research shows how cinematic signs such as narrative pacing, visual rhythm, character movement, and temporal structuring serve as meaning-making systems that encode various philosophies of time, drawing on Christian Metz's film semiotics. *Carpe Diem* is expressed as a temporal ideology in *The Lion King* (1994) and *Mulan* (1998), where time is seen as a finite and urgent force that drives motivation, moral urgency, and decisive action, inspiring characters to act quickly, bravely, and directly in times of crisis. On the other hand, the analysis of *Howl's Moving Castle* (2004) and *Spirited Away* (2001) shows that the Japanese concept of "Ma" emphasizes deliberate delay, patience, and the emergence of meaning through unhurried experience, constructing time as a natural, flowing continuum to be inhabited rather than conquered.

Utilizing Zepetneck's comparative literature framework, this cross-cultural comparison highlights how divergent narrative temporalities shape differing moral orientations: *Disney* films privilege action-oriented heroism grounded in immediacy, while *Ghibli* films foreground ethical maturation through stillness, restraint, and temporal openness. In the end, the results highlight the fact that cinematic depictions of time are not neutral but rather culturally entrenched value systems that have a significant impact on how moral development, bravery, and responsibility are conceived and communicated through animated film tales.

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Gendered Pragmatics: Flouting of Maxims in Female Conversations in Tilik

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Abstract

This study investigates the ways in which female characters in the Indonesian short film *Tilik* flout Grice's conversational maxims and how these pragmatic deviations reflect gendered communication patterns. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach, eight selected utterances from the film's dialogue were analyzed, focusing on interactions involving characters such as Bu Tejo, Yu Ning, and Bu Tri. The analysis identified instances of flouting across all four Gricean maxims: quantity, quality, relevance, and manner, with the maxim of quality occurring most frequently. These pragmatic strategies generated conversational implicatures that conveyed implicit moral evaluations and social criticism, particularly toward the character Dian. To enrich the interpretative framework, the study incorporated Tannen's (1990) theory of gendered communication, emphasizing features such as indirectness, gossip, indirect criticism, and shared assumptions in women's discourse. The findings demonstrate that maxim flouting in *Tilik* corresponds closely with these gendered communicative strategies, serving as a means of reinforcing social solidarity while simultaneously negotiating social norms. Overall, the study reveals that flouting conversational maxims functions as a culturally embedded and gendered pragmatic practice through which women construct meaning and express judgment indirectly.

Keywords: Flouting maxims, Grice's maxims, implicature, gendered pragmatics, *Tilik*.

Introduction

Language functions as the fundamental medium through which humans communicate and construct social interaction (Amberg & Vause, 2009). It enables individuals to convey ideas, emotions, intentions, and experiences, thereby facilitating cooperation and mutual understanding within society (Mailani et al., 2022). As inherently social beings, humans rely on communication to exchange information and maintain interpersonal relationships. Communication refers to the process through which messages are transmitted between individuals or groups, involving both verbal and non-verbal elements (Laghadze, 2024). Successful communication occurs when the intended meaning of a message is accurately interpreted by the recipient, rather than merely when grammatically correct forms are produced (Alejandro, 2024). In this sense, effective communication requires shared understanding between interlocutors. Braga & Logan, (2018) emphasize that communication is complete only when the receiver understands the sender's intended message. Clarity relies on pragmatics, as it encompasses the social context and conversational norms that guide information exchange, ensuring proper interpretation and preventing miscommunication. One influential framework that explains these norms is Grice's cooperative principle, which outlines how speakers collaboratively contribute to meaningful interaction.

The cooperative principle plays a crucial role in maintaining coherence and minimizing misunderstanding in everyday conversations (LIU, n.d.). Grice (1975) proposed four conversational maxims that regulate effective communication. The maxim of quantity requires speakers to provide sufficient but not excessive information. The maxim of quality emphasizes truthfulness and discourages speakers from conveying information lacking evidence. The maxim of relation requires contributions to remain relevant to the topic of discussion, while the maxim of manner encourages clarity, brevity, and the avoidance of ambiguity. Together, these maxims function as practical guidelines that support cooperative interaction. Nevertheless, (Bi, 2019) in natural discourse, speakers often violate cooperative principles, either intentionally to achieve specific communicative effects or unintentionally due to various factors. These violations (Jegade, 2020) can lead to conversational implicature, enhancing the richness and complexity of verbal communication.

Beyond general conversational norms, communicative practices are also shaped by social factors, particularly gender. Gender differences influence how speakers observe or flout conversational maxims in interaction (Tran & Tran, 2020; Okamoto & Morimoto, 2022). Tannen (1990) argues that men and women typically develop distinct communicative styles due to differing social expectations and roles. Women's discourse often emphasizes relational connection, cooperation, and indirectness, whereas men's communication tends to focus on status, autonomy, and direct expression. According to Tannen (1990), women's conversational behavior is commonly characterized by four primary strategies: indirectness, gossip, indirect criticism, and shared assumptions.

Indirectness refers to the practice of expressing intentions or evaluations implicitly rather than directly. Speakers convey meaning through hints, narratives, or rhetorical expressions that allow listeners to infer the intended message. This strategy serves to maintain politeness, avoid confrontation, and preserve social harmony (Grainger & Mills, 2016). For instance, instead of explicitly accusing someone of infidelity, a speaker may allude to changes in behavior, enabling the listener to draw conclusions independently.

Gossip, in this framework, does not solely imply negative talk but rather involves discussing absent individuals as a means of sharing information and reinforcing social bonds. Within female groups, gossip functions as a mechanism for establishing solidarity, transmitting social norms, and constructing shared perspectives (Mohammad & Vásquez, 2015). Tannen (1990) describes gossip as a form of rapport talk, emphasizing its role in strengthening interpersonal connections rather than merely exchanging factual information.

Indirect criticism involves expressing disapproval implicitly rather than through overt judgment. This may occur through storytelling, comparisons, or ironic remarks that suggest evaluation without directly stating it. Such a strategy allows speakers to communicate criticism while minimizing social tension and maintaining relational harmony (Burgers, 2023). For example, Indirect criticism is prevalent in Japanese workplaces, utilizing strategies like suggestions, invitations, or questions to express disapproval subtly. This approach helps maintain politeness and relational stability, minimizing social tension while effectively addressing shortcomings without direct confrontation (Santoso et al., 2024).

Shared assumptions rely on collective knowledge and common cultural understanding among conversational participants. Speakers often make references that presume mutual

awareness, thereby conveying meaning efficiently and reinforcing group cohesion. Statements such as “You know how that kind of person is” exemplify this strategy, as they depend on shared social experiences for interpretation (Jiang, n.d.).

Supporting these perspectives, Lakoff (1973) notes that women’s language frequently includes hedges, tag questions, and polite expressions, reflecting a tendency toward maintaining interpersonal harmony. These linguistic features often shape how women manage conversational implicature and flout maxims in socially sensitive situations (Kamal & Mhamed, 2023). Furthermore, West and Zimmerman (1987) argue that gendered communication patterns arise from differential socialization processes and power relations. Their social power theory suggests that individuals with less social authority are more likely to adopt polite and indirect communicative strategies, influencing how conversational norms are negotiated in interaction.

This study examines the flouting of Grice’s conversational maxims in the Indonesian short film *Tilik*, with particular attention to female conversational practices. It seeks to identify the types of maxim flouting that occur and to analyze the pragmatic meanings generated through implicature. Additionally, the study explores how these pragmatic strategies reflect gendered communication patterns as conceptualized by Tannen (1990). By integrating Grice’s theory of conversational implicature with gendered communication theory, this research highlights how indirectness, gossip, and shared assumptions function as pragmatic resources in female interaction.

While previous studies have explored maxim flouting and gendered discourse separately, limited research has examined their intersection within Indonesian cinematic contexts. This study addresses this gap by analyzing how pragmatic deviations from cooperative norms operate within culturally situated female conversations in *Tilik*. Through this integrated approach, the research offers empirical insights into the role of gender in shaping pragmatic meaning and contributes to a deeper understanding of conversational strategies in Indonesian social discourse.

Method

This study applies a qualitative descriptive research method to examine, describe, and analyze how female characters in the dialogue flout maxims and generate implicatures. The data source is the short film *Tilik*, released by Ravacana Films in 2018, which is available on YouTube. The data consist of eight utterances spoken by female characters that flout Grice’s conversational maxims. These utterances were selected for their clear examples of maxim flouting and potential implicatures, particularly instances reflecting gender-based conversational strategies.

Data were collected through documentary techniques. These techniques involved several steps. First, the researcher conducted multiple viewings of the film to understand the context of the female characters’ dialogue. Next, all spoken utterances were transcribed into written form, with a particular focus on conversations involving female characters. From these transcriptions, utterances showing signs of implicature and maxim violations were selected and categorized according to the type of maxim flouted. They were also marked with timestamps to ensure accuracy and accessibility. Finally, the utterances were classified, interpreted, and

analyzed using Grice's theory of non-observance maxims and the concept of implicature. Tannen's theories were also applied to identify gender-based pragmatic conversational patterns.

Results and Discussion

As Grice (1975) explains, flouting conversational maxims occurs when speakers purposely disregard the cooperative principle in order to imply a different meaning beyond the literal interpretation of their utterance. In this study, eight utterances from the short film *Tilik* were found to flout Grice's maxims. The analysis revealed that the characters flouted all four types of maxims. The researcher summarized the data findings as follows:

Table 1. Data of Flouting Maxims in *Tilik* Short Film

No	Types of Flouting Maxim	Total
1	Flouting the Maxim of Quality	5
2	Flouting the Maxim of Quantity	5
3	Flouting the Maxim of Relation/ Relevance	3
4	Flouting the Maxim of Manner	2
Total		15

The table above shows that the maxim of quality was flouted five times, maxim of quantity was also flouted five times, maxim of relation was flouted in three times, and maxim of manner was flouted two times.

