Representation of Male and Female Characters in *Cerita Pendek tentang Cerita Cinta Pendek:* A Transitivity Analysis

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ABSTRACT:

This study is aimed at investigating the representation of male and female characters in the three short stories of *Cerita Pendek tentang Cerita Cinta Pendek* and revealing hidden meanings embedded in the representations by identifying the process type choices. This study employs a qualitative method and transitivity analysis proposed by Fairclough's three-dimensional approach (1989) and Halliday's transitivity (2004). *Based on the analysis,* all six process types of transitivity are embedded to male and female characters in which females have the highest number. It means that the short stories tend to represent male characters as a more passive participant while female characters as a more active and powerful participant. This study also finds that the female characters are still victimized by the male characters sexually and violently. The study suggests that the author intended to openly discuss the sexuality issue in Indonesian contexts from females' perspective.

Keywords: *Transitivity, Critical Discourse Analysis, Language and Gender, Literary Texts, Representation*

INTRODUCTION

Language and gender has been widely discussed in linguistics study for a long time (Holmes, 2008; Milroy & Gordon, 2003; Wardhaugh, 2006). This is because males and females are two entities which differ from one another biologically and socially (Arvidsson, 2009). The differences are affected by social background of people (Holmes, 2008; Milroy & Gordon, 2003; Wardhaugh, 2006). For example, people with low social status (such as employees) will talk politely with others who have higher social status (employers) (Holmes, 2008). Thus, people will talk differently to different people in different communities with different contexts. The result above is gained through observing males' and females' speech in "real world". The same goes for "fictional world" which exist in literary texts (Amerian & Esmaili, 2014; Aoumeur, 2014; Rasman, 2014).

Several scholars who conducted studies involving gender in "fictional world" state that the language associated with male and female characters is different (Amerian & Esmaili, 2014; Rasman, 2014). Most of these studies focus on analyzing the words that are used to describe male and female characters in literary texts.

Indonesian literary texts such as novels, short stories, fables, play etc. have a specific theme. One of them raises an issue about an injustice relationship between males and females (Ikhsano & Inkiriwang, 2015). This theme is usually called Sastra Wangi. One of Indonesian authors who uses this theme in her story is Djenar Maesa Ayu. Although her short stories are considered as a display of females' resistance in gaining equal rights (Ikhsano & Inkiriwang, 2015), there are still some gender stereotypes in it (Pertiwi, 2016). That aspect is what makes Djenar Maesa Ayu different from other famous Sastra Wangi authors (Chasanah, 2006). One of her books entitled *"Cerita Pendek tentang Cerita Cinta Pendek"* contains many short stories with the same issue. Ikhsano and Inkiriwang (2015) along with Zulfardi (2017) found that there is social injustice

regarding male and female characters in the stories.

Those previous studies use literary theories as a mean to analyze the story while the linguistic aspects have not yet explored. To contribute other previous studies, this present study attempts to investigate representation of male and female characters in three stories of "*Cerita Pendek tentang Cerita Cinta Pendek.* It focuses on analyzing process types of Halliday's transitivity (2004) embedded to the characters. This study also attempts to reveal hidden meanings in the representation by analyzing it further with Fairclough's three-dimensional concept (1989). Choosing those three short stories are based on consideration that these stories have the potential to be read by many. Therefore, it is assumed that these stories can affect people' opinion regarding gender issue.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Language and Gender

Language and gender issue has begun to gain more attention since 1975 (Lakoff, 1975). Lakoff (1975) writes a theory about "women language", commonly known as deficit theory, which explains how females use language to reflect their powerlessness in comparison to males'. On the other hand, Thorne and Henley (1975) propose another theory about language and gender named dominance theory. The theory claims that females are viewed inferior to males. It is believed by many sociolinguists that females tend to use the standard language, whereas males are inclined to use the vernacular form (Milroy & Gordon, 2003). Those reveals are concluded by observing males' and females' speech when they are interacting with others in community in real world. Therefore, other community which exists in fictional world will also be affected by this notion.

