



A Critical Discourse Analysis of Women's Disempowerment in a Movie: A Case Study of Changeling

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Abstract

The purposes of this study were to identify women's disempowerment factors found in a movie dialogue investigated at discourse and sentence levels and to identify how each factor is reflected through a movie discourse. The dialogues are from the movie "Changeling" and there were a total of eight dialogues in the movie script that reflected some characteristics of the disempowerment. Thus, with the implementation of critical discourse analysis, the researcher further analyzed those eight dialogues as the main samples to reveal the occurrence frequency of women's disempowerment factors such as gender roles, powerlessness, violence against women as well as how those factors were presented in the characters' discourses. According to the findings, the highest percentage of occurrence frequency fell into the violence against women factor, yet the gender roles factor is found at the lowest percentage. Furthermore, this research also reflected the cultural problems regarding the hierarchical inequality between female and male through their social status and roles. However, the findings of this research interestingly triggers the need for further investigation on both scripts and scenes of a movie to understand the in-depth views on how cultural issues are presented via those channels; especially the issues related to verbal and non-verbal communication.

Introduction

From a holistic point of view, Woman's disempowerment involves various factors causing difficulties in women's lives since power, authority, and influence in society are deprived, and this social phenomenon could be seen through several dimensions such as oppression, victimization, powerlessness, violence, poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, social status

as well as cultural and religious practices (Merriam Webster, 1828; Sinclair, 2012; Nkealah, 2017; Edlund, 2016). From the researchers' point of view, it can seem that any attempts, both behavioral and ideological methods, to obstruct women from gaining their rights, authority, and power as well as to reduce their ability to control their own lives are considered as the disempowerment of women. Moreover, the root of this

problematic issue is the ideology of men's domination of women under the patriarchal norms in society which are sometimes transmitted in a particular culture by ideology, family, workplace, organizations and the political system that use power to oppress women through various social activities including worship, law, language, custom, idioms, education, and the division of labor (Jackson, 2018; Josiah, 2002 as cited in Khopolklang, Polnigongit & Chamnongsri 2014). Apart from this aforesaid transmission, women's disempowerment unconsciously appears in media, especially the broadcasting media (e.g., television, radio, cable television) and films based on characters' discourses. Moreover, the language in characters' dialogues greatly influence the portrayal of sexual violence through cultural productions, stereotypes, and presentations (Khopolklang et., al, 2014). Therefore, this could predict that the more problematic issues unintentionally portrayed in media, the higher the tendency of people to absorb such norms, which could unfortunately turn to be a normal perception in society (i.e., normalization).

As a result of this concern, an investigation on the imbalance of power and equality through film has been recently popular among academics and scholars. For instance, Chairiah (2010) investigated "gender issues in Clint Eastwood's *Changeling* (2008)" and has revealed the gender discrimination, inequality, and violence against women through the film characters. The study showed the gender discrimination in the law sector through the scene that Christine begged for the right over her real son, but it turned out that she was suddenly referred to a psychiatric hospital as a mental-ill person despite her fit attributes. More recently, Bililigne (2012) studied "Female Disempowerment: Some Expressions in Amharic." examining Amharic proverbs and literal expressions that refer to females. Furthermore, the expressions of this study were analyzed through the theory of "dominance" by Thorne and Henley (1975) stating that "social norms are established dominantly by men." The results showed various themes which illustrate women as inferior, talkative, ill-natured, dependent, and so forth. In some context, women themselves accept the superiority of men, and they are systematically forced to be powerless which led to less participation in political, social, economic movements in society.

Besides, some dialogues in this movie also sparked the researchers' interest, especially the three sentences in the film that were linked to the disempowerment issues such as (1) "Mrs. Collins...do

you still insist that the boy out there is not your son?", (2) "you are to convey the prisoner to the Los Angeles County General Hospital Psychopathic Ward and," and (3) "no wait, you can't." These three sentences show that Christine has become powerless to fight for the right for her real son and cannot protect herself from such allegations, so this can be inferred that these sentences relate to the powerlessness factor of women's disempowerment. Moreover, the researchers still wondered if there were any other factors of women's disempowerment which was unintentionally presented through the film. Thus, the researchers decided to further study this issue to reveal more factors of women's disempowerment hidden in the characters' discourse in the film *Changeling*.

Objectives

The research objectives were to identify women's disempowerment factors that are mostly found in the movie dialogues at the discourse and sentence levels and to describe how women's disempowerment factors are reflected through movie dialogues. Additionally, the findings primarily aimed at answering the research questions including, 1) What are the women's disempowerment factors mostly found in the movie dialogues at the discourse and sentence levels? and 2) How are the women's disempowerment factors reflected through the movie dialogues?