1. Flouting the Maxim of Quality

This type of flouting occurs when the speaker makes a statement that is not true or expresses something that is believed to be false or misleading. The dialogue example below illustrates the flouting of maxim quality.

Data 1

Yu Ning : *Njenengan ki kok yo mbok ora waton nek ngendikan*
(You shouldn't just say things carelessly like that.)

Bu Tejo : *Waton pie lo Yu Ning ki, la saiki ngomongke Dian kabeh je, neng facebook we yo do rame ngono kui lo, deloken komen-komene*
(What do you mean carelessly, Yu Ning? The whole neighborhood's talking about her! It's all over Facebook too, just look at the comments.)

Bu tejo : *lo layo, neng saiki cobo do mikir aku ki bukane nyilikke bondone keluargane Dian lo yo, cetho ket cilik Dian ki ditinggal minggat karo bapakne, yo. Ibune we ndue sawah we rasepiroo, mulakno rampung SMA dewekne ora kuliah, nembe nyambut gawe, handphone anyar, motor anyar, hoooh ra?*

(Exactly. Now think about it for a second. I'm not trying to look down on Dian's family or anything, okay? But let's be real, her dad ran off when she was little, her mom only has that tiny rice field. That's why after high school, she didn't go to college. And now suddenly she's got a new phone, a new motorbike... right?)

(03:27)

In this segment, Bu Tejo makes several assumptions and speculative statements about Dian's background and financial situation. Although she presents her statements with confidence, the statements are not supported by verified facts. In the dialogue, Yu Ning warns Bu Tejo not to speak carelessly: "You shouldn't say things so carelessly." This suggests that Bu Tejo has made a serious accusation. However, instead of responding with evidence or clarity, Bu Tejo justifies her statements by referring to Facebook gossip: "The whole neighborhood is talking about her! It's all over Facebook too, just look at the comments. She then continues with a series of unverified personal accusations about Dian's family history, implying that Dian's new phone and motorcycle must have come from morally questionable means: "her father ran away...her mother only has a small rice field...she didn't go to college...and now she has a new phone, a new motorcycle."

In this segment, Bu Tejo makes several assumptions and speculative statements about Dian's background and financial situation. Although she presents her statements with confidence, the statements are not supported by verified facts.

This conversation illustrates a clear for the maxim of quality, as Bu Tejo presents speculation as if it were fact, without providing any real evidence. She uses social media gossip and assumptions based on her own observations as justification, which do not meet the standard of truthfulness required by this maxim.

The implication behind Bu Tejo's words is that she suspects Dian of doing something inappropriate or immoral to afford a lifestyle that doesn't seem to match her background. Even though Bu Tejo doesn't say it directly, her use of background information and suggestive questions leads others to think that way. By not saying it directly, she delivers a strong judgment in a casual way, showing how people can use indirect language to criticize others without directly accusing them.

Data 2

Bu Tejo : *Eh yu sam kiro-kiro menurutmu dian ki nganggo susuk ora?*
(Yu Sam, do you think Dian might be using *susuk*?)

Yu Sam : *Ketoke hoo, iso mungkin iso ora sih bu, la ncen dian kan bocahe wes ayu, kan akeh seng seneng to?*
(Maybe. It could be true, or maybe not. She is already pretty, and many people are attracted to her)

Bu Tejo : *nek modal ayu ki ra cukup, iyo ra? wong lanang kabeh dadi seneng ki yo pesti nganggo susuk barang.*
(Just being pretty isn't enough, right? So many men are interested, she must be using *susuk*)

(16:34)

In this dialogue, Bu Tejo starts the conversation by asking Dian if she uses *susuk*, a mystical practice believed to make a person more attractive. Although Yu Sam responds carefully, stating that it may or may not be true, Bu Tejo immediately strengthens the assumption, saying that physical beauty is not enough to attract many men and implying that Dian must be using *susuk*. Bu Tejo flouts the maxim of quality by presenting an unverified

belief and cultural myth as a reasonable explanation. Her claim lacks factual evidence and is based only on speculation and social stereotypes. The implicature created suggests that Dian's attractiveness is unnatural and morally questionable. This implies negative judgments about her character while Bu Tejo avoiding a direct accusation.

Furthermore, according to Tannen's (1990) theory of gendered communication, these utterances reflect a pattern of indirect criticism through implicature. In this pattern, female speakers imply judgment without direct confrontation. This aligns with women's tendency to maintain politeness and social harmony while expressing criticism. Additionally, Bu Tejo's statements function as part of gossip for social bonding, a feature of female communication that strengthens group cohesion by sharing morally ambiguous narratives. Her criticism is grounded in shared assumptions and culturally familiar examples, which reinforce group solidarity while indirectly marginalizing Dian. According to (Tannen, 1990), women tend to maintain social relationships by using indirect communication, such as implicature, instead of direct confrontation.

2. Flouting the Maxim of Quantity

The quantity maxim is flouted when the speaker provides too much information. It is also flouted when the speaker provides too little information that does not meet the needs of the conversation. The dialogue example below illustrates the flouting of maxim quantity.

Data 3

Bu Tejo: *Dian ki gaweane opo yo? Kok jare tau omong yen gaweane ra genah ngono kui. Kan mesakke bu Lurah to, yen nganti ndue mantu gaweane ora nggenah ngono kui lo yo. Ono seng tau ngomong yen gaweane Dian ki mlebu metu hotel ngono kui lo. Terus neng mall karo wong lanang barang ki hahaha gawean opo yo?*

What does Dian actually do for a living? I've heard people saying her job isn't exactly respectable. If Bu Lurah ends up with a daughter-in-law whose job is like that, it'd be such a shame. Some people say she's always in and out of hotels, you know. And she goes to the mall with different men too. So really, what kind of job does she have?)

(01:21)

This utterance flouts the maxim of quantity because the speaker provides more information than necessary to answer the first question. The question "What does Dian actually do for a living?" could be answered with a simple response. Instead of seeking explanation, Bu Tejo adds speculative and negative details about Dian, such as rumors of her going in and out of hotels and being seen at the mall with men. These details are unnecessary for identifying Dian's job, but Bu Tejo uses them to expand the topic into a negative narrative. By providing too much information, Bu Tejo directs the listener toward suspicion and judgment. This over-informative response violates the maxim of quantity and functions pragmatically to construct a negative social image of Dian through implication rather than direct accusation.

Data 4

Yu Ning: *Bu tri, lawong saiki mlaku-mlaku neng mall salahe opo to?*

(Bu Tri! What's wrong with just hanging out at the mall)

Bu Tri: *Loh wong mlaku-mlakune ceto karo om-om yo bu tejo?*

(Well, she's clearly hanging out with some older guy. Right, Bu Tejo?)
Bu Tejo: *Yo ramungkin mung mlaku-mlaku tok karo nyambi to kui*
(There's no way it's just hanging out, she's definitely doing something on
the side too)
(15:53)

The conversation begins with Yu Ning questioning the assumption that hanging out at the mall is suspicious in itself: "What's wrong with just hanging out at the mall?" However, instead of providing a direct and proportional response, Bu Tri escalates the issue by inserting a specific but vague claim: "She's clearly hanging out with an older guy. This statement introduces an unnecessary detail that shifts the narrative from an innocent activity to something morally questionable without any real evidence. Then Bu Tejo further exaggerates by saying: "There's no way she's just hanging out, she's definitely doing something on the side too" Here she adds more information than the situation requires and puts it in a way that invites suspicion and judgment.

Bu Tejo strengthens this implication by saying: "There's no way she's just hanging out, she's definitely doing something on the side, too." This statement amplifies suspicion without directly accusing Dian, leading the listener to assume immoral behavior on her. The indirect comment creates a strong implicature, conveying a negative assumption about Dian's actions without stating it explicitly. This strategy enables Bu Tejo to influence others' perceptions while avoiding direct responsibility for the accusation.

From a gendered pragmatic perspective, this conversation illustrates several features of the female conversational style, as described by Tannen (1990). First, the interaction demonstrates indirect criticism through implicature, both Bu Tri and Bu Tejo avoid directly accusing Dian but still imply a strong moral judgment. This indirectness is a face-saving strategy that maintains social harmony while expressing criticism. Second, the conversation reflects the use of gossip for social bonding, as the discussion about Dian takes place among women and serves to affirm shared values and reinforce group cohesion. Finally, shared assumptions such as "older guy" and "something on the side" rely on shared assumptions that are culturally understood by the participants. These indirect, suggestive statements depend on mutual cultural knowledge and unspoken norms, making them effective tools for covertly conveying criticism and building group solidarity without overt conflict. This segment illustrates how female conversational strategies, shaped by pragmatics and gendered norms, create social meaning within a cultural context.

3. Flouting the Maxim of Relation

The relation maxim is being flouted when the speaker responds in a way that is not relevant to the current topic by giving responses that are unrelated or off-topic. The dialogue example below illustrates the flouting of maxim relation.

Data 5

Bu Tejo: *oh saiki aku ngerti kenopo Bu Lurah ki nganti ngeblak meneh*
(Ah, now I understand why Bu Lurah is sick again.)

Yu Sam: *la ngopo?* (Why's that?)

Bu Tejo: *Mesti goro-goro mikirke anake yen due hubungan karo Dian yo ra?*
(She's probably sick from worrying about her son getting involved with Dian. Right?)

(14:33)

In this example, Bu Tejo says, "Ah, now I understand why Bu Lurah is sick again," to which Yu Sam responds by asking, "Why's that?" However, instead of offering a medically or contextually relevant answer, Bu Tejo responds with a personal speculation: "She's probably sick from worrying about her son getting involved with Dian. Right?" Her response does not directly address Bu Lurah's illness in any factual or health-related way, but instead changes the subject to gossip about Dian's rumored relationship with Bu Lurah's son.

This is a clear flouting of the relation maxim, as the response is not appropriate or relevant to the original concern, which is Bu Lurah's physical health. Instead, Bu Tejo uses the moment to insert her own assumption, linking Bu Lurah's condition to Dian's presence, which is a personal and speculative topic.

