

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This section present background of the research, research problem, objective of the research, significance of the research, scope and limitations of the study each of these items elaborated clearly as follows:

A. Background of the Research

Language is an ability that humans possess from birth. Language was born when humans were given the ability to think. According to Goldstein, language is a system of communication using sounds or symbols that enables us to express our feelings, thoughts, ideas, and experience¹. On the other hand, Vygotsky stated that language is fundamental to cognitive development, shaping how we think and learn. In short, language is a means of communication, conveying thoughts, expressing feelings, and showing others that what is meant has meaning.² Through communication, humans can understand one another. When they can understand each other, humans can feel connected, and this connection brings emotional closeness that makes humans feel comfortable. The way one person shares their thoughts to each other, makes people find it easier to understand each other, avoids misunderstanding that leads to conflicts between humans, can be minimized, which

¹ Goldstein, E. B. (2008). *Cognitive psychology: Connecting mind, research, and everyday experience*. Thomson Wadsworth.

² Vygotsky, L. S. (1987). *Thinking and speech* (N. Minick, Trans.). Springer. (Original work published 1934)

makes life more peaceful. This closeness between humans also creates values of unity and increases the desire to protect one another. From this sense of comfort that comes from mutual understanding, people can gather and form a group. A group of people who have the same views, ideas, or thoughts about something and agree with those thoughts create something named ideology.

Over time, language has also evolved. Language, which was originally Language, which was originally only in the form of gestures and vocals, humans eventually learned to make a text. Text is the communication of thoughts by systematically arranging certain symbols called numbers, letters, consonants, etc. This makes human ideas and thoughts easier to remember. Ideas can be conveyed through symbols that have been agreed upon by a group of people to convey meaning, and they also become evidence of thoughts that stand the test of time. For example, when a lecturer teaches in class, we will forget more quickly if we only hear him or her deliver the material, but if we take notes and write down what is said, we can refresh our memory about the material at home. In its development, text has been able to reach people outside the text-makers area, provided that the target audience has agreed on the use of the same symbols. For example, we can create a post on Facebook using Indonesian language, and people around us who speak Indonesian can understand what we wrote. It is different if we make a post using English. Not everyone in Indonesia understands English, so few people around us who understand English will get the idea what we're trying to say, while those who don't use English will have trouble in understanding our post.

To date, texts can not be separated in our daily lives. We can find and read texts everywhere, both in digital media and in real world situations. The massive spread of texts are certainly the result of each individual's thoughts. Humans convey their intentions and feelings, trying to inform others about something for various reasons, according to their socio-cultural background and the phenomena occurring around them, then encouraging others to take action on the matter being discussed. This is what is called discourse. In short, discourse is an idea or thought that has been carefully constructed in order to make people take actions of this idea. Analyzing discourse serves to determine the speaker's motives or intentions towards the author of the text target audience, namely us, and to reveal what the author actually means that will encourage readers to take action. Of course, this must be done while paying attention to and considering the social and cultural aspects behind the text. The discourse itself makes the language hold power to engage people. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is an interdisciplinary approach that examines the relationship between language and power in society. It focuses on how discourse shapes, and is shaped by, social structures and ideologies. As stated by Fairclough, CDA seeks to "explore the ways in which language relates to social processes and structures, particularly in terms of power relations."³ This is also supported by the work of van Dijk, which emphasizes the importance of examining how language in songs can reinforce or challenge prevailing ideologies.⁴

³ Fairclough, N. (1995). *Critical discourse analysis: The critical study of language*. Longman. (pp. 132–133)

⁴ van Dijk, T. A. (1993). *Principles of critical discourse analysis*. *Discourse & Society*, 4(2), 249–283. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926593004002006>

The rapid development of language also led people to recognize that language does not only have literal meanings or intentions, but also other meanings or connotations. This is called representation. Representation in language refers to how language constructs or describes reality, identity, events, and social meaning through signs and symbols. The theory of representation in language emphasizes that language is not merely a neutral medium that reflects objective reality, but an active process that produces meaning and constructs social knowledge. One of the main perspectives on representation comes from cultural theorist Stuart Hall, who argues that representation is a process in which meaning is produced and exchanged between members of a culture through language and other sign systems. Such representation cannot be separated from ideology and power, as it shapes how people, groups, and social realities are understood and communicated⁵. Analysts study how representation in language relates to identity, power dynamics, and social relations. Examples of this include the use of figurative language, idioms, and metaphors, which do not always have direct meanings. Take a look on the phrase below:

I'm feeling blue.

Literally, this phrase is difficult to understand and does not make sense, because how can a person feel a color, the color blue? How can color be felt? Color can only be seen, so it must be the eyes, as the sense of sight, that influence the perception of the color blue. However, if we take a look at language and understand the broader context, we will know that "blue" is a symbol of sadness. This phrase

⁵Hall, S. (1997). *Representation: Cultural representations and signifying practices*. Sage Publications.

originated from the belief of people around the 16th century of the blue devil, a devil that is believed by the people living in that century could bring sadness to humans. Another theory is that it comes from the lowering of the captain's blue flag to signal that the captain had died. Later, this phrase has been passed down from generation to generation, until the current generation. Thus, "blue" in the phrase "I'm feeling blue" means sadness. The contextual meaning is: I am feeling sad. The theory of representation is useful for us to gain a deeper understanding of the broader context in which a word is used, adding to our understanding of the word's various meanings.

