

## **Linguistic Strategy Used by Homosexuals in the Movie "I Love You Phillip Morris"**

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### **Abstract**

The aim of this study is to analyze the linguistics strategy usage: what strategies are used, the purpose of using it, and whether it meets the result wanted by the user. Also how a character building in a movie is affected by the usage of linguistic strategy in the dialogue. Linguistic strategy is strategy used in conversation for reaching purposes using the conversation. Linguistic strategy consists of many strategies, being interruption, indirectness, topic raising, silence, minimal response, and adversativeness among all of them. The subject of this study is the main characters of "I Love You Phillip Morris" Movie who are Steven Russel, Phillip Morris, and Jimmy Kemple. The data are taken from the utterances found in the movie dialogue, which are described by the theory of language and gender by Deborah Tannen. The method of this study is qualitative approach, with conversational and discourse analysis especially in the field of pragmatics are used to and interpret the data analysis. This study is closely related with the dominance in conversation. Because it is the dominance that mostly to determine of one's character. The data analysis of this study on the movie "I Love You Phillip Morris" dialogue finds that some strategies that provide dominance in conversation like interruption and topic raising contribute in building tough and reliable characters, while other strategies like indirectness can be considered contributing in a more gentle and careful character

**Key words:** *Linguistic strategy, dominance, character, homosexual.*

### **Abstrak**

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis penggunaan Linguistic Strategy : strategi apa yang digunakan , tujuan menggunakannya , dan apakah memenuhi hasil yang diinginkan oleh pengguna. Juga bagaimana pembangunan karakter dalam sebuah film dipengaruhi oleh penggunaan Linguistic Strategy dalam dialog . Linguistic Strategy adalah strategi yang digunakan dalam percakapan untuk mencapai tujuan menggunakan percakapan . Linguistic Strategy terdiri dari banyak strategi , *interruption, indirectness , topic raising, silence, minimal response* , dan *adversativeness* adalah salah satu dari banyak strategi . Subjek penelitian ini adalah karakter - karakter utama dari film " I Love You Phillip Morris " yaitu Steven Russel , Phillip Morris , dan Jimmy Kemple . Data yang diambil dari ucapan-ucapan yang ditemukan dalam dialog film , yang dijelaskan oleh teori *linguistic strategy* oleh Deborah Tannen . Metode penelitian ini adalah pendekatan kualitatif , dengan *discourse analysis* dan *conversation analysis* terutama di bidang pragmatik digunakan untuk menginterpretasikan dan analisis data. Penelitian ini berkaitan erat dengan dominasi dalam percakapan. Karena dominasi lah yang sebagian besar menentukan karakter seseorang . Analisis data penelitian ini di dialog film " I Love You Phillip Morris " menemukan bahwa beberapa strategi yang memberikan dominasi dalam percakapan seperti *interruption* dan *topic raising* berkontribusi dalam membangun karakter yang tangguh dan dapat diandalkan , sedangkan strategi lainnya seperti *indirectness* dapat dianggap memberikan kontribusi dalam karakter yang lebih lembut dan berhati-hati

**Kata-kata Kunci:** *Linguistic strategy, dominasi, karakter, homoseksual*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Language is one important aspect of human life. It is not possible for human to be able to communicate well as for now without the existence of language. Regardless of its creation and origin, people are still studying on this aspect of human life. This is why branches of language study existed such as semantics, sociolinguistics, pragmatics etc. They are created by human being to understand more about the language. Specifically a language is an important tool for human being to deliver their thought and messages each other.

Studies of analyzing language use in many occasion has been established from a long time ago,

many approach in their attempt to analyze language use are established and are compiled in a study field of discourse analysis. The basis of this analysis is the thought that language as a communication tool, can be seen in many perspective. It can be seen in transactional view where we directly see in the raw purpose of someone in using language to deliver message. Or in the other word a view to see language as its efficient function clearly without any other meaning behind their explicit message. Language can also be seen in interactional view, which is a perspective that believes language can has different purpose other than conveying message clearly and straightforwardly. Language, according to this view can also be a tool to establish and maintaing a social

relationship by using certain strategies which are then studied in the field of pragmatics study.

Regarding to strategy in conversation, Tannen (1996) believes in a conversation one can find linguistic strategies such as indirectness, silence or volubility, topic raising, adversativeness and interruption. Although most people don't realize that they use the strategies, they are there for a purpose. All of them do create or express dominance or subordination. The dominance and subordination can also be referred as power and closeness, or solidarity.