The implication behind Bu Tejo's statement is that Dian is a negative influence and a source of trouble for others, even someone as respected as Bu Lurah. Although this is never directly stated, her unrelated response creates the impression that Dian is the cause of trouble, supporting negative assumptions about her character.

Data 6

Yu Ning : *Bu Tejo ki nopo e? gor meneng wae. Wes mau ra gelem ngewangi nyurung trek. Saiki mong meneng wae. Ojo-ojo bener mau ki duit seng dikei gotrek kui mau duit seng ra berkah yo to?*

(What's wrong with you, Bu Tejo? You've been silent the whole time. First, you didn't want to help push the truck, and now you're just being quiet. Could the money Gotrek gave you earlier have been dirty money?)

Bu Tejo: *Astaghfirullah, Ya Allah.*

Yu Ning: *Seng ngarani Dian nganggo susuk barang. Ki, marakke trek e Gotrek mau mogok to?*

(You were the one accusing Dian of using *susuk*. Maybe that's why Gotrek's truck broke down, huh?)

Bu Tejo: *Eh Yu Ning, lek mu ngomong ki ati-ati lho ya.*

(Hey, Yu Ning, you should be careful when you talk)

(18:25)

In this dialogue, Yu Ning flouts the maxim of relation. The first problem is that Bu Tejo doesn't say anything and won't help push the truck. This is a practical and situational problem. However, Yu Ning suddenly changes the subject by linking these actions to moral causes, such as dirty money that she gave to Gotrek and her accusations of Dian uses *susuk*. These assumptions are irrelevant to the mechanical problem of the truck breaking down. By introducing these unrelated moral issues, Yu Ning violates the maxim of relation.

From Tannen's (1990) perspective on gendered communication, Bu Tejo's utterance shows patterns often seen in female discourse. First, she uses implicature to indirectly criticize Dian, implying that she is the cause of stress and illness without making a direct accusation. This strategy enables her to express her opinion while maintaining surface-level politeness and social harmony. Second, the conversation serves as an act of gossip for social bonding as Bu Tejo builds rapport with the other women by sharing morally charged commentary about a mutual acquaintance. Finally, her use of the rhetorical question "Right?" and her assumption that others will understand her implication relies on shared assumptions. Female speakers often draw on collective cultural knowledge to communicate implicitly in this way. These gendered strategies highlight how Bu Tejo indirectly conveys negative perceptions of Dian without confronting her, making the gossip appear casual yet powerful in shaping listeners' interpretations.

4. Flouting the Maxim of Manner

This kind of flouting happens when the speaker uses expressions that are unclear or ambiguous. The dialogue example below illustrates the flouting of maxim manner.

Data 7

Bu Tejo: *Heh, aku ki dadi kelingan to, aku ki pernah nyonangi Dian muntah-muntah pas kui ki wayah bengi.*

(I remember seeing Dian throwing up late at night.)

Bu Tri : *tenan ora e bu?*

(Seriously?)

Bu tejo: *Heh tenan! Paskui aku ki bali seko pengajian, hooh to? Neng cedak omahe mbah Dar kae lo, nggon enggok-enggokan kae, kae lak petengan to? Nah ono wong muntah-muntah seko nduwur motor, bareng tak cedaki, la kok Dian. Bukane aroh-aroh aku malah nginggati cobo, hih kui ki nak ora mergo muntah meteng nopo kok dadak nginggati aku cobo, hooh ra?*

(Yes, it is. I was on my way home from religious gathering, near the dark corner in Mbah Dar's house. I saw someone throwing up on a motorbike. When I got closer, it turned out to be Dian. Instead of greeting me, she immediately left. If it was not because of pregnancy, why would she leave so suddenly? Right?)

(05:51)

This dialogue can be categorized as a flouting of the maxim of manner because Bu Tejo delivers her message in an indirect and ambiguous manner. She never explicitly states her accusation, instead ends her utterance with a rhetorical question: "If it was not because of pregnancy, why would she leave so suddenly?" This forces the listener to infer the intended meaning. Such ambiguity violates the maxim of manner, which requires speakers to be clear, orderly, and unambiguous. By avoiding direct accusation and relying on implication, Bu Tejo guides the audience toward a specific conclusion. This lack of clarity enables her to express suspicion without taking explicit responsibility for the accusation. Thus, flouting the maxim of manner functions as a pragmatic strategy to convey judgment indirectly.

Data 8

Yu Sam: *Bu Tejo, emange nak muntah-muntah ki mergo meteng opo piye? La iki*

buktine, Yu Nah mutah-mutah to mau ngene yo ora meteng.

(Bu Tejo, come on... just 'cause someone throws up doesn't automatically mean she's pregnant, right? Look at Yu Nah, she threw up too, and no one's calling her pregnant)

Bu Tejo: *Oalah yu Sam, Yu Sam koyo aku ki ora tau meteng wae, yo jelas bedo toyo, wong mutah mergo meteng karo wong muntah mergo masuk angin ki. Hooh ra? Bedo banget kui*

(Oh please, Yu Sam.. like I don't know what pregnancy feels like. I've been through it, okay? Pregnancy puke and regular puke? It's totally different)

(06:39)

In this segment, Bu Tejo responds to Yu Sam's logical observation with a response that lacks clarity and relies on subjective, experimental ambiguity. Yu Sam doubts Bu Tejo's assumption that throwing up is a sign of pregnancy by pointing out that Yu Nah also threw up, but no one accused her of being pregnant. Instead of giving a clear, logical response, Bu Tejo responds with an emotionally charged and ambiguous comparison: "Pregnancy throwing up and regular throwing up? It's totally different." However, she fails to explain what the difference actually is, nor does she provide any evidence to support her claim. The statement is based on her own personal experience and assumes that others will simply agree without questioning the logic.

This goes against the principle of manner because Bu Tejo's statement is unclear, lacks specificity, and cannot be objectively verified. Instead of clarifying the difference between types of throw-up, she uses emotional emphasis ("you act like I've never been pregnant") to shut down the argument without proper reasoning. Her language creates an impression of certain knowledge while avoiding explanation.

The implication here is that Dian is probably pregnant, based simply on the symptom of throwing up, but Bu Tejo avoids stating this directly. Instead, she uses an ambiguous justification based on her "motherly instinct" and life experience to imply a serious claim without taking full responsibility for it. This tactic makes the gossip seem more credible while maintaining a level of pragmatic justification. Through this flouting, Bu Tejo indirectly validates her narrative that Dian is morally questionable, continuing the pattern of judgment without factual clarity.

This moment clearly reflects several features of female conversation. First, Bu Tejo uses implicature to indirectly criticize, expressing judgment without stating it directly. Second, she expects the other women to accept her reasoning based on mutual cultural understanding about pregnancy and morality, reflecting shared assumptions. Finally, this interaction is an example of gossip as social bonding because her statement contributes to a collective narrative about Dian, strengthening the group's moral viewpoint. Through her ambiguous language, Bu Tejo not only strengthens her social role, but also continues to label Dian as a socially problematic figure all without providing any concrete evidence.

Conclusion

The analysis of the dialogues in the short film *Tilik* shows that the characters frequently flout Grice's conversational maxims in order to convey implicit messages and social judgments. A total of eight utterances were identified as flouting maxims. Among these, the maxim of

quality and the maxim of quantity were most frequently flouted. There were five such instances each. The maxim of relation was flouted three times. The maxim of manner was flouted twice.

These floutings were often intentional, used as rhetorical strategies to express suspicion, criticism, or implication without making direct accusations. Most of the floutings served to question or implicate Dian's character, reflecting how gossip and indirect language work in social interactions. The implicatures created by these utterances reveal underlying assumptions, judgments, and power dynamics between characters, especially in how information is shared and interpreted in a social setting.

In addition to Grice's theory, the study employed Tannen's (1990) gender-based pragmatic framework to examine how female characters create meaning through implicit conversational strategies. The analysis revealed that the characters consistently employed gendered features, including indirect criticism, gossip as a means of bonding, shared assumptions, and indirectness. Indirect criticism through implicature was the most frequent pattern observed in all analyzed data segments. It was often accompanied by gossip as a form of social bonding that helped maintain group cohesion and shared moral judgments. Shared assumptions were also commonly used, particularly in ambiguous or culturally specific statements that relied on implicit understanding among the women.

These gendered strategies aligned with the flouting of maxims, creating nuanced forms of communication in which meaning was shaped more by implication than by direct expression. The female characters' speech patterns reflect personal attitudes and wider social norms related to femininity, morality, and relational communication in Indonesian culture. Overall, the combination of flouting Gricean maxims and gender-based pragmatic patterns highlights how the women in Tilik negotiate power, solidarity, and judgment through layered, indirect communication. This underscores the importance of examining both linguistic principles and gendered contexts to fully understand how meaning is constructed in everyday conversation.

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An Analysis of Derivational Morphemes in the Lyrics of Sabrina Carpenter's Album *Emails I Can't Send Fwd*

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Abstract

This study investigates the derivational morphemes found in the lyrics of Sabrina Carpenter's album, aim to identify the types of derivational morphemes used and analyze how they influence meaning and word class. Employing a qualitative descriptive method, the research presents the data through detailed explanations without numerical analysis, enabling a deeper understanding of word formation and shifts in grammatical categories. The data were taken from selected songs and analyzed using Katamba's theory of derivational morphology. The findings reveal 36 derivational morphemes, consisting of 8 prefixes and 28 suffixes, with no infixes present. Suffixes emerge as the most dominant type, particularly forms such as *-ness* and *-tion*, which commonly create new lexical categories. The analysis also shows that derivational processes significantly affect meaning, as seen in examples like *kind* becoming *unkind*, which produces an opposite or extended nuance. Overall, the study emphasizes the crucial role of derivational morphology in shaping vocabulary and enhancing linguistic creativity in song lyrics, offering valuable insights for students, teachers, and future researchers in morphology.