The theory of representation is very influential in presenting a thought, expressing feelings whose words are packaged with a certain harmony of tones. This shows that language is also used in music. A collection of words or rhymes that contain meaning in a written form of text is called lyrics. As we all know, music is inseparable from the current era. People use songs not only as a means of entertainment, but also to express feelings, convey information, and even criticism through song lyrics. This strengthens the findings of Arnot and Pinson, who stated that music serves as a catalyst for social movements and youth engagement. Music can be a powerful medium of criticism that unites people from various backgrounds to carry out collective movements to express their disagreement of certain thoughts⁶. Research by Kress and van Leeuwen supports the idea that visual and textual elements in musical discourse can influence audience perceptions and

⁶ Arnot, M., & Pinson, H. (2005). *Education, citizenship and social justice*. Routledge.

contribute to social change⁷. Music is a powerful medium that serves not only as a source of entertainment but also as a vital means of transferring messages and social values. Throughout history, music has played a significant role in shaping cultures and societies, influencing social norms and behaviors. Research conducted by Liu M. et al. has shown that music can foster social cohesion and community engagement, as it often brings people together during cultural events, celebrations, and protests⁸.

However, even though times have changed, in texts that have been widely spread over the years, women are rarely mentioned, portrayed, or even not portrayed at all. Even if they are, women are usually portrayed as objects, passive figures who have no control over how they are portrayed in the text. Object is something that receives action from something else, namely the subject. Meanwhile, a subject is something that performs actions on an object. Simply, the subject plays an active role while the object is affected by the actions performed by the subject.

This is because men have power or control, both in the dissemination of texts and in the creation of texts. This is one example of a patriarchal phenomenon, where men have more power or control and restrict the space for women to express themselves. Gerda Lerner explains patriarchy as emerging from historical processes in ancient Mesopotamia, where men institutionalized control over women's

⁷ Kress, G., & van Leeuwen, T. (2001). *Multimodal discourse: The modes and media of contemporary communication*. Arnold.

⁸ Liu, M., Hu, X., & Schedl, M. (2018). *The relation of culture, socio-economics, and friendship to music preferences: A large-scale, cross-country study*. PloS one, 13(12), e0208186.

reproductive and productive labor⁹. This system is maintained by legal, cultural, and ideological frameworks that reinforce male authority and female subordination. This imbalance shows that language is a tool of power. This relationship between language and power led Sara Mills to analyze the role of women in texts, showing the injustice system that limits women to present in the text. Her theory reveals how power relations can be conveyed through language by determining the subject and object and attempts to unravel the views, thoughts or ideas of the author of the text so that it can be understood by the reader. Mills emphasizes the importance of gender and identity in discourse, arguing that language not only reflects but also constructs social realities¹⁰. This theory is used as the ground for critical discourse analysis in the song lyrics of Voice of Baceprot.

Voice of Baceprot is a heavy metal band consisting of three young women from Indonesia whose music has reached the global market of music. The global popularity of Voice of Baceprot highlights the significance of their message beyond Indonesia. In their songs, Voice of Baceprot conveys social criticism through their choice of language and strong words in line with their heavy metal genre. As a part of women, Voice of Baceprot also voice their disapproval of gender inequality that causes injustice against women, and they convey a message to their listeners and readers of their lyrics to play a role in voicing this issue. As noted by Agha, the dissemination of cultural products can inquire stereotypes and foster understanding across different contexts¹¹. Voice of Baceprot international reach signifies the

⁹ Lerner, G. (1986). *The creation of patriarchy*. Oxford University Press

¹⁰ Mills, S. (1997). *Discourse*. Routledge.

¹¹ Agha, A. (2007). *Language and Social Relations*. Cambridge University Press.
Arnot, M., & Pinson, H. (2005). *Education, Social Justice, and the Role of Music*.

potential for their music to engage diverse audiences in conversations about gender and cultural identity.

The three songs analyzed in this study are: [NOT] PUBLIC PROPERTY, PMS, and Renegade Sheep. These three songs were chosen to find out how Voice of Baceprot represents women in their songs, as well as to find out how the subject-object position and the role of the reader are invited to feel and understand the phenomenon of gender inequality that occurs, and to understand the criticism conveyed through the song lyrics.

Various studies have been found related to this research by the researcher. The first study is a bachelor thesis by Shofi Lutfiana (2024) titled “Discourse Analysis on Greta Gerwig’s film ‘Little Women’ Utilizing Sara Mills Model.” The research results highlight the significance of feminism in literature pertaining to women's challenges and their quest for autonomy and respect within heavily patriarchal structures. The distinction between Shofi Lutfiana's study and this research is in the subjects employed. Past studies focus on the Little Women film as their subject, whereas this researcher examines the songs of Voice of Baceprot. Another difference is the past studies highlighted on the ideology theory of feminism in depth description and analysis, while in this study use additional representation theory to describe the context of the text analysis. The similarity is found in the object and the theory applied, as both investigate the portrayal of female figures, utilizing the Sara Mills perspective approach as the base theoretical framework.