Conceptual Framework

The theoretical frameworks used to identify the factors of women's disempowerment and to analyze the phenomenon regarding the inequality of power through a film written script are presented as follow:

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

The critical discourse analysis (CDA) was employed as the pathway for analyzing the hidden meaning of social power and disempowerment and gender inequality in dialogues of a movie's written script. Based on its definition according to Van Dijk (2015) and Fairclough (2012), CDA was defined as the field which analyzes written and spoken texts to reveal the discursive sources of power, dominance, inequality, and bias, and it is also used to investigate how these discursive sources are maintained and reproduced within the specific social, political, and historical contexts. Furthermore, it focuses on the three central and constitutive concepts such as power, ideology and critique, especially inequality of power between social

classes, genders, and ethnic and cultural majorities and minorities through how they represent things and position people (Fairclough, 1993; Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). In sum, CDA is “a type of discourse analysis that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by texts and talks in social and political contexts” (Van Dijk, 2014).

Disempowerment

Young, Vance & Harris (2007) defined a disempowering act as any intentional or unintentional, verbal, or nonverbal behaviors such as intimidating, hostile, and demeaning. Furthermore, they also stated that disempowerment experience is more likely to result in lowered self-effectiveness, self-confidence, perceived personal control and power, and motivation. Furthermore, Nilsson explained that disempowerment takes the shape of a dictatorship by a powerful one establishing forceful control over others through intimidation (Nilsson, 2015, as cited in Friedman, 1998). In brief, disempowerment can be viewed as any actions (e.g., intimidation, hostile, and demeaning) made by a powerful individual to disempower others.

The women’s disempowerment issue is defined by Merriam Webster (1828) as a process in which women are deprived of power, authority, and influence. The disempowerment of women comes from two main causes as follow: (1) general causes such as a lack of possession of productive assets, a lack of skills, and gender discrimination as well as general beliefs and (2) specific causes including illiteracy, a lack of organization, a lack of awareness and information, the exclusion in household decisions relating to the size of the family, education, marriage of female children, and the like. This will result in weakness, ineffectiveness, and unimportance. Importantly, it involves oppression, powerlessness, and sometimes violence (Sinclair, 2012). Therefore, these causes possibly promote the problem of women’s disempowerment and other cultural problems in society.

Factors contributing to the women’s disempowerment

After reviewing the related theoretical framework concerning the power and cultural dimensions, the researchers scrutinized the critical four factors engendering women’s disempowerment as follows:

1) Gender Roles

As stated by Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, (2010), biological constraints were not only differences

in terms of bodies, but they were also the social roles between two genders. Specifically, it can be said that “gender roles lead to gender stereotypes and finally promote different social roles” (Burn, 2005). For instance, women are concentrated to work at home and domestic domain (e.g., child bearers, childcare, good wife, and mother), while men performed as labor outside the home (Burn, 2005; Richardson & Robinson, 2008). Moreover, men are viewed as taller and stronger while women are considered weaker and more sensitive. Thus, the proper behaviors and roles between females and males in society are different fossilized (Hofstede et al., 2010). In short, the aforesaid beliefs and expectations seem to be a deeply rooted cause of differences in gender roles in societies.

2) Powerlessness

Powerlessness refers to the ‘social power’—focusing on how people in society distribute power, especially when it comes to unequal distribution as ones may lack of opportunities to make their own decision and be under control of others whether in the workplace or the home (Hanafin, 2016) Moreover, ‘power’ and ‘society’ can be linked to the cultural dimension by Hofstede (1991) called “power distance’ which studies the way people in some cultures accept a higher degree of unequally distributed power. Furthermore, Ashforth (1989) has defined powerlessness as a lack of participation and autonomy. He claimed that participation is related to the degree of the individual that has input or influence over decisions and autonomy concerns about the freedom of an individual. Additionally, Ashforth (1989) grouped the models of powerlessness experiences in an organization into three groups which are: reactance, helplessness, and alienation.