Keywords: Derivational morphemes, prefix, song lyrics, suffix, word class

Introduction

Analyzing song lyrics has become a common method for understanding how language works in everyday life. Sabrina Carpenter's album "emails I can't send fwd." has gotten a lot of notice. This album features emotive songs about personal experiences, relationships, and self-improvement. Songs like "Feather," "Nonsense," and "Because I Liked a Boy" have gone viral on social media platforms such as TikTok and YouTube, so many listeners are familiar with the lyrics. This emphasizes the importance of studying how the words in these lyrics are generated and how they influence meaning. Given how many people listen to and repeat the lyrics, it is critical to grasp the structure underlying them. One fascinating approach is to examine how words are constructed using prefixes and suffixes, known as derivational morphemes. This study is unique in that it employs a fresh and popular album rather than old or classic materials. It emphasizes how current music reflects contemporary language use. This also demonstrates that studying song lyrics is beneficial for comprehending how words change and evolve. As a result, this research focuses on morphology.

Morphology is the study of word structure (Katamba, 1993). One important element in morphology is the root. The root of a word is unchangeable (Rugaiyah, 2018). Morphology also examines derivational morphemes, especially affixes including prefixes, suffixes, and infixes. An affix is a morpheme that appears only when it is linked to another morpheme (Finegan, 2008). Prefixes appear before a root, such as *re-*, *un-*, or *in-*. Suffixes appear after a root, such as *-ly*, *-er*, *-ist*, *-s*, *-ing*, and *-ed*. Infixes are inserted into the root itself. Adding an affix to the root can result in a new meaning, which is known as a derivational morpheme.

Morphemes are the smallest units in words that correlate with differences in meaning or grammatical structure (Katamba, 1993). By adding a morpheme, the base or the word class can change. For example, *real* becomes *really*: *real* is an adjective and *really* is an adverb.

Morphemes are classified into two categories: bound morphemes and free morphemes. Bound morphemes are divided into derivational and inflectional morphemes, while free morphemes are divided into lexical and function words. Derivational morphemes produce new terms by modifying the base word's meaning or word class. Meanwhile, inflectional morphemes express grammatical functions without modifying a word's syntactic category (Toruan, 2023). In this study, the main focus is on derivational morphemes. For example, the adjective happy becomes the noun happiness when the suffix -ness is added. To improve vocabulary, language users should learn morphology, including derivation. Derivational morphemes appear in books, movies, songs, and poems. Songs are often used for language learning because they support vocabulary development (Tegge, 2015), and lyrics express personal thoughts directly (Simpson, 2008).

Sabrina Carpenter is chosen as the research subject because of her success as a singer, songwriter, and actress. The lyrics she writes show how language can be used creatively. She uses many derivational morphemes—such as prefixes and suffixes—to build new words or change word forms. This makes her lyrics a strong example for studying word formation in English songs. This research is important because understanding how words are formed is an important part of learning a language. This study gives examples from real song lyrics to show how prefixes and suffixes can change a word's meaning or function. It helps readers see that language rules are not just theory, but something found in everyday life, especially in music.

The analysis of derivational morphemes has been widely used in various research topics. Several earlier studies support this field. The first article is “An Analysis of Derivational Affixes in Song” by Siregar and Siregar (2021). The researchers found two types of derivational affixes, prefixes and suffixes in Harris Jung's Salam album. The theory used was from Edward, and the method was library research.

The second study is “An Analysis of Derivational and Inflectional Morphemes in the Lyrics of Calum Scott's Songs in the Album Bridges” by Toruan (2023). This study aimed to investigate both inflectional and derivational affixes using Lieber and Finegan's framework. A qualitative method was used.

The third study is “Derivational and Inflectional on Selena Gomez Song Lyrics in Revival Album” by Halawa (2021). The purpose was to identify derivational and inflectional affixes using Lieber and Finegan's theory with a descriptive qualitative method. Compared to the previous studies, this research differs in terms of the object and theory used. This research focuses specifically on derivational morphemes in Sabrina Carpenter's album, using theories from Francis Katamba (1993) and Edward Finegan (2008). This makes the study more updated and relevant to contemporary linguistic use. Based on the research topic described above, the research objectives of this study are:

1. To identify derivational morphemes found in the lyrics of Sabrina Carpenter's album.
2. To explain how derivational morphemes affect the meaning and word class in Sabrina Carpenter's album.

This research focuses on derivational morphemes in Sabrina Carpenter's album. This study specifically discusses derivational morphemes categorized as bound morphemes. Free morphemes and inflectional morphemes are not included. This study uses theories from Francis Katamba (1993) and Edward Finegan (2008) to analyze derivational morphemes found in the album emails I can't send fwd. The songs analyzed include: “emails i can't send,” “Vicious,” “Read Your Mind,” “Tornado Warnings,” “because i like a boy,” “Already Over,” “how many things,” “bet u wanna,” “Nonsense,” “Fast Times,” “skinny dipping,” “Bad for Business,” “decode,” “opposite,” “Feather,” “Lonesome,” and “things i wish you said.”

This study helps readers understand how derivational morphemes are used to produce new words, especially in song lyrics. The research can contribute to linguistic theory, particularly in morphology. It may be useful for students, lecturers, and researchers. This study

can serve as a reference for further research and can also support language teaching and the development of educational materials.

Theory and Method

Research Design

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach. Qualitative research is a sort of research that uses experiences to describe and comprehend something (Creswell & Creswell, J.D., 2018). In this study, the researcher does not use numbers or statistics, but focuses more on words and explanations. The goal of this study is to explain and describe derivational morphemes found in Sabrina Carpenter's song lyrics. Derivational morphemes are parts of words, like prefixes, suffixes, and infix that can alter the meaning or type of a word. A verb, for example, can be transformed into a noun, and an adjective into an adverb. This study design is designed to assist the researcher in thoroughly examining each word in the lyrics and understanding how derivational morphemes are used. The descriptive method also allows you to explain the purpose of each prefix, suffix, and infix.

Data Source and Research Data

The words from chosen Sabrina Carpenter's songs served as the basis for this study. These song lyrics were taken from her official albums and reliable lyric websites. The songs were selected because they contain many examples of derivational morphemes, which are useful for morphological analysis. Sabrina Carpenter is a popular American singer and songwriter, and her songs often include creative and meaningful language. This makes her lyrics a rich source of data for studying how words are produced, and how their meanings or grammatical categories might change as a result of morphemes.

By analysing these morphemes, the researcher aims to understand how word formation happens in real language use, especially in music lyrics. The words are not taken randomly; they are chosen carefully to make sure they are relevant to the topic of derivational morphemes and provide clear examples for analysis.

Research Instruments

The researcher serves as the primary research tool in this study due to its qualitative methodology. where the researcher does everything directly collecting, choosing, analysing, and understanding the data. Qualitative research is for exploring and understanding the meaning individual or group considered to social or human problem Creswell (2018). Qualitative research can be defined as the investigation and understanding of human or social problems by individuals or groups. in qualitative research, the researcher is the main tool to get and study the information. In this research, the researcher reads the song lyrics, looks for words that have derivational morphemes (like prefixes, suffixes and infix.), and writes them down. The researcher uses simple tools like observation and notes-taking. Observation helps to focus on the right words, and note-taking helps to keep everything organized. There are no special machines or apps used. The researcher only needs basic tools like a notebook, phone, or computer (for example, Microsoft Word or Google Docs). These tools help the researcher collect and arrange the data clearly and simply.

Technique of Data Collection

The researcher collected the data analysis from Sabrina Carpenter's album. The lyrics were taken from the album Sabrina Carpenter's album. These song lyrics were taken from Spotify. To make it easier. The relevant data was collected using the following steps:

1. Identifying derivational morphemes in selected Spotify song lyrics through reading and listening.

- 2.To identify affixes such as prefix, suffix, and infix, highlight and note the derivational morphemes.
- 3.Analysis derivational morphemes to identify the word class and changes the meaning.

Technique of Data Analysis

In this research, the researcher used the data analysis method from (Miles & Huberman, 1994), It comprises the following three steps: reducing the data, displaying the data, and drawing a conclusion. The researcher began by selecting words with affixes and classifying them into three categories: infixes, suffixes, and prefixes. Next, the researcher put the affixes found in the speech into a table to make them easier to see and understand. Finally, to carry out the analysis, the researcher follows these main steps:

- 1.This study uses the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 9th Edition, to identify affixes and examine the meanings of derivational morphemes. in accordance with Francis Katamba's (1993) and Adward Finegan's (2008) theories.
- 2.In the process of analysis, the researcher applies the data analysis method proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994), which includes three steps: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.
- 3.Finally, each data point is given a code, such as S1 for song and D1 for datum.

Findings and Discussion

The words of songs by Sabrina Carpenter served as the research's data source. The information was extracted from a particular song, namely: “*Emails I Can’t Send*”, “*Vicious*”, “*Read Your Mind*”, “*Tornado Warnings*”, “*Because I Like A Boy*”, “*Already Over*”, “*How Many Things*”, “*Bet U Wanna*”, “*Nonsense*”, “*Fast Times*”, “*Skinny Dipping*”, “*Bad For Business*”, “*Decode*”, “*Opposite*”, “*Feather*”, “*Lonesome*” And “*Things I Wish You Said*”. Based on an affix of derivational morphemes by Francis Katamba (1993). The next table shows the frequency of those derivational morphemes found in each song lyrics of Sabrina Carpenter’s album.