Further, Tannen (1996) believes that a relativity in linguistic strategy does exist. And the meaning of linguistic strategy can vary depend on the context which coping address, closeness, solidarity, gender and many more. Therefore this study also find the functions for each linguistic strategy as well as its effect to the interlocutor involved. This is due to tannen's theory that the response of interlocutor determine which meaning the linguistic strategy possess.

"I Love You Phillip Morris" movie which is the subject of this study is a movie with a theme of a gay couple's life, Steven Jay Russel and Phillip Morris. The storyline of this movie will be about the life of the homosexuals and how their relationship will progress through this. To make this study interesting, the element of homosexual is observed. The problem is whether or not linguistic strategy used in the movie dialogue. And if it used, what is the reason behind the use of each linguistic strategy. Understanding the reason of the use of linguistic strategy can not be seen only from the speaker point of view. But also from the interlocutor point of view. This is because as Tannen (1996) has stated in her book that linguistic strategy may have different meaning determined by the context involved. Therefore it is important to understand the effect of the linguistic strategy to the interlocutor. From the collected answer reader can understand how the movie writer build a character and the conflict along the movie "I Love You Phillip Morris"

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Based on the problem above, the research question can be stated as follows:

1. What do the students learn from simplified debate? What linguistic strategies are used by homosexuals in the movie "I Love You Phillip Morris"?
2. What are the factors affecting the use of linguistic strategies in Question 1 by homosexuals in the movie "I Love You Phillip Morris"?
3. What are the effects of using linguistic strategies in by homosexuals in the movie "I Love You Phillip Morris" to the interlocutors?

## **METHOD**

This study is a descriptive qualitative study where the study is designed to describe the observed phenomena with words rather than with numbers, because the subject of the study is movie dialogue script containing conversations that are hard to quantify and are easier to study while relying in interpretation using certain theory and considering context. Johnson and Christensen (2012:359) state that the descriptive qualitative study is a research relying primarily in the collection of qualitative data (non-numerical data such as words and pictures). The data are analyzed in the form of phenomenon description, not numeral or sufficient of cause and effect relationship.

This study focuses on the listing of the utterances of the homosexual in the movie "I Love You Phillip Morris" because it is related to the purpose of this study which is to understand about the use of linguistic strategy by homosexuals. Therefore it only focuses on certain utterance that has linguistic strategies in it to be analyzed later on.

## **Findings**

From the analysis of the strategies above, research question 1 has been answered. The strategies used by homosexuals are interruption, indirectness, topic raising, silence, adversativeness and minimal response.

While for the research question 2, it has been found that strategy like interruption has been used mainly for gaining dominance in conversation. The violence in turn taking system definitely showing the dominance of the user in the conversation floor. Also user can use interruption to get what they wanted from the interlocutor for example to stop talking or to silence the interlocutor, this is the purpose of the use of interruption as stated by West and Zimmerman

(1975) that Interruption can be used to control the flow of the conversation and gaining dominance.

The topic raising, similar to interruption, is used mainly for dominating the conversation floor. Topic raising affecting also the turn taking system by setting a topic at the beginning of the system thus making the interlocutor to choose to follow it or not. Topic raising is used also as the starter of making a conversation and ensure a conversation to be happened.

Another strategy that is used to gain dominance in conversation is adversativeness or engaging in verbal conflict. This strategy almost ensure that the user will gain dominance in conversation, moreover if the interlocutor are people with lack of dominance or like to avoid conflict. Adversativeness also can be used as a sign of anger, like in datum 15 where Steven used swearing word "fuck you" to create conflict that showing paramedic he is in anger. Similar to it, datum 19 contain swearing word that can led to conflict which is caused by anger of the user. Another function of adversativeness it to showing disagreement. In datum 21 and 24 Jimmy and Steven used the strategy to directly showing his anger and disagreement toward the insult from Debbie. The word "What the fuck are you talking about?" is a question but it is actually more of a sign of engaging conflict and not a simple question. If one answers the question with wrong answer, a conflict can be happen.

Silence can only mean that the silenced person is silenced based on this movie's dialogue. By silencing ourselves we let other people dominating in conversation.