To clarify, the stage of *reactance* is an individual’s desire to control their environment and the immediate parameters of their work and decisions. Furthermore, if the greater of an individual has less autonomy and participation, the greater unmet expectations and desires will occur. In other words, this sense can be called “reality shock,” and this shock is more likely to engender a certain degree of frustration and anxiety. Another stage is *helplessness* which occurs when there is a lack of participation and autonomy. Helplessness can be explained under two circumstances including: (1) it is self-induced dependence or the experience by a lack of control which can be inferred to helplessness (e.g., demanding social labels, tasks, or work settings, observing or hearing of the experiences of social

referents) and (2) helplessness can be countered with the very bureaucratic operations. So, this stage can be concluded that it stems from the reactance and resentment, which likely exacerbate the helplessness experienced under conditions of high powerlessness. The last powerlessness model is *the work alienation* which is the stage that individual is likely to desire the indirect control through the belief and predictability, in which powerful individuals control others. Moreover, powerlessness also predicted a lack of “self-evaluative involvement” and instrumental work orientation among workers. So, the effect of powerlessness on work alienation is the perception of helplessness. Consequently, we can see that these three stages associate each other depending on stricter and context. In sum, this factor is a lack of authority, capacity, influence, participation, autonomy, and power for making decisions and doing what people want, and it may occur when power distance in society are unequally distributed. Absolutely, it can also lead people to suffer, depression, hopelessness, helplessness, and reactance as well.

3) Violence against women

According to Haseena (2015), one of the crucial factors that adversely affected the development and empowerment of women is the violence against women (VAW). This factor of disempower is an under-recognized issue and complex phenomenon in the world. It is widespread, but it is not universal. VAW can lead women to physical and mental health problems, and it can decrease their self-esteem as well (World Health Organization, 2005). Furthermore, VAW can be connected to the term ‘gender violence’ or ‘gender-based violence (GBV).’ GBV largely stems from women’s subordinate status in society (men’s power over women) referring to women’s lower status and power than men, and it leads to the abuse of women and girls in a society (Burn, 2005; World Health Organization, 2005). Moreover, the United Nations (2013) also discussed that violence against women has the root cause of gender inequality and discrimination which are influenced by the power imbalances between women and men across all communities worldwide. The three main types of violence against women can be summarized as follows:

First, *the Physical Violence Against Women* is any act that causes physical harm and injury among women including physical forces. Physical violence can occur in many forms, for instance, serious assault, deprivation of liberty, domestic violence, dowry death, and honor killing (Burn, 2005). Another type of violence against

women is *the Sexual Violence Against Women* refers to any sexual acts and abuses which can take the form of rape or sexual assault, and it includes prostitution as well (Burn, 2005). The last type is called *the Psychological Violence Against Women* which is any act that causes psychological harm to an individual. Additionally, psychological violence can take the form of, for example, coercion, defamation, verbal insult, or harassment. And physical violence also includes intimidation (e.g., scaring with looks, gestures, or screams, throwing objects, or destroying property), disdain (e.g., treating the others person as inferior, making important decisions without consulting with others), and as well as isolation (e.g., abusive control of others’ life by watching over their acts and movements, just listening to their conversation) (Casique & Furegato, 2006).

4) Oppression

According to Crossman (2018), oppression is the process of gaining power which includes the systematic mistreatment, exploitation, and abuse of people by another group and the use of force on others. So, an oppressive system is built as the superiority of some groups over the inferiority of others through the control of institutions, organizations, or even society’s law. Furthermore, Abberley (1987) has cited the concept of oppression from (Eisenstein, 1979) which claimed that “the oppression refers to women and minorities within patriarchal, racist, and capitalist relations.” In other words, this means that “women’s oppression occurs from the relations that define their existence in the patriarchal sexual hierarchy. Crossman (2018) also stated that social oppression occurs due to the different positions within the social hierarchies of race, class, gender, sexuality, and ability. For those who control others, they can gain greater access to rights and resources, a better quality of life, and better life chances. In converse, those who are oppressed may have fewer rights, less access to resources, lower overall life chances, as well as less political power in society. Moreover, under the oppression concept in labor power by Richards and Saba (1990), working-class women are likely to be oppressed and subordinated to the men of their class. Therefore, these related theories and four factors will be used to measure and examine the women’s disempowerment issues in the film’s written script. Nevertheless, the study focused mainly on the significant related factors as the criterion to prove the presentation of women’s disempowerment.