4.1 1 List of Song and Total Derivational Morphemes

No	Title of the song	Derivational Morphemes
1.	Email I Can’t Send	3
2.	Vicious	5
3.	Read Your Mind	3
4.	Tornado Warnings	6
5.	Because I Like A Boy	3
6.	Already Over	1
7.	How Many Things	1
8.	Bet U Wanna	2
9.	Nonsense	0
10.	Fast Times	2
11.	Skinny Dipping	2
12.	Bad For Business	1
13.	Decode	4
14.	Opposite	0
15.	Feather	0
16.	Lonesome	1
17.	Things I Wish You Said	2
	Total	36

While the word class and meaning of derivational morphemes. The table below shows the frequency of those derivational morphemes changes the word class and meaning in each song lyrics of Sabrina Carpenter’s album. To support the data analysis of each word. The

researcher using Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (OALD) was used as primary references for translation and definition. Here are several data from Sabrina Carpenter's album which belong to the data:

Datum 1: S1D1

*So, I could see what you did October thirteenth
At 10:15, were you really asleep?*

In this line the datum found is the word **really**. The root is **real** and added by a suffix **-ly** as the derivational morphemes. The suffix **-ly** converts the word class from an **adjective** (real) to an **adverb** (really).

Meaning of the root "**real**" is actually existing or happening and not imagined or pretended. after the addition of suffix **-ly** the meaning changes into used to say what is actually the fact or the truth about something

Datum 2: S1D2

*When I'm forty-five, someone calls me their wife
And he fucks our lives in one selfish night*

The word **selfish** is found in the datum. The root **self** and formed by added the suffix **-ish** as the derivational morphemes. The suffixes **-ish** transforms the word class from **noun** (self) into (selfish) **adjective**

Meaning of the root "**self**" is the type of person you are, especially the way you normally behave, look or feel. after the addition of suffix **-ish** the meaning changes into caring only about yourself rather than about other people

Datum 3: S1D3

*Don't think I'll find forgiveness as fast as mom did
And, God, I love you, but you're such a dipshit*

In this lyric the datum found is the word **forgiveness**. The root is **self** and added by a suffix **-ness** as the derivational morphemes. The suffix **-ness** changes the word class from a verb (**forgive**) into a noun (**forgiveness**)

Meaning of the root "**forgive**" is to stop feeling angry with somebody who has done something to harm, annoy or upset you to stop feeling angry with yourself. after the addition of suffix **-ness** the meaning changes into the act of forgiving somebody, willingness to forgive somebody

Datum 4: S2D4

*But it was dressed up in
Heated emotion*

In this line the datum found is the word **emotion**. The root is **emote** and added by a suffix **-ion** as the derivational morphemes. The suffix **-ion** changes the word class from a verb (**emote**) into a noun (**emotion**)

Meaning of the root "**emote**" is to show emotion in a very obvious way. after the addition of suffix **-ion** the meaning changes into a strong feeling such a love, fear or anger the part of a person's character that consist of feelings.

Datum 5: S2D5

*You're lucky I'm a private person
I've quietly carried your burden*

The word **quietly** is found in the datum. The root is **quiet** and added by a suffix **-ly** as the derivational morphemes. The suffix **-ly** changes the word class from an adjective (**quiet**) into an adverb (**quietly**)

Meaning of the root "**quiet**" is making very little noise. after the addition of suffix **-ly** the meaning changes into in the way that makes very little noise.

Datum 6: S2D6

*And everyone thinks you're an angel
But shit, I would **probably** use different wording*

In in this line the datum found is the word **probably**. It from the root **probable** and added by suffix **-ly** as derivational morphemes. The suffix **-ly** changes the word class from an **adjective (probable)** into **adverb (probably)**.

Meaning of the root probable is likely to happen, to exist or to be true. After the adding of suffix **-ly** the meaning changes into used to say something is likely to happen or to be true

Datum 7: S2D7

*You like a certain type of woman
Who's smart but neglects **Intuition***

In the lyrics the datum found is the word **intuition**. It from the root **intuit** and added by a suffix **-ion** as derivational morphemes. The suffix **-ion** changes the word class from a **verb (intuit)** into **noun (intuition)**.

Meaning of the root intuit is to know that something is true based on your feelings rather than on facts, what somebody tells you. After the adding the suffix **-ion** the meaning changes into the ability to know something by using your feelings rather than considering the facts.

Datum 8: S2D8

*when you're **insecure**
could be me, could be her*

The word **insecure** is found in the datum. It from the root **secure** and added by a prefix **in-**. The prefix **in-** changes the word class from an **adjective (secure)** into **adjective (insecure)**.

Meaning of the root secure is feeling happy and confident about yourself or a particular situation. After adding the prefix **in-** the meaning changes into not confident about yourself or your relationships with other people

Datum 9: S3D9

*Made it clear when you told me (ah)
Don't know why, but you gotta be **lonely** (ah)*

In this line the datum found is the word **lonely**. The root is **lone** and added by a suffix **-ly** as derivational morphemes. The suffix **-ly** changes the word class from an **adjective (lone)** into **adjective (lonely)**.

The meaning of the root lone is without any other people or things. After adding the suffix **-ly** the meaning changes into unhappy because you have no friends or people to talk to.

Datum 10: S3D10

*Say it's hard, but you make it look easy (ah)
So I'm tryin' to live in **reality** (ah)*

In the lyrics the datum found is the word **reality**. The root is **real** and added by a suffix **-ity** as derivational morphemes. The suffix **-ity** changes the word class from an **adjective (real)** into **noun (reality)**.

Meaning of the root real is actually existing or happening and not imagined or pretended. After addition of suffix **-ity** the meaning changes into the true situation and the problems that actually exist in life, in contrast to how you would like life to be.

The findings of this research showed that Sabrina Carpenter's album *Emails I Can't Send* contained 36 derivational morphemes, which consisted of 8 derivational prefixes and 28 derivational suffixes. The dominance of suffixes indicates that English songs tend to rely more on suffixation to adjust word class and meaning. This supports Katamba's (1993) explanation that suffixes are highly productive and are often used to create new lexical items or shift

grammatical categories in a way that fits sentence structure naturally. In song lyrics, this flexibility is especially important because lyricists must follow rhythm, rhyme, and emotional nuance, which require precise word forms.

The high number of suffixes also shows that Sabrina Carpenter frequently modifies words to express abstract ideas, emotions, and personal reflections—something that is commonly found in expressive or narrative song genres. The patterns of word class changes, such as verb to noun or adjective to adverb, suggest that the songwriter uses derivational morphology to strengthen meaning and adjust the flow of the lyrics. For example, the transformation from verb to noun, which appeared most frequently, reflects how actions are often reinterpreted as concepts or emotional states in her storytelling style. Meanwhile, transformations like adjective to adverb help describe actions more vividly, creating a dynamic lyrical voice.

When compared with previous studies, this research aligns with earlier findings which also reported that derivational suffixes are more dominant than prefixes in song lyrics. Siregar and Siregar (2021) found that suffixes such as *-ness*, *-ly*, and *-ful* appeared more often than prefixes in Harris J's *Salam* album. Similarly, Halawa (2021) discovered that Selena Gomez's *Revival* album also used more suffixes like *-ly*, *-ion*, *-ity*, and *-er*, with prefixes appearing far less frequently. These similarities suggest a recurring pattern in English songwriting, where suffixation is preferred due to its flexibility in shaping meaning without drastically altering the rhythm of a lyric.

Meanwhile, the study by Toruan (2023), which analyzed both derivational and inflectional morphemes in Calum Scott's *Bridges* album, also showed a large variety of suffixes, reinforcing the idea that suffixation is a dominant morphological process in English song lyrics. Although Toruan focused more on the combination of derivational and inflectional morphemes, his findings still support the trend observed in this research.

However, the uniqueness of this study lies in its focus not only on identifying derivational morphemes but also on analyzing the changes in word class they produce. Previous studies mostly emphasized types and frequencies of morphemes, while this research goes further by exploring how those morphemes influence grammatical structure and lyrical expression. For example, identifying the most dominant transformation—verb to noun—offers insight into how abstract ideas and emotional states are formed lyrically. This deeper look into word class shifts provides new understanding of how songwriters construct meaning through morphology, showing that derivational morphemes contribute not only to vocabulary expansion but also to stylistic choices in songwriting. Overall, the results of this study fit well within the pattern established by earlier research while also providing additional insight into how derivational morphemes affect grammatical function and lyrical style. This makes the study not only confirmative but also contributive, offering a more detailed perspective on morphological processes in contemporary English song lyrics.

Conclusion

The ability of derivational morphemes to generate new words, improve sentence structure, and clarify meaning makes them crucial in song lyrics. Additionally, they demonstrate how language history continues to impact contemporary music and appreciate lyrics more. Songs by Sabrina Carpenter, Julia Michaels, and JP Saxe demonstrate this, since the lyrics reveal Sabrina's true emotions and sense of style. The song's rhythm is maintained by the emotional lyrics, which discuss feelings like love, regret, and melancholy. They also incorporate syllables that complement the music.

In this study, the lyrics contain 36 derivational morphemes, along with 28 suffixes, 8 prefixes, and no infixes. The most prevalent kind are suffixes, which are frequently employed to alter a word's shape and give it a new meaning. Changes from verbs to nouns and adjectives

to adverbs are the most common word class transitions. These findings demonstrate that in addition to altering a word's shape and meaning, derivational morphemes also improve the accessibility and enjoyment of songs.

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Indonesian Users' Self-expressions on X: A Case Study

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Abstract

English has been an important international language for Indonesians to learn since they were children and seen as a major factor of future success in global competition. The wide scope of English language usage has led to the incorporation of English language into Indonesian people's expressions on social media, especially X (previously Twitter). Many Indonesian X users choose to express themselves in English rather than in Indonesian. The aim of this research is to investigate why Indonesian users prefer to use English in their heartfelt self-expressions on X. A qualitative case study, consisting of document gathering and interviews, is adopted in the data collection process. The data includes 8 top replies of the X thread of concern and follow-up interviews with the repliers. The result of this study shows that most participants felt awkward when expressing themselves in Indonesian. Additionally, they prefer utilizing the English language because of its extensive vocabulary and sense of propriety.

