

POLARI ANALYSIS BASED ON THE MEANING AND THE CONTEXT OF SITUATION ON GUS VAN SANT'S *MILK*

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Abstrak

Jurnal ini difokuskan untuk mentelaah percakapan yang muncul dalam film “Milk” berdasarkan teori Meaning dari Leech dan teori Context of Situation dari Halliday. Data untuk paper ini diperoleh dari satu film “Milk” karya Gus Van Sant dan teknik pengumpulan data yang digunakan adalah dokumentasi. Sedangkan metode dan teknik analisa data yang digunakan adalah kualitatif. Temuan yang diperoleh dari analisis Polari dalam “Teori Meaning” yaitu Denotative Meaning, Connotative Meaning, Stylistic Meaning dan Reflected Meaning sedangkan dalam analisis “Context of Situation” yaitu “Field” dari percakapan tersebut adalah tentang pergerakan kebebasan kaum gay, kemudian “Tenor” dari film ini adalah semua karakter didalam percakapan. Dan “Mode” dari percakapan tersebut adalah bahasa lisan (spoken).

Keywords: *polari, context of situation, meaning, film, script.*

1. Background

The study of the interaction between minority population and communication practices is a small but a growing field. One form of institutional oppressions is the use of exclusive language. The term “exclusive language” has been used by various authors to imply that certain language marginalizes particular groups, thereby preventing them from accessing the power structure that is enjoyed by others. An example of exclusive language is sexist language. Such language is denoted when people refer to occupations that can be held by either men or women by using gendered language (i.e., chairman, fireman, policeman vs. chair, firefighter, and police officer). Sexist language reinforces social stereotypes or norms that intrinsically contain the idea that one gender is superior to the other. One of the possible causes and symptoms of the perceived marginalization of queer populations is the omnipresence of heterosexism and heterosexist language.

One of the most interesting linguistic aspects of *Milk* was the use of Polari in the dialogues, a spoken secret variety of language. Gay liberation means that Polari is well served on the web, and a number of sites are linked to the Polari site – not identical with the site just quoted. It clearly derives its semantic content from various sources, back slang and cockney rhyming slang, for instance. As Polari was rarely written down and was not a standardized form of language, its form tended to vary depending on different groups of speakers. Almost all speakers used a core

lexicon (Stanley 1970) of about twenty words, but many other speakers made use of a wider fringe lexicon, containing words and meanings not known to other speakers.

2. **Problem of the study**

There are some problems that can be formulated related to the use of Polari on Gus Van Sant's *Milk*, which are follows:

1. What are the differences in meaning of Polari words used in *Milk* compared to the Standard English?
2. In what context of situations Polari is used in *Milk*?

3. **Aim of the study**

The following terms are being proposed as the aims of study:

1. To find out the meaning of Polari words used in *Milk* compared with the Standard English.
2. To analyse the context of the situations of Polari used in *Milk*.

4. **Research Method**

The data were taken from a film entitled *Milk* by Gus Van Sant (2008), *Milk* film by Gus Van Sant based on true story of Gay movement in the Castro, Eureka Valley, and San Francisco. The method used in collecting the data was documentation. Documentation is the way to collect data by recording or reporting of the fact of something, especially by using picture, recording, note taking, etc. To find out the Polari words, the data source were read thoroughly and then relevant points were collected using note taking method. The data were collected through some steps. In this study, the procedures used in collecting data are: (1) watching the film repeatedly; (2) note taking the Polari words found in the film by checking in the Polari dictionary and Oxford dictionary whether they are Polari words or not; (3) reading the script; (4) comparing the Polari words in the film and in the script. The collected data were analyzed using qualitative method. Based on the book entitled "The Analysis of Qualitative Data" by Miles (1992), qualitative method is a kind of analysis method which is used the data in form of words not number, qualitative method provides a wide descriptive of process that happened in the area which is analyzed. Polari words were analyzed with *Polari Dictionary* (cited in <http://members.xoom.com/MrRDunn/polari-dict.html>) and *Oxford Advanced Learner Dictionary 7th Edition* (Oxford University Press 2005). The Polari words also were analyzed as the types of meaning based on the theory proposed by Leech (1974). Secondly, analyzing the context of the situation in the conversation using Polari words in term of field, tenor, and mode of discourse based on the theory in Halliday (1985).

5. Analysis

The Analysis of Denotative Meaning

The word 'gay' in the line 3 (in the first conversation) involved denotative meaning because it has the same meaning in Oxford Dictionary and Polari Dictionary. According to Leech (1974, p11), conceptual meaning is very important because it is related to similar organizations on the syntactic and phonological levels of language. In other words, the semantic level of natural language has its own constituent structure just as the syntactic level. Denotative meaning is the surface meaning of a word or an expression.

The Three Features of Context of Situations

The field of the text which is stated in above monologue is the self-tape what Harvey has recorded. It reveals the insecurity of him as a gay or a person with different sexual preferences or which is violating the common order what the heterosexual people believe as the right one. Harvey, as an activist he is aware that he must be ready to stand for whatever will happen to him because he knew that homosexual is not accepted. Tenor, in this analysis who is taking part in this case was Harvey, while he recorded his speech about who he was. Sean Penn, the actor in this film, never tries to show Harvey Milk as a hero, and never needs to. He shows him as an ordinary man, kind, funny, flawed, shrewd, idealistic, yearning for a better world. He shows what such an ordinary man can achieve. Milk was the right person in the right place at the right time, and he rose to the occasion. The mode term used in the text belongs to Polari, where it is also used by common people to describe "gay" as a homosexual. So in both Polari or general term, the word gay is commonly used.