Research Methodology

Populations and Samples

The data source is the dialogue script of the *Changeling* movie. The purposive sampling technique was used in sample selection, and all dialogues in the movie were chosen to be analyzed at discourse and sentence levels. Regarding the movie's background, written by J. Michael Straczynski, is an American mystery crime drama film which is directed and produced by Clint Eastwood and released in 2008. The movie is based on the true story that happened in 1928 in Los Angeles. The story is about a single mother named Christine Collins (portrayed by Angelina Jolie) who lost her kidnapped son 'Walter.' Five months after the kidnapping of her son, Captain J.J. Jones, the head of LAPD's Juvenile Division brings a new son to her. However, Collins insists that he is not her son, and she tries to convince Captain Jones by describing the physical differences between her real son and the impostor. Moreover, Collins tries to do everything to find her real son, but it turns out that Captain Jones; alleges that she is an unfit mother and sends her to Los Angeles Hospital's psychopathic ward. From this circumstance, the issues in this movie, especially the disempowerment of women and inequality, spark the researchers' interests and leads to the investigation of this phenomenon for broadening the wider view on this issue.

Research Instrument

The research employed the descriptive statistics including frequencies and a percentage to illustrate the factor representations in selected dialogues. The number of occurrence frequency of each factor was turned into a percentage—calculated based on the total number of all talk sequences and all statistical data were reported through tables. Besides, a qualitative method was used to analyze how those factors are reflected in the movie dialogues through critical discourse analysis (CDA) to reveal the discursive sources of power, dominance, inequality, and bias—under the umbrella of the theoretical frameworks in chapter two. In addition, the CDA was used to examine how these discursive sources are maintained and reproduced within specific social contexts (Van Dijk as cited in Sheyholislami, 2019).

Collection of Data

All dialogues between all male and female characters from the written script were studied at discourse (the holistic view) and the sentence levels (the interaction between characters in each sentence). From the preliminary investigation with a purposive sampling

technique, there were a total of eight dialogues from the movie script that linked to the four factors of women's disempowerment. When looking thoroughly in each dialogue at a sentence level, it showed that one dialogue could reveal more than one factor. Moreover, the analysis of the utterances in dialogues were conducted under the four factors contributing to women's disempowerment. The detailed criteria of such factors are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Factors contributing to women's disempowerment

Factors	Descriptions
Gender Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Males as a leader (dominance) with higher status, and more powerful than females (Subordinator). - Males as working outside the home. - Females as a domestic household worker (e.g., child bearers, childcare, good wife, and mother).
Powerlessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deprivation and the lack of the authority, capacity, influence, and power to act. - Being connected to high power distance (e.g., a large gap between superiors and subordinates).
Violence against women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Physical violence against women: any act causing physical harm, injury, and physical force (e.g., serious assault, domestic violence, dowry death, and honor killing). - Sexual violence against women: any sexual act and abuse (e.g., rape or sexual assault and prostitution). - Psychological violence against women: any act causing psychological harm (e.g., coercion, defamation, verbal insult, harassment, intimidation, disdain, and isolation).
Oppression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Any acts of mistreatment, exploitation, abuse by another group. - Any acts of gaining power over the inferior groups.

Data Analysis

The representation of women's disempowerment from 8 dialogues was analyzed through CDA approach under the four major concepts of women's disempowerment including gender roles, powerlessness, violence against women and oppression. Then the results are presented

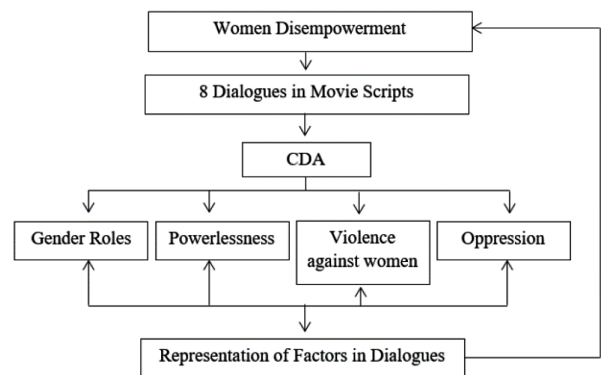


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

in two different ways; descriptive statistics and critical discourse analysis; to answer the research questions. Furthermore, to understand the concept of data investigation and analysis, the conceptual framework is presented in Figure 1 below:

Results

To answer the first question of this study: “what women’s disempowerment factors are mostly found in the movie dialogues at the discourse and sentence levels?”, the frequency of occurrence of factors were initially reported by using percentages based on the overall number of talk sequences reflecting women’s disempowerment. There are 33 talk sequences found from 8 dialogues as shown in Table 2 below:

Table 2 The occurrence frequency of the women’s disempowerment factors (WD)

Dialogues	No. of Talk Sequences Reflected WD	Factors Contributing to Woman’s disempowerment			
		Gender Roles	Powerlessness	Violence Against Women	Oppression
1	3	-	3	-	-
2	4	-	3	1	-
3	8	1	2	6	-
4	6	-	4	3	-
5	1	1	-	-	-
6	2	-	-	2	-
7	8	-	1	6	3
8	1	-	-	1	1
Total Talk Sequences	33	2	13	20	4
Total Percentage (100%)		6.06%	39.39%	60.60%	12.12%