Keywords: Linguistic imperialism, online identity, stance-taking, translanguaging

Introduction

English, as an international language, has been an important language for Indonesians to acquire since they were children. A growing appreciation for the value of English, considered as a critical determinant in future achievement in global competition, reveals itself in schools' decision to move English education from the 4th year to the 1st year of primary school. English is taught in primary schools once a week for 2 x 35 minutes per lesson, according to the Ministry of National Education Decree No. 22/2006 on the Structure of National Curriculum. There is no specific data available to illustrate the number of schools that have chosen to offer English education, but it appears that nearly all primary schools in cities and suburbs, as well as some in rural areas, have begun implementing English education (Zein, 2012). This situation encourages the use of the English language in a wider scope.

People in Indonesia speak two languages, Indonesian as their lingua franca and the local language as their mother tongue. They converse in Indonesian with a local tongue, such as Sundanese, and on occasion in English. They may speak in their own language, with Indonesian or even English words or phrases included. The incorporation of English terms into the Indonesian language serves a number of reasons, one of which is to alleviate the difficulty of translating. When talking in Indonesian or a local language, Indonesians of all ages, genders, and classes use English code switching in a variety of locations and circumstances (Setiawan, 2016). Such a phenomenon can be seen in Indonesian people's interaction on social media, especially X (Twitter). They often mix Indonesian, English, and even their local language when expressing themselves online.

Many Indonesian X users feel more at ease when expressing themselves in English rather than Indonesian. Some say that using Indonesian in a conversation makes them feel more

embarrassed and intimate. The word 'cringe' was also used frequently to describe the sensation. While there is no clear statistics on the proportion, many Indonesian users may relate to the issue, according to one particular thread on X.

The issue of mixing languages could also raise questions about Indonesian people's identity and why the national language did not feel good enough to let some people express their emotions. Previous research from Barik et al. (2019) has discovered the normalization in Indonesian and English code-mixed X data. However, their research has only covered the aspects of tokenization, language identification, lexical normalization, and translation. The usage of the English language itself must be known if it will be an issue in the future or if this phenomena is a result of the benefits of globalization that have been impacting Indonesia for the past decade. One issue that has been covered by Wang et al. (2014) is the phenomena of using English curse words on X. Nevertheless, their research only examined the characteristics of cursing activity on X.

This research could benefit many people who are still having difficulty expressing themselves online. Individuals who routinely repress their emotions report a distinct sense of inauthenticity, which is especially relevant to the current line of research. That is, they have an uncomfortable dissonance between their internal and external perceptions of themselves (Reimer, 2008). Drawing on Barton & Lee's (2013) approach to online identity and stance-taking, as well as Phillipson's (1992) conception of linguistic imperialism, this research explores the question of why Indonesian users prefer to use English in their heartfelt self-expressions on X.

Introduction

Online Identity

Ruyter and Conroy (2002) defined online identity as a combination of characteristics that offer help to characterize individuals on the internet, in this way, making them different from other online users. Social networking platforms support people to present themselves in a more structured and personal way (Manago et al., 2008). In online profiles, people can share their basic information (such as gender, age, education, etc.), describe their preferences (for example, people they are interested in), list their own interests (such as hobbies and favorite movies), and so on. This means that identity reconstruction is possible because people can design and create their own online identities. People can hide or change their identity if they want (Suler, 2004). Given that individuals can reconstruct their online identities based on their own ideas, their identities on social networking platforms may be partially, or even completely, different from their identities in the offline world (Hu et al., 2015).

People now have unprecedented opportunities to record and share their daily experiences in writing and other forms thanks to new digital media (Barton & Lee, 2013). While online material is frequently shared in a "publicly private" way, which means that the name of the content poster is made known but that access to the content is mostly limited, some people might act in the opposite manner by sharing publicly accessible content anonymously or engaging in "privately public" behavior (Lange, 2007). People's perspectives of themselves have evolved as a result of these divergent activities. Therefore, online identities include not just who we are but also who we want to appear to be to others and how others perceive us.

As stated by Barton & Lee (2013), the fact that identity is a fluid and multifaceted concept is crucial. Thus, identities are sometimes seen as masks that may be put on and taken off in various social interaction circumstances (Goffman, 2021). Online profiles are used by people to display their personality qualities. According to Brandtzaeg and Chaparro-Domnguez (2020), an online identity stored on social media may not be a linear temporal process but rather a convoluted process. The most significant influences on judgments of personality traits were

found to be images, quotes, and other free-form things like movies and novels. Users are most able to reach optimal ratings and present themselves in the intended way by using descriptive items like the photo and about me statement (Counts & Stecher, 2009).

Stance-taking

When someone makes a claim or makes a judgment, their stance is an important factor that cannot be overlooked. Stance is also an important term in linguistics because it encompasses a wide range of studies on the meanings of utterances and how speakers or writers approach their audiences (Kiesling et al., 2018). Barton & Lee (2013) states that when making any stances, three factors must be considered: the individual expressing the stance, the topic under debate, and the sources used. Thus, people's "stance" refers to the attitude they take toward themselves, what is spoken, and other people or objects.

People employ argumentation, appraisal, and persuasion in their social media postings to attract potential readers, either openly or implicitly, in order to increase interaction. This behavior, of course, resulted in a social media user's point of view. Thus, the realization of the text's point of view is referred to as "stance-taking" (Sholikhah, 2019). Understanding how people make claims about their connection, the topics they discuss, and their listeners and interlocutors requires an understanding of stance-taking (Kiesling et al., 2018).

Stance-taking has evolved into an important part of discourse in online interaction. Not only does it convey the stance-takers' opinions, but some may also seek to assert a unique sense of self in order to stand out in a larger community of stance-takers by careful choice of words and other resources (Barton & Lee, 2013). X, a microblogging application, has quickly become an established component of everyday life with a wide appeal in the social media landscape. A research by Bechini et al. (2020) stated that messages commonly shared on social media now reflect people's opinions on social and political problems. Therefore, a simple study of tweet contents is insufficient to appreciate the diversity of user behavior.

Linguistic Imperialism

According to Phillipson (1992), linguistic imperialism is the assertion and maintenance of supremacy through the development and ongoing reconstitution of structural and cultural disparities between English and other languages. Similarly, Reagan (2009) asserts that linguistic imperialism is the denial of the linguistic validity of a language, any language spoken by any linguistic community, which, in essence, amounts to little more than an illustration of the tyranny of the majority.

The expression and transmission of ideological ideas as well as social, cultural, and empirical concepts depend on language (Reagan, 2009). In the age of globalization, English has become a widely used language on a global scale. As the most widely taught foreign language, English dominates in the fields of science, technology, medicine, transnational commerce, trade, shipping, aviation, diplomacy, media entertainment, news agencies, journalism, and youth culture (Phillipson, 1992). The spread of English parallels the increasing usage of computers in several fields nowadays (Ferguson, 1983 in Phillipson, 1992).

English encroaches on all the languages it comes into contact with; furthermore, the use of one language often indicates the exclusion of others, even though this isn't technically necessary (Phillipson, 1992). While many regions of the world have had a long-standing relationship with English, recent globalization and European integration trends have led to a significant increase in the usage of English in continental Europe (Phillipson, 2008).

The cultural integrity of the non-native speaker is compromised by the imperialism of the English language (Modiano, 2001). According to Phillipson (1992), if the English language is there and its spread is unchecked, it could destroy the local culture. In order to reinforce continuing efforts to sustain linguistic diversity globally, more active language policy formulation is therefore needed (Phillipson, 2008).

Translanguaging

The scientific notion of translanguaging has recently gained popularity in sociolinguistics and applied linguistics (Jaspers, 2017). Translanguaging is an approach for using two naturally occurring language systems simultaneously. This is demonstrated by the large number of social media users who employ translanguaging when sending tweets from their X accounts (Creese & Blackledge, 2010).

Translanguaging was first created in Welsh to refer to the bilingual use between Welsh and English and its subsequent absorption into literature on dual languages (Conteh, 2018). You (2011) studied how Chinese white-collar employees used English creatively on electronic bulletin boards and discovered that these young bilinguals blended a variety of Chinese and English codes to establish a community known as the "domestic diaspora".

Translanguaging can be defined as the use of all linguistic resources by a speaker to construct meaning, transfer information, and perform identities, such that individual languages appear as part of a single integrated system. Thus, X users can create informal and casual personas by using translanguaging, nonstandard, abbreviated, and colloquial English forms (Creese & Blackledge, 2010). However, Jaspers (2017) claimed the contradictory statements of most researchers that translanguaging results in change in subjectivity and social structures. In addition, they are very difficult to justify once implemented. However, most researchers support the idea that translanguaging helps people improve their creativity, critical thinking, and decision-making in life. In addition, it also assists English students to improve their academic skills. This is declared by Schreiber (2015), Mazzaferro (2018), Li Wei (2022), and Gracia (2015) in their research.

The major researchers came to the final conclusion of the benefits of translanguaging. Schreiber (2015) said that people who speak multilingually tend to be more creative in terms of linguistics and it enables them to easily make things more widely known. It is strengthened by Mazzaferro (2018) who said that translanguaging raises a creative and critical thinking process by people who utters that meaning to organize their daily lives. Li Wei (2022) also agrees with the latter statements, where he proves that it helps to foster creativity and critical thinking.

While Hu et al. (2015) asserts that people can reconstruct their online identities based on their own ideas, online identities can be masked as stated by Goffman (2021). Additionally, informal and casual personas can be created through translanguaging (Creese & Blackledge's, 2010). People's opinion on social media cannot determine the diversity of their behavior (Bechini et al., 2020). However, the realization of the people's point of view on social media can depict their stance (Sholikhah, 2019). To contribute to these important topics, we draw on Barton & Lee's (2013) approach to online identity and stance-taking, as well as Phillipson's (1992) conception of linguistic imperialism, to investigate the issue of why Indonesian users prefer to use English in their heartfelt self-expressions on X.