The second previous research is a thesis by Anisa Sri I (2017) entitled “Analisis Wacana Sara Mills Mengenai Politik Tubuh Perempuan dalam Cerpen ‘Jangan Main-Main Dengan Kelaminmu’ karya Djenar Maesa Ayu”. Her study revealed that in this short story, women are viewed as sexual objects, with their physical appearance being the most important aspect and considered everything. In the narrative, the patriarchal system treats women unjustly, positioning men as superior, leading many women to become victims. The research by Anisa Sri I. and this study share similarities in their theoretical foundation, as both utilize the Sara Mills perspective approach. In contrast, Anisa's study examines short stories as research subjects, whereas this study focuses on analyzing song lyrics. Anisa's study only has one research problem, to explore the subject-object position of women and how the author and reader's position in the text. In this study, the research uses additional theory of representation to give in-depth understanding of the context of language used in the song lyrics.

From the previous studies mentioned above, there are similarities in each study, namely discussing critical discourse analysis using Sara Mills' model. Meanwhile, the differences lie in the final results of the research and the title or subject. In writing this thesis, the author wants to conduct research using a title or subject that is different from previous studies. Therefore, there has been no previous study using the same title as this thesis.

The researcher chose critical discourse analysis using Sara Mills model as a topic of this research because it provides a powerful tool for examining gender representation, power relations, and the cultural ideologies embedded in the text.

The researcher wants to explore how women are positioned as subjects or objects and to critique the underlying social structures that shape these portrayals. This makes it a suitable choice for analyzing song lyrics that involve themes of gender, identity, and power dynamics. The data in this research will be taken from Voice of Baceprot Songs entitled “[NOT] PUBLIC PROPERTY”, “PMS” and “Renegade Sheep”.

B. Statement of Research Problem

The problem statements in this research are as follows:

1. How does Voice of Baceprot represent women in their song lyrics?
2. How is the discourse of women’s representation constructed in Voice of Baceprot’s song lyrics based on Sara Mills approach?

C. The Purpose of The Research

Based on the research problems, the objectives of the research are:

1. To find out how VoB represents women in their song lyrics.
2. To identify discourse of women’s representation constructed in Voice of Baceprot’s song lyrics based on Sara Mills approach.

D. Significance of the Research

1. Theoretically

In theory, discourse analysis examines how language can form relationships and has the power to influence others in achieving goals, enabling researchers to understand that the study of language is a science that will always be relevant in social life. This is useful so the researcher can be more responsive to the issues at

hand and think of ways to resolve them. Moreover, this research possesses significant theoretical and practical importance in instructing discourse analysis via Sara Mills' model that focuses on sentence-level aspects that demonstrate sexism. Sara Mills model revitalizes feminist discourse analysis by examines sentence syntax, including subject-object positioning and passive constructions, in order to clarify the gender power dynamics embedded in linguistic structure. This research pushes the theory further into English language education, linking feminist stylistics with fundamental grammar teaching. In an Indonesian context, it supports the feminist linguistics literature with hands-on, testable examples that overcome cultural angles. The researcher hopes that this research can serve as a reference for future researchers in analyzing discourse and be developed with other subjects.

2. Practically

The result of this research is expected to give deeper understanding about critical discourse in analyzing song lyrics using Sara Mills' theory. For educators, this research furnishes accessible analytical tools for classroom implementation, exemplified by transforming sentences For educators, the study furnishes accessible analytical tools for classroom implementation, exemplified by transforming lyric lines in the Voice of Baceprot's songs, "Demonize me, with hell you threw" into active voice variants (e.g., "You threw hell to demonize me") to facilitate discussions on linguistic equity. Learners acquire practical competencies in identifying, deconstructing, and revising biased syntax, thereby enhancing critical literacy and equitable writing proficiency. This critical lens can lead to a deeper understanding of the text and its implications for contemporary gender issues. The

study expected that the portrayal of female characters as objects of violence and stereotypes can reinforce harmful societal norms. The researcher hopes this research will be useful for the reader, students, and the future researchers.

E. Limitation of the Research

In order to make the research more centered, the research is focused on critical discourse analysis using Sara Mills approach in VoB's song lyrics entitled [NOT] Public Property, PMS, and Renegade Sheep.

F. Definition of Key Terms

1. Representation

The description or portrayal of someone or something in a particular way or as having a particular quality. (Oxford Dictionary).

2. Women

Female human beings (plural form of woman), typically considered as adult females. (Merriam Webster Dictionary).

3. Song

Song is a typically quick piece of tune with phrases which might be sung. (Cambridge Dictionary Third Edition).

4. Critical Discourse

Critical Discourse Analysis is a method for examining how discourse (spoken or written) contributes to the production and reproduction of power relations in society.

5. Sara Mills Framework

Sara Mills Framework studies how characters in a text are described by the writer. It also looks at the position of each character in each social context, what their ideas are, and what the events look like.