According to Table 2, eight dialogues were selected from the movie script to investigate the factors contributing to the disempowerment of women. Based on the holistic view, there are 33 factors that outnumbered the total number of talk sequences. Furthermore, some talk sequences in each dialogue reflected more than one factor. To begin with, there are four main factors of women’s disempowerment including 1) gender roles, 2) powerlessness, 3) violence against women, and 4) oppression. As can be seen from t Table 2, the highest percentage of occurrence significantly fell into the factor of violence against women (60.60%), followed by powerlessness which is frequently found at 39.39% and 12.12% for oppression, respectively. Moreover, for the lowest frequency of occurrence, it was found in the dimension of gender roles with a percentage of 6.06%.

Apart from the occurrence frequency of the

women’s disempowerment factors as presented above, the researchers followed the critical discourse analysis framework to further analyze how such factors were presented in the movie dialogues. Some examples of the detailed analysis are as follows:

Gender Roles

Based on the investigation of all selected dialogues, the researchers found the factor of gender roles in Dialogue 3. This dialogue was a conversation between male and female characters namely, Jones and Christine, and it took place at a police station. The example of the dialogue’s analysis in gender roles factor will be illustrated below.

Dialogue 3
 INT. STATION - BULLPEN
 [1] JONES: Mrs. Collins.
 Christine starts to take “Walter’s” hand when a matron appears.
 [2] JONES: {Leave the boy for now. We'll look after him.}
 She hands “Walter” over to the matron, then enters
 INT. JONES' OFFICE
 He leaves the door open and indicates for Christine to sit.
 She does. He paces, working up to what he’s going to do.
 [3] JONES: {You’ve put us through quite a bit of trouble, Mrs. Collins. This situation has become an embarrassment for the entire department.}
 [4] CHRISTINE: It wasn't my intention to embarrass anyone.
 [5] JONES: No, of course not. You just told the papers we can't tell one boy from another as a compliment for the months we spent working on your case. Are you trying to make fools out of us? Is that it? Do you enjoy this?
 [6] CHRISTINE: {No, of course not. I had to get your attention; I had to make you understand...he's not my son.}
 He circles, closing in on her. She becomes aware that the door is open, and he's doing this for the benefit of anyone who might be listening in.
 [7] JONES: {*You know what your problem is? You want to shirk your responsibilities as a mother.*}^{GR} {You enjoyed being a free woman, didn't you? Enjoyed not having to worry about a young son. You could do what you wanted, go where you wanted, see anyone you wanted.}

GR represented “gender roles”

According to this dialogue, the factor of gender roles has been revealed through the sentences in the talk sequence [7]. To further explain, this talk sequence was stated by Jones, “You want to shirk your responsibilities as a mother.” This utterance can assume that Jones believes that the role of women is mainly related to the childcare as mothers since he mentioned “You enjoyed being a free woman, didn't you? Enjoyed not having to worry about a young son.” In this sense, it can be implied that ‘a free woman’ may refer to a mother with no responsibility to take care of the kids. On the contrary, this perception can somewhat be interpreted that a person mainly taking care of children in the family should only be ‘a woman’ since there is no male’s role as a child

guardian being mentioned by Jones and he also backed up his belief by saying “Enjoyed not having to worry about a young son” which possibly imprinted the role of woman as a mother or a child guardian.

It is clear that the previous statement is related to the perception of women’s gender role according to Hofstede et al. (2010) stating that the main females’ duties included taking care of homes, children, and people in general. Furthermore, Hofstede et al. (2010) also stated female gender roles that they are more concerned with the traditional gender roles of doing house-work activities, including cooking, doing the laundry, especially doing childcare. Thereby, the findings clearly showed that the traditional roles are still attached to the female genders in society. Moreover, the gender role can possibly link to the thought that shapes the perspective of women power in society as well.

Powerlessness

Several powerlessness factors were frequently found from the movie script, and the explicit example appears in Dialogue 4 which was a conversational context among three characters including Jones, matron, nurse, and Christine. The context was taken place at the hospital and the analysis will be discussed as follow.

Dialogue 4

INT. LA COUNTY GENERAL HOSPITAL-RECEIVING AREA-DAY

A sterile, dreary, white-on-white place where in the background, we can HEAR the sounds of the insane crying out. The matron leads a stunned Christine to the front desk.