The Analysis of Stylistic Meaning

The word 'come out' (Line 13) conveys stylistic meaning, because the meaning of *come out* is closely related to aspect of communication which has to do with the situation in which an utterance takes place. Leech (1974:16) stated that stylistic meaning is a piece of language which conveys the social circumstances of its use. By this meaning which is already explained on the table, the speaker and the writer decode the stylistic meaning of a text through the recognition of different dimensions and levels of usage within the same language.

The Three Features of Context of Situations

This script happened in the Cleve's apartment when the field of the text is the gathering of Harvey and his friends, where they were having a discussion about how to influence homosexuals to reveal their sexual identities. Harvey's agenda is to change the Old Democratic way to be the Liberal one. In the story, Harvey was very optimistic if all homosexuals in California would come out, he would win his vote. The latest campaign was a success, as Milk was elected supervisor for the newly zoned District 5. Milk served San Francisco well while lobbying for a citywide ordinance protecting people from being fired because of their orientation—and rallying support against a proposed statewide referendum to fire gay schoolteachers and their supporters; he realized that this fight against Proposition 6 represents a pivotal precipice for the gay rights movement. At the same time, the political agendas of Milk and those of another newly elected supervisor, Dan White, increasingly diverge and their personal destinies tragically converge. Milk's platform was and is one of hope—a hero's legacy that resonates in the here and now. There were three figures were taking part in this scene, they Cleve Jones who was very pessimistic about Harvey winning the vote and he gave up to the Old Democracy, Jim Rivaldo who was extremely against Cleve's thought that Harvey would not make it, he strongly believed that if every homosexuals came out, Harvey would win, Harvey who was a main character of the story, wanted to make a gay movement in California, that every gay must come out their closests to make everyone out there aware and realise that gay people also have rights to live in freedom. The mode term used in the text belongs to Polari, where it is used to describe “come out” as a declaration of one's sexual identity. In the text it is mentioned in the sentence “Everybody's coming out”

The Analysis of Connotative Meaning

The word 'rent' in line 13 (in the fourth conversation) has connotative meaning. In this conversation, it means a prostitute. Connotative meaning is communicated by virtue of what language refers to, over and above its purely conceptual content. Connotative meaning appears as result of feeling association language user to the words heard or read.

The Three Features of Context of Situations

The field in this scene described how Harvey delivered his complained to the Mayor. He knew that Dan already sent his resignation but he also proposed again as a new City Supervisor with his new voters, Police Officers Assosiation. But, the Mayor has already had his opinion about Dan secretly. His most fateful relationship was with Dan White, a seemingly straight member of the Board of Supervisors, a Catholic who said homosexuality was a sin and campaigned with his wife, kids and the American flag. An awkward alliance

formed between Milk and White, who was probably gay and used their areas of political agreement as a beard. "I think he's one of us," Milk confided. The only gay supervisor, Milk was the only supervisor invited to the baptism of White's new baby. White was an alcoholic who all but revealed his sexuality to Milk during a drunken tirade became unbalanced, resigned his position and on Nov. 27, 1978, walked into City Hall and assassinated Milk and Mayor George Moscone. Since tenor who is taking part of these scene, there are two figures is taking part, they are: Harvey Milk, protagonist complained to the Mayor about what he saw. Accordance with procedure, Dan should not propose for the next election. In other hand, he proceeded it with the new voters. Mayor Moscone arranged his decisions for what Harvey's objection. The result would be conveyed on Monday. The language of figures in the text was used Polari. For distance there was a polari word, that is "rent". These word representing to mention male prostitute. On the text this word was used in "Cement rent control".

The Analysis of Reflected Meaning

Based on the conversation in the fifth conversation, the word 'lefty' found in line 3 is called reflected meaning, because this word meaning does not intends to the Oxford Dictionary as usually people know, but the word *lefty* here is associated with bed according to the Polari Dictionary. The function is used to deliver the new sense of a word that relates to another phenomenon.

The Three Features of Context of Situation

The field was taking place at the City Hall which occurred on 147, it described vividly about the field of the text which is the witting of a new City Supervisor which was already chosen by the Mayor. In this and the next scene narrated that Mayor Moscone and Harvey been assassinated by Dan in the office. There were two figures taking part in this scene, they are: Harvey Milk who looked in a hurry for meeting up the Mayor. He wanted to know for the new city supervisor that he announced to Harvey the last day they talked to and Dianne Feinstein who told Harvey if there was a new City Supervisor and it wasn't Dan. The language of figures in the text used Polari. For distance there was a polari word that is "lefty". These words represent to mention bed. On the text this word was used in "is he replacing Dan with that God Damned liberal lefty Don Horanzy?"

6. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of the meaning of Polari used in *Milk*, in the previous chapter, there are four types of meaning found in the script. Those are denotative meaning, what is the ordinary dictionary everyday meaning of a word or expression; connotative meaning, what is communicated by virtue of language refers to; stylistic meaning, what is communicated of social circumstances of language use; and reflected meaning, what is communicated through association with another sense.

And the last, the context of situation affects the understanding at the message which is conveyed by the text in this film. Based on the three heading of context of situation, the film can be described such as field, tenor, and mode. Field refers to the subject matter or product itself. Tenor concerns with the social relation, existing between the interactants in a speech situations. Mode concerns with the language which is used in some polari word. In the whole of explanation of context of situation which was already analyzed in the previous chapter, it stated out to give a briefly information of the social phenomena.

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