Method

This research is a qualitative case study with document gathering and interview as the data collection procedures. This research drew upon the qualitative method because it aims to find out the reason why Indonesian X users prefer to use English. The inquiry in qualitative research begins with an inquiry in which the data originate from a natural context, thus there is no manipulation or experimentation on the data, and data analysis is inductive, creating patterns or themes. The research's ultimate conclusions contain a detailed description and explanation of the problem, as well as an extension of the literature (Creswell, 2007). Thus, qualitative research is most suited for the current study. This is due to the fact that the research entails a case study analysis, which offers the natural context of the case in concern. A case study can

be thought of as an in-depth examination of a single case with the aim of shedding light on a broader group of cases or a community. Therefore, case study research has the power to sophisticate the beholding of the environments and pursuits under consideration (Cousin, 2005).

The participants are the X users' who replied on the X thread of “Why is it more comfortable to talk about things in English compared to Indonesian when you want to express your feelings?”. The data involves 8 top replies and interviews. Originally, the top 10 repliers were selected; however, two of them were no longer active on X, so the data only included 8 out of 10. The repliers were selected among the top replies based on how they integrate the English language into their expressions. These participants were selected due to the correlation of their online identity and the purpose of this research. The top replies with the most likes were the ones who voiced out a stance relatable to many others. And then, they were interviewed to further analyze how their online identity affects the stance they portray in their replies. To maintain confidentiality, the participants are given pseudonyms. The participants' profiles are as shown in the table below.

Table 1: Participants' profiles

No	Participant	Age	Gender	Background
1	Ax	20	Female	Undergraduate student in Medical Science
2	Bx	16	Female	High school student
3	Cx	24	Female	Private employee
4	Dx	19	Female	High school graduate
5	Ex	23	Female	Bachelor of Arts
6	Fx	23	Female	Bachelor of English Literature
7	Gx	21	Female	Undergraduate student in Communication Science
8	Hx	19	Female	Undergraduate student in Astronomy

The data collection was conducted online through the X platform. The replies were first sorted from the number of likes, and then the top 10 were separated. Since two of the top 10 were no longer active, they too were omitted. For the document gathering, the 8 top replies were put into a table where they are presented in their original form, their English translated form, and added a description. As for the interview, the researchers personally massaged the 8 interviewees via X direct message. The interview was conducted in Indonesian to get a more comprehensible answer from the interviewees. Thus, the interpretation and data analysis in this study are presented in their closest English translations.

The first step in analyzing the data was to analyze the stance portrayed in each of the participants' replies referring to Barton & Lee (2013). After that, commonalities were identified from their replies. Next, the participants' online identities were analyzed through the data from the interview based on Barton & Lee (2013). The online identity analysis was to support the participants' stances. Then, the participants' language usage was identified to analyze the portrayal of translanguaging. The participants' use of translanguaging showed the implementation of their stance. The discussion here centered on the reasons for the Indonesian

X users' preference on using English to express themselves and their relation to linguistic imperialism referring to Phillipson (1992).

It should be noted that the findings of this study are inadequate to represent the perspective of other individuals with similar backgrounds, especially age range and education, since the participants of this study are limited to Indonesian X users who replied on the X thread of concern. Therefore, this study is expected to be exploratory in nature.

Findings and Discussion

Having analyzed the data from the replies and interviews, we discovered a common perspective where the participants feel comfortable with using English in their self-expressions on X. Some even employ the English language in their reply and interview, whether fully or mixed with Indonesian.

Stance Towards English Language Usage in X Self-expressions

The data indicates that five out of eight participants fully employ English in their reply, two out of eight employ translanguaging by mixing English and Indonesian, and one out of eight fully employs Indonesian. Every participant seems to have a common stance in which they are more inclined to use the English language in expressing their feelings. Referring to Barton & Lee (2013), the participants' stances were examined by considering the individual expressing the stance, the topic under debate, and the sources used. Looking at the behavior of the individual expressing the stance, it can be inferred that the stance of those employing English is stronger than those who do otherwise. While all of the participants seem to agree to the topic in which using English is preferred when expressing their feelings, each of them seems to have their own reasons for doing so. The sources of their stances seem to have been from personal experience; however, external sources like general knowledge and common perspective have also been integrated into their stances.

The in-depth interviews have strengthened the participants' stance towards the use of English in their self-expressions. The participants construct meaning, transfer information, and perform identities using translanguaging in the interview. They may unknowingly utilize translanguaging without knowing that it is a linguistic resource in language. However, the fact that they employ translanguaging strengthens the claim by Creese & Blackledge (2010) yet again on how bilingual people can use two naturally occurring language systems, in this case English and Indonesian, simultaneously.

The participants have a common answer for whether they are comfortable with using English and what makes them do. Analyzing the stance from their replies and strengthened by the interview answers, this research has discovered the 3 most prevalent reasons as to why the participants prefer to use English in their heartfelt self-expressions. The reasons are that they feel awkward when talking about their feelings in Indonesian, as well as the variety of English vocabulary they could utilize when expressing themselves in English, and the sense of propriety of the English language.

A. English is Less Awkward

The most common excuse as to why the participants prefer to use English in their self-expressions is that they feel awkward when expressing their feelings in Indonesian. Cx and Dx express their stance on the awkwardness of using Indonesian in their replies, supported by other reasons as to why they prefer the English language.

Cx: It's a bit awkward to talk about feelings in Indonesian and it would sound less miserable to do it in other languages other than our mother tongue.

Cx states that talking about feelings in Indonesian is awkward. Supporting that stance, Cx also believes that expressing feelings in other languages is less miserable than doing it in

Indonesian. Therefore, Cx believed that expressing feelings in Indonesian, as the Indonesian people's mother tongue, is awkward and miserable. If we take into account her background as the only private employee and how she is the oldest among the participants, it is understandable if she believes that expressing feelings is not an easy thing. She must have gone through a lot in life, and her exposure to the English language may have made her more comfortable than the mother tongue that she has long associated with in life.

Dx: Because it's awkward to use Indonesian words. And it's also easier to use English I think, like a sentence can already describe our feelings.

Similarly, Dx believes that it is awkward to use Indonesian words. In support, Dx claims that using English is easier because a sentence in English can already describe her feelings.

It is shown that the replies posted by the participants pose a sense of interaction with each other. One reply attracts another reply, and it can be seen from the similarities in their opinion regarding the awkwardness of using Indonesian and how they seem to be more comfortable with using English. The point of view they utilize in expressing their opinions is the first person point of view where they correlate their own personal experience and their personal feelings with the topic of English language usage in expressing feelings. This realization of the participants' point of view towards the topic accompanied by the interaction they attract by posing their opinion is in line with stance-taking as stated by Sholikhah (2019).

Ex: I don't know but I think it's because english isn't our mother tongue. We were told to speak Indonesian by our parents because they taught us with hearts and it has been engraved in our soul since, meanwhile most of us learn English for academic purposes only so we can express our feelings better in English because that language isn't connected to our soul I don't know.

Bringing up another point of view from a more general perspective, Ex claims that English is not connected to the soul since people learn English for academic purposes only. Meanwhile, people learn Indonesian as their mother tongue, and that the Indonesian language is already connected to their souls. Ex's stance implies that feelings are easier expressed using a language that is detached from people's souls.

We can see why most participants are concerned about what other people think about their statements when expressing their emotions, resulting in the awkwardness they feel when conveying feelings in a language that is close to their souls. This fits what Barton & Lee (2013) stated in their study that stance-takers use carefully chosen words when they want to assert a unique sense of self in a large community. The participants in this study are careful with their words, they even use English rather than Indonesian because their opinions about their feelings are seen by a number of X users.

B. English Has Extensive amount of Vocabulary

When asked about the reason why the participants employ English on social media, a few points of view came up regarding the English vocabulary compared to Indonesian vocabulary.

Ax: English has more vocabulary than Indonesian, so what I want to convey in Indonesian seems out of place for a few specific words. For example, in Indonesian there is "malu", but in English there are "embarrassed", "shy", "bashful" that have similar but different meanings.

The reason Ax prefers to use English is because of the variety of the vocabulary. She claims that some things seem out of place when conveyed in Indonesian, but not in English due to the precise objective of English vocabulary. Similarly, Dx and Gx also have the same view about the variety of English vocabulary that can only be conveyed in English.

Dx: It feels easier because there are simpler English vocabulary that are more understandable than their Indonesian form.

Dx believes that English has simpler vocabulary that is more understandable than their Indonesian form. Thus, she prefers to use English due to its variety of vocabulary.

Gx: I am quite comfortable using English, especially in expressing myself or if I fail to find the right choice of words to express my feelings and opinions. Sometimes, there are several expressions that are quite lacking or excessive when I use Indonesian.

Meanwhile, Gx states that she feels comfortable with expressing her feelings in English, especially when she fails to find the right words in Indonesian. She also claims that some expressions are either quite lacking or excessive in Indonesian. Her stance seems to imply that the use of Indonesian words is uncomfortable due to the essence of its words' meaning. Thus, she prefers to use English which has a more varied and precise vocabulary.

To further discover the extent of English vocabulary compared to Indonesian vocabulary, we have looked into statistics on the amount of their vocabulary. As per Oxford Dictionary, there are 171,476 English words in current use; 250,000 distinct terms (excluding inflections and words from technical and regional lexicon); and 750,000 of words counted in the most liberal method. On the other hand, as per The Great Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), there are a total of 118,021 entries of Indonesian words. Based on these points, it can be inferred that English has more vocabulary than Indonesian. Even the amount of English words in current use exceeds Indonesian words' total entry by 53,455 words.

C. English Sounds More Proper

Another common reason why the participants prefer to use English to express themselves is because English sounds more proper than Indonesian.

Fx: I feel that if I talk about my feelings in English, it sounds more proper. It's more comfortable and the language is more polite, because in my opinion, there are some things that if expressed in Indonesian make it seem rude.