[3] JONES (V.O.): {She suffers from paranoia, delusions of persecution, and dislocation from reality. She may be a threat to herself or others. We recommend that she be conveyed to the psychopathic ward for treatment and observation until her senses can be restored.}

The matron stops before the desk. The NURSE barely looks up.

[4] MATRON: Got another code twelve.

[5] NURSE: Name?

[6] MATRON: Collins. Christine.

[7] CHRISTINE: {*Wait...please, this is a mistake.*} ^{PWL}

[8] NURSE (to matron): Certifying officer?

[9] MATRON: Captain J. J. Jones, Lincoln Heights division.

[10] CHRISTINE (forced calm): {*Please...you have to listen to me. The police are doing this to punish me. They tried to force this boy on me and tell me he was my son, but it wasn't my son, and now they say I'm crazy --*} ^{PWL}

She stops, noting the looks exchanged between the nurse and the matron. Her story sounds insane, even to her. She begins to realize the depth of her predicament.

[11] CHRISTINE: {*Oh, god...oh god, please, no...*} ^{PWL}

[12] NURSE: {If you continue to struggle I'll have to put you in a straitjacket. Do you want that? (she shakes head). Good. Then behave yourself.} (to orderlies) Code twelve.

The matron turns Christine over to two large male ORDERLIES, who take her by the arms and lead her into the psycho ward.

PWL represented “powerlessness”

As can be seen from the talk sequences [7], [10], and [11], Christine said the following statements: “Wait... please, this is a mistake,” “Please...you have to listen to me.” “The police are doing this to punish me.” “They tried to force this boy on me and tell me he was my son, but it wasn't my son, and now they say I'm crazy,” and “Oh, god...oh god, please, no.” Based on the concept of powerlessness stated by Hofstede (1991) and Ghosh (2011), power is distributed by a distance of both superior and their subordinate and it leads to inequality among people. As we can see in these three utterances, Christine talked to a nurse who has a higher social status, and she often says the word “please” to claim her own rights against the allegation, but no one cares. In this circumstance, it can be implied that Christine lacks the power to fight and to protect herself from the allegations and insecure circumstances. According to Hofstede (1991) and Ghosh (2011), one of the possible causes of the powerlessness was rooted in the large distance of power among people in a society which can be seen through the role of ‘Official authorities (e.g., nurse and matron) and civilian (e.g., Christine)’.

Violence against women

From the investigation of the selected dialogues, the researchers found the factor of violence against women in Dialogue 7. To its overview, this dialogue was a conversation between female and male characters named Christine and Steele. The situational context took place in a hospital mental ward. For more detailed analysis, it is further presented below.

Dialogue 7

INT. HOSPITAL - MENTAL WARD - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

running, pursued by orderlies, two more blocking her way.

[17] CHRISTINE: {*No, I won't let you! Someone, please, help me!*} ^{VAW}

They TACKLE her and bring her down. She struggles as the others look on, and you can see in their eyes that they don't like what they're seeing, there's rage -- and a furious Carol Dexter comes to her aid. She JUMPS into the struggle. Biting. Kicking. Scratching.

Steele comes on the run just as the orderlies peel Carol off the fight, spinning her around to face Steele, who SLAPS her.

[18] STEELE: {*Stay out of this! This is none of your business! (to the rest). This is police business! You'll stay out of it if you know what's good for you!*} ^{VAW}

He looks to Carol, Christine restrained behind them.

[19] STEELE: {*You'd think you had enough trouble with the law just being a whore, wouldn't you?*} ^{VAW}

He smiles. She gets a hand free and SLUGS him, hard, a nail slicing his cheek. He touches his face. It comes back with blood. Then he looks to the orderly.

VAW represented “violence against women”

This violence against women factor has been revealed in many utterances. According to the talk sequence [17], it was stated by Christine that “No, I won’t let you! Someone, please, help me!” Based on this utterance, it was simultaneously constructed through the scene that she kicks, bites, and scratches the officers when they are trying to tackle her. This means that she may get injured while she is trying to fight. Therefore, this statement in this scene can be implied that Christine is facing physical violence according to Burn (2015) who explained this type of violence as an act that causes injuries and it involves many forms of violence such as serious assault, deprivation of liberty, domestic violence, dowry death, and honor killing. Although the utterance’s description does not reach the death or killing forms, this circumstance can lead Christine to be injured. Moreover, according to the talk sequence [17], Carol Dexter is Christine’s friend helping her from the fight against Steele, a male doctor in the mental ward. In this situational context, Carol is slapped by Steele because Carol tries to fight against him and other orderlies. As a result, this situation tends to show that physical violence against women was still made by men.