Indirectness has function as a defensive strategy. This strategy allow the speaker to safely tell a meaning implicitly so that the user can revise it when it doesn't meet with the response it wants for example datum 1. In datum 1 Phillip said his feeling toward Steven implicitly so that he doesn't look too aggressive and can defend himself from upcoming response from Steven Or to convey a sensitive message without hurting the feeling of others. The example is datum 2

**STEVEN:** You don't like it.

**JIMMY:** I'm menstruating. Don't listen to me.

**STEVEN:** Tell me what's wrong with it. Is it the gold?

Jimmy used indirectness to convey his dislikeness to Steven by saying he is menstruating and not answering directly to the question. That way he can show his dislikeness in a way that doesn't hurt Steven's feeling compared to saying it directly.

Minimal response however, has much function other than showing disinterest toward topic indirectly. The example is datum 22 where Steven used "Oh, okay" to answer his boss request that he found difficulty to be done. This shows disinterest toward

the topic. Aside from it Minimal response can be a sign of time to change the topic where Steven felt annoyed when they talked about cops, thus suggesting to change the topic by using minimal response.

As to answer reseach question 3, effect to interlocutor of each strategy can be classified according to the type of strategy .

By using indirectness, one can deliver an idea implicitly to the interlocutor safely. And based on analysis above, indirectness is able to make the opposito realize and understand the ideas that are implicitly spoken or conveyed through indirectness. Also indirectness can stop interlocutor from making other conflict . Steven can avoid conflict by indirectly saying he has opened the box already with sense of guilt. This helps prevent conflict to happen from Debbie.

Interruption has effect to interlocutor to admit the dominance and fulfill the request whether it is implicitly spoken or directly spoken. Example is datum 5 where Steven succeeded in making Debbie stop and shorten her praying by interrupt her implicitly saying she needs to stop. Other than that it can also make the interlocutor to stop their turn at talking forcefully. Interruption can be a sign for interlocutor that their turn to talk should be ended.

Adversativeness can only be ended in 2 ways. First, either the interlocutor agreed to engage on the verbal conflict or not engaging in the conflict. This is similar to Topic Raising that give the interlocutor to follow the topic or not to follow the conflict.

One of the things that are considered for the analysis of the use of linguistic strategy is closeness of the user to the interlocutor. For example people with close relationship or high solidarity will be considered normal in doing the strategy of interruption. This is because close relationship will provide less polite and bold utterance in conversation because they have known each other for a long time and trust each other more than another people. High solidarity also means it is safer to use strategy that has a risk creating conflict like interruption and adversativeness. But even in a distant relationship, people can use the strategy for many reason. for example the mental state of the user. If the user is angry or panic, he tends using any strategies that allow him to engage in conflict. Study has proven that anger people are capable of using the strategy even to stranger that they are not close to. This boldness of them is meant to build the emotional and tempered character in the movie, for example Steven.

## Discussion

This study has found out that certain linguistic strategies can have different function each. And also the effect to the interlocutor can be different even when the strategy is the same. This is relevant to the theory of relativity of linguistic strategy by Deborah

Tannen (1996) that believes linguistics strategy can vary its function according to the context.

Not only merely function and effect, this study learned that linguistic strategy contributing to the conflict and character building in the movie. For example the tendency of a character to use dominating and intimidating strategies to interlocutor that doesn't has close relation to the speaker will make the speaker possess characteristic as a tough and emotional character. While the lack of those dominating strategies and tendency to use defensive strategies like indirectness will build a gentle character.

In the conflict on this movie, the characteristics of each character play a significant role as the high temper character will most likely solve their problem with engaging on conflict like when Steven use a lot of interruption and engage in verbal conflict to settle his problem with people surrounding him. His characteristic is also one of the reason why his relationship with Phillip often comes to a fight.

Similiar study is conducted on 2010 entitled "A Study of Linguistic Strategy Used by Bisexuals on the movie "Brokeback Mountain" Script" by Purwantari. The study also came up with linguistic strategy and movie as a subject. But what differ the two studies is that the previous study only analyze the use of linguistic strategy to a limited interlocutor which are the wife and their gay couple, also unlike this study, the effects to interlocutor in responding the strategies are not deeply observed thus it can't prove or improve the theory of relativity of linguistic strategy that require a deep analysis of the context of where, when and why a strategy is used.

### **Suggestion**

Some suggestions for the teacher, it is better if the teacher pays attention more to the student when they are having debate. In order when the students do not understand with the point from their opposite group statement, the teacher can explain it. Because if the students ask what their statement means, it can disturb their enjoyment in the debates section. The second, it is better for the teacher if she gives a feed back for the student in the last section. In order the students know their mistake when they were having debate. The further researcher can try to find other types of debate technique that might be better than the previous researcher. In choosing the type of debate, it is better for the next researcher used types of debate that can be implemented to the whole student, not only some students.

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