Fx claims that using English when talking about feelings is more proper, and to her, the use of the English language is more comfortable and polite. Considering Fx's background as a Bachelor of English Literature, it is understandable for her to feel comfortable utilizing English, as it is the language she studied in her major. Fx also supports that stance by stating that some things seem rude if expressed in Indonesian. Similarly, Gx and Hx also believe that the use of English seems more polite when used for cursing or using bad words.

Gx: The language is more comfortable and refined. Because I think there are a few things that if they are conveyed in Indonesian, they will sound harsh, but not in English.

Similar to Fx, Gx believes that the English language is more comfortable. Aside from that, the English language is also more refined. Thus, there are things that will sound harsh when conveyed in Indonesian, but not in English as it is more eloquent.

Hx: Because I'm a person who tends to think about people's responses, it's better for me to use English. Sometimes it doesn't feel right to be sad, so if I use Indonesian, it will seem too obvious.

In the context of expressing feelings, Hx claims that using Indonesian would seem too obvious. As she believes that sadness is not right, the use of English when expressing sadness will make the expression more proper.

Lange (2007) stated that some people may share publicly accessible content anonymously or engage in public in private behavior. Conforming that notion, Fx, Gx, and Hx concludes that the English vocabulary is more proper than Indonesian, even in terms of profanity. When sadness is involved, they can express themselves more comfortably with English on X or other online platforms where their online identity exists. Thus, English is preferred for the content they share online, whether public or private.

Context of English Language Usage

Regarding the context in which they employ English language, the participants pose a similar view. They use English on social media when they express their feelings or opinion, like Ax, Cx, Dx, Ex, Fx, Gx, and Hx; they use English on social media when talking about something serious, like Ax, Cx, Ex, and Fx; and they use English to communicate with other people, like Bx, Cx, and Ex. Most of the participants use English on social media to express their feelings or opinions.

The data shows that the participants do not only utilize English in online interaction, but also in their everyday lives. Depending on the context and the interlocutors, they mix English into their discourse. While it is true that many are comfortable with using English in their everyday lives, some are obstructed by the lack of interaction with English speaking people in real life. Therefore, they utilize the English language more online. This finding supports Hu et al. (2015) on how the construction of individuals' online identities may be different from their real life.

Awkwardness in Relation to Identity

The context in which Indonesian X users feel awkward with using Indonesian is when they express their emotions or feelings. They regard human emotion as weakness; thus, it is embarrassing to show such weakness. This awkwardness is the uncomfortable feeling that they feel when utilizing a language that is close to their souls, which is Indonesian.

As Indonesian users tend to have a hard time expressing sadness, happiness, fear, anger, and disgust, they detach themselves from those emotions through the use of a foreign language. Although it is not strictly essential, the use of one language typically implies the exclusion of others (Phillipson, 1992). When connected with other trends, their preference towards the English language is due to how they can deliver their feelings better in an easier and more proper way. Their stances towards English language usage reflect their opinion from personal experience. This is in line with Bechini et al. (2020) on how social media messages now reflect people's opinions on social issues.

Though none of the Indonesian X users in this research have the exact same answer in the interview, which conforms Barton & Lee's (2013) claim on how online identity is multifaceted, their stances support the supremacy of the English language. With more and more people having the same stance, the English language will eventually override the Indonesian language from Indonesian people's lives. If people continue to feel awkward when using Indonesian, and they keep detaching themselves from their feelings by utilizing English in their heartfelt self-expressions, the language will further erode our identity as Indonesians. First, we may lose our connection with our mother tongue. And then we may lose our love towards our nationality.

Despite the threat of English language supremacy towards our identity as Indonesians, there is still hope for our Indonesian language due to the fact that online identity is fluid, as stated by Barton & Lee's (2013). From the interview, the participants conveyed that when they wish to utilize the English language, they consider their interlocutors before doing so. The fact that online identity is fluid also supports Goffman's (2021) claim on how identities are seen as masks that can be put on and taken off in various social circumstances.

On another note, the fact that the Indonesian language has globalized to some extent can strengthen our sense of belonging towards our national identity. The Indonesian language has been taught in various countries like Australia and Egypt. Thus, we must be proud of our identity as Indonesians.

Word Choice in Relation to Linguistic Imperialism

The amount of English vocabulary does exceed the amount of Indonesian vocabulary, though that cannot be the only reason why Indonesian X users prefer to use English. The mere use of English words within the Indonesian online world may have yet to be a part of linguistic imperialism as English is still considered a foreign language. However, the continuous use of English words will turn out to be a gate towards linguistic imperialism. In some ways, the spread of English is similar to how computers are now used (Ferguson, 1983 in Phillipson, 1992). If the Indonesian people lose grasp of their identity, it is the same as losing their own home or place of origin. When that happens, the use of Indonesian language will be the same as using a foreign language in its own nation.

One example that we can see nowadays is the widespread development of English-based schools and institutions in Indonesia. These educational establishments employ English as their daily language and apply the international curriculum onto their students' learning. As the most widely learned foreign language, English holds a strong position in the fields of science, technology, medicine, transnational commerce, trade, shipping, aviation, diplomacy, media entertainment, news agencies, journalism, and youth culture (Phillipson, 1992). Ironically, with such exposure to the English language, many Indonesians feel foreign towards their own mother tongue, Indonesian. Additionally, they seem to prefer using English words in their daily conversations instead of Indonesian.

Another example is when Indonesian users consider the use of English words superior to Indonesian, there may be various aspects to support that. From the influence of the society they interact with, their major, their work, or even their family. However, such exposure causes concern that Indonesian people would bow down to the Western culture. If the Indonesian people's tendency towards the Western culture continues, the existence of the Indonesian language and culture itself may be eroded.

We believe that when people feel more sense of belonging and glorify the English language instead of their own mother tongue, their national identity is also doubted. Such people are prone to being the spreaders of the linguistic imperialism trend. According to Phillipson (1992), English intrudes on all the languages that it comes into contact with, and this case is not an exception. It comes back to each person's awareness, because some people still uphold their identity as Indonesians despite their exposure and continuous use of the English language, and some do not. Linguistic imperialism will not happen if the Indonesian people do not lose grasp of their identity as Indonesians. Therefore, we must never forget that we are Indonesians.

Sense of Propriety in Relation to Value

The English language can act as a bridge between our culture and that of the West. Language is essential for the expression and transmission of ideological notions as well as social, cultural, and empirical ideas (Reagan, 2009). In big cities in Indonesia, people generalize and follow Western culture, from the way they socialize in real life to the way they interact online. Social networking platforms support people to present themselves in a more structured and personal way (Manago et al., 2008). Indonesian people who learn English as their second language know well that the second language they learn cannot replace the value of the Indonesian language. We believe that our identity as Indonesians is the value that we were born with.

With the development of technology and the human mindset, the local language has been alienated from the local society due to their exposure to globalization. With the open-mindedness of people nowadays, they no longer value their local language. Thus, the only language keeping Indonesian people together is the Indonesian language. As stated by

Phillipson (1992) the existence of the English language can erode the local culture if its spread is not filtered.

The irony in today's world is that people tend to know more English slang than Indonesian proverbs. Unknowingly, this will influence Indonesian people's language style. Indonesian people are known to be polite, but the spread of foreign slang has diminished that sense of politeness and replaced it with the notion of arrogance. As this phenomena continues to spread, and even more rapidly on the internet, Indonesian people start to put more value into the sense of propriety of English words.

The eroding value due to the use of English language is the value of unity. By using our national language, Indonesian, it can unite us as Indonesian citizens. In addition, the value of preserving the Indonesian language is also being pushed back by the presence of English. The influence of English may have shifted the use of Indonesian as our main language, but our souls are still that of Indonesian people.

Conclusion

The participants' stances in this research are inclined to the use of English in their self-expressions. Their stance is also strengthened by convergent online identity, and the use of translanguaging has also proven the participants' identity as bilinguals. Their exposure to the English language and their frequent use of the language in everyday life contributes to their online identity.

To sum up, the present study has answered the question of why Indonesian users prefer to use English in their heartfelt self-expressions on X. Firstly, the use of English is less awkward than Indonesian. As the English language is not Indonesian people's mother tongue, it is not too closely related to their souls. Therefore, when expressing feelings, which can sometimes be embarrassing, the use of English helps the conveyors detach themselves from what they are conveying, and thus allows them to express themselves more comfortably. Secondly, English has a larger variety of vocabulary. English vocabulary can represent feelings in a more understandable and precise way. A complicated sentence in Indonesian can be represented in a single phrase in English; alternatively, a word in Indonesian can have the same meaning as many English words with clearer context. Lastly, the English language sounds more proper. Since English is a foreign language, its sense of propriety exceeds that of our own mother tongue. Even in terms of profanity, when people use English curse words, it would sound more eloquent than Indonesian curse words. Expressing feelings with a language that is known to be superior makes people feel more sense of propriety.

The English language will further destroy our identity as Indonesians if people continue to feel embarrassed while using Indonesian and keep detaching themselves from their emotions by adopting English in their heartfelt self-expressions. Given that English is still seen as a foreign language in Indonesia, the usage of English words may have yet to constitute linguistic imperialism. The continued usage of English, however, will serve as a gateway for linguistic imperialism. There is still hope for the Indonesian language as long as the Indonesian people maintain a strong sense of their identity, despite the threat of English language supremacy to our identity as Indonesians. Although the use of Indonesian as our primary language may have changed due to the influence of English, our souls are still Indonesian.

For future research related to English language usage in the online scope, it is suggested that the research work on a wider extent than just on X platform. The goal is to better understand the variety of user behavior, as described by Bechini et al (2020). Thus, by incorporating additional data from various platforms, future research can better appreciate the diversity of user behavior. On another note, future research could also focus on fewer participants with a more in-depth interview. The objective is to further explore the behavior

and identity of certain participants. Additionally, it is also suggested to incorporate a variety of aspects such as gender, age, academic background, and length of exposure to the English language into consideration.

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