According to the talk sequence [18], Steele stated that “Stay out of this! This is none of your business! (to the rest). This is police business! You’ll stay out of it if you know what’s good for you!” As shown through this utterance, it obviously entailed the verbal intimidation, which Steele threatened the rest of the women at that moment in the hospital. In this regard, it showed that owing to his higher role as a doctor, Steele intimidates other women and tried strongly to push the women away from the situation. Moreover, based on Steele’s statement, it can be implied that there might be some negative sides when the women contacted with the event as shown via the statement “You’ll stay out of it if you know what’s good for you.” This situation of context is related to the theory of psychological violence based on Casique & Furegato (2006), stating that psychological violence includes intimidation, disdain, and isolation. Furthermore, through the scene, the perception of males’ occupational role can also be found since the role as a doctor and police officers were played by male characters. And, this is related to Hofstede et al. (2010) showing that the occupation of males is more concerned with the achievement or jobs outside the home, and males’ occupations are supposed to be proper with the aggressive, competitive, and tough jobs. For instance, Jones’ job as a police officer is supposed to be working

in a more aggressive atmosphere. Thus, this seems to perfectly match with Hofstede et al. (2010) framework.

Moreover, in talk sequence [19], Steele said to Carol that “You’d think you had enough trouble with the law just being a whore, wouldn’t you?” This utterance conveys that he is insulting Carol as a whore. According to Casique & Furegato (2006), the utterance produced by Steele (e.g., just being a whore) shows the rudeness to Carol (a female character) and this is considered as psychological violence through the form of disdain. Moreover, Steel also used the phrase ‘trouble with the law’ to back up his power over the female character in this scene. In short, this case can be analyzed as the violence against women by producing the discourse with the aim of discrediting the female character in the form of disdainful manners.

Oppression

For the oppression factor, was found in selected dialogues in the movie script. This factor was found in Dialogue 7 which was a conversation between Christine and Steele and took place in Steele’s office at the hospital. It was the conversation about a situation in which Christine was forced to sign a document. The example of analysis regarding the oppression factor will be shown as follows.

Dialogue 7

INT. HOSPITAL - STEELE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

He goes to his desk as she stands in the doorway.

[1] CHRISTINE: I don't have anything wrong with me that I should have to take medication.

[2] STEELE: There's nothing wrong with you.

[3] CHRISTINE: That's right.

[4] STEELE: You're fine.

[5] CHRISTINE: Yes.

He pulls a typed letter out of his desk, slides it across.

[6] STEELE: Then you shouldn't have any trouble signing this.

She picks it up, reads as he continues:

[7] STEELE: *{By signing, you certify that you were wrong when you stated the boy returned by the police was not your son. It further stipulates that the police acted properly in sending you here for observation and absolves them of all responsibility for -}* ^{OPS}

[8] CHRISTINE: I won't sign it.

[9] STEELE: *{Then your condition is not improved. Sign it, and you can be out of here first thing tomorrow.}* ^{OPS}

[10] CHRISTINE: I won't sign it!

She tears up the sheet of paper.

OPS represented “oppression”

According to the utterance of Steele in the talk sequence [7], he said “By signing, you certify that you were wrong when you stated the boy returned by the

police was not your son. It further stipulates that the police acted properly in sending you here for observation and absolves them of all responsibility for.” This means that Steele is trying to force Christine to sign a document to conceal the police’s fault for sending her to the mental ward; however, Christine denies signing it. Then, in talk sequence [9] Steele continues to say that “Then your condition is not improved. Sign it, and you can be out of here first thing tomorrow.” It can be implied that he still forces her to sign. His utterance means that if Christine does not sign a document, she cannot be out of a hospital. As can be seen from the two statements above and the action to force the female character to sign the document, it is implied that the male character has a higher hierarchical status as well as a power. This situation is related to the concept of Crossman (2018) since he viewed the root of oppression as the action that occurred when one is superior status, and another is inferior status based on their social hierarchies of class, gender, and roles—in this case, we can see from Steel’s role as a doctor. Consequently, the two talk sequences reflected the theory of oppression which is related to abuse of power.

To conclude, these examples of the analysis reflected the women’s disempowerment issues. The researchers found that most factors leading to women’s disempowerment were generated from the inequality and unfairness according to the social hierarchical status and roles between both male and female characters. Despite a huge attempt by many countries to raise the awareness of equality in women rights and power, the problems of women’s disempowerment still exists in societies. In fact, it might be unintentionally depicted through the media, such as movies or some entertainment programs. However, these examples show only some parts of the analysis, and all studies of the selected dialogues can be further explained in the appendix.

Discussion

The study has been conducted to identify the factors of women’s disempowerment mostly found in a movie script and to explain how women’s disempowerment factors are reflected through movie script under a critical discourse perspective. Based on the first objective of this study about the investigation of four women’s disempowerment factors, it surprisingly reveals that violence against women factor were mostly found from all selected dialogues. Tracing back to its background, the issues of women’s disempowerment

have attracted several researchers and one distinctive culture that reflects this disempowerment issue seems to be the culture in most Arabian countries. According to the study by the United Nations (2013) and Bryan (2012), the issue of violence against women obviously existed in Arab countries. It pointed out that the cause of this issue probably came from the influence of cultural and religious values in Arabian cultures which perceived women’s status as subordinates to men.

By this phenomenon, it implies a controversy against the belief of equality in society; especially in the United States since the movie was produced based on a true story in America. Based on the cultural dimension theory by Hofstede et al. (2010), the American society is ranked as a low-power distance society which promotes the equality of citizens. According to the Power Distance Index table of Hofstede et al. (2010), it is measuring the degree of inequality in society, and they rank the countries such as, the United States, Austria, German, and New Zealand as the culture of low power distance. On the other word, this movie reflects several violence against women which seems to be contradicted to the belief of ‘a low-power-distance society’ where most people propose that the inequalities should be minimized. It can be implied that the status between males and females, even in the low-power distance countries, is still unequal. Furthermore, it can be assumed that although a society of equality like American still faces these cultural imbalance and problems.

In addition, the findings from this study can be possibly linked to some types of cultural problems which are the inequality and unfairness of the social hierarchical status and roles between both males and females. And, the inequality and unfairness can be seen from the actions such as verbal defamation and insult, intimidation, disdain, physical attacks, and the use of force, abuse and etc. Apart from this, it is interesting that the movie presents female and male characters in the different roles or duties. Based on the movie, it can be seen that females are traditionally stereotyped as mothers who do childcare or work at home. On the contrary, males are found in a wider range of occupations, such as police and doctor. This is related to Hofstede et al. (2010) framework which proposes that females’ occupations are concerned with “taking care of home”, “of children”, and “of people in general”. Moreover, the interesting point regarding the occupational roles is that nurse characters are played by females. This can imply that a female role tends to be confined as the master of nurturing.

Based on the findings of this study, it shows that the use of language and discourse clearly plays a crucial role as the instrument influencing the source of power among people in a society. Apart from this, the use of language and discourse of this movie transfers some ideology regarding the cultural perception through a movie character (e.g., males as dominance and females as subordinators). Also, the ideology of disempowerment among women in this study is reinforced through social roles as subordinates to men with a lack of power. Moreover, the power abuse is also shown from the use of language from the superior character to the inferior ones through the hierarchical status. It can be implied that the discourse in this movie script is possibly shaped by the influence of social structures in a society. Thus, this perfectly links to the concept of CDA by Van Dijk (2015) and Fairclough (2012), as it paves the way for an in-depth analysis of texts and talks through the structures, strategies or other properties of text, talks, verbal interaction, and communicative events which play an important role in the reproduction of power and ideology among people.

To conclude, these cultural problems presented though the movie may lead the viewers' perception to the negative beliefs about gender differences between females and males. In this way, this movie may contribute to the misperception toward the several issues such as gender roles, status, and power. Although the movie depicts women as subordinates with lower power and being glued to the traditional roles, the possible reason may be due to the time of this story which occurs in 1928. At that time, it can be assumed that the awareness of these cultural problems tends not to be promoted as the important issues in the American society.

Suggestion

This research solely studies the dialogues from a movie script. It might be more critical that the movie scenes are analyzed in tandem with the discourse. Second, the study only covered one movie which seems to be insufficient for figuring out the different cultural facets in various cultural contexts. Moreover, the study is limited since the researchers focused only on examining the four factors of disempowerment. This movie may reflect other cultural perspectives such as individualism, collectivism, high-low power distance, gender bias, and other cultural problems. At last, this movie is produced from the true story in 1928, so the results of the study might be different from the reality of people's belief in

society at the present time. For the suggestions, first, a further study should be conducted with various factors causing disempowerment and power or other cultural perspectives and should compare at least two movies produced from different cultures to open a new window to the cultural issues. Second, further researchers should investigate both scripts and scenes of a movie to understand a deeper view of how cultural issues are presented via verbal and non-verbal communication

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