The issue about language and gender in literary texts has been discussed by many linguists before (Holmes & Meyerhoff, 2003). Some studies focus in analyzing language and gender issue of characters in the story. Rasman (2014) explores this issue by analyzing narrative texts in school textbook. He found that the narrative texts show the stereotypical

side of males and females in which female characters are represented as less powerful than male characters. He obtained this result by analyzing the texts using transitivity theory and critical discourse analysis (CDA). Other studies conducted by Aoumeur (2014) shares similar result. He found that the characters in stories still represent males and females in a traditional and stereotypical way in which male characters are depicted as more dominant than female characters. Meanwhile, Amerian and Esmaili (2014) analyze gender representation in ELT textbooks. The findings show that the textbooks contain sexism in which female are discriminated and exploited as an instrument to achieve a certain purpose. On the other hand, Ortells and Posteguillo (2002) conduct a study on a novel. They found that male and female characters have their own speech style.

Fairclough's Framework of Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical discourse analysis deals with language and power in society. Fairclough (1989) further states that

CDA aims to find the relationship of power between "discursive practices, events, and texts" as well as "wider social and cultural structures, relations, and processes". He also states that there are two kinds of relationship between power and discourse. Firstly, "power in discourse" refers to a relationship in which the discourse has power. Secondly, "power behind discourse" refers to a belief which claims that society shapes discourses. Furthermore, Fairclough (1989) proposes three inter-related dimensions of discourse. Those are the object of analysis, the processes which are produced or received by human, and its socio-historical conditions. To analyze these dimensions, Fairclough (1989) uses three stages; description stage, interpretation stage, and explanation stage.

The first stage which is used to analyze the social practices of discourse is description stage. This stage raises several questions which aim to describe the textual elements of the discourse.

The second stage of Fairclough's three-dimensional model is interpretation stage. In this stage, the analysis concerns with the relationship between the discourse and its productions and its consumptions (Fairclough, 1989). It also deals with the relationship of texts and interactions. Thus, it views the discourse or texts as a process of production and interpretation. In this stage, analysts are required to interpret the meanings and the understandings of people who are involved in the process of productions and interpretations. In order to find people's understandings, Fairclough (1989) suggests that people's language knowledge and proficiency should be taken into consideration as well. This knowledge and proficiency can also show people's beliefs, values, assumptions, etc. which compromise their social order and the linguistic competence. The relationship between social orders and linguistic competences is pivotal for making claims of social meanings. The social order helps analysts to understand the social meanings which are realized by using a certain way of interacting and acting; the interacting and acting is realized linguistically in texts (Kettle, 2005). Thus, that is where the relationship between texts and interactions come from, which is used to find people's meanings and understandings.

The last stage which is proposed by Fairclough is explanation stage. In this stage, Fairclough (1989) claims that "explanation is concerned with the relationship between interaction and social context with the social determination of the process of production and interpretation, and their social effects" (p.26). To find this, the description and interpretation stage have provided it. In this analysis, texts can be interpreted further by analysts. The nature of this interpretation is arbitrary depending on ideology and power of people (Fairclough, 1989). This ideology and power are taken into consideration to further explain the interaction between socio-cultural contexts and texts' productions and consumptions. This is due to Fairclough's claim that says

discourse or texts are portrayed as a social practice.

Transitivity

Transitivity realizes ideational meaning as it is used to describe ideas and things (Gerot & Wagnel, 1995). Here, clauses represent events or phenomena which are implicitly affected by social contexts. It means that transitivity can show how someone perceives or realizes his/her experience through language. There are three semantic categories to represent the experiences or phenomena; circumstances, processes, and participants.

Firstly, circumstances realize meaning about time, place, manner, cause, accompaniment, matter, and role (Gerot & Wignel, 1995). Time or temporal circumstances raise questions such as when, how often in clauses; for example, every Monday, at 10 AM, yesterday etc. Place or spatial circumstances answer questions such as where; for example, to school, to the café, to the building etc. Manner circumstances raise a question of how; for example, by taxi. It is further categorized into

two types; quality and comparison. Cause circumstances answer question about why; for example, for his father. It is divided into three types; reason, purpose, and behalf. Accompaniment circumstances realize meaning about something with or without; for example, without money. Matter circumstances tell about what is probed by what; for example, about this study. Finally, role circumstances tell about what as or being; for example, as a student.

The second category which is also the central point is processes. It consists of verbs which express doings, happenings, beings, and feelings. There are several types of processes; Material Processes, mental processes, behavioral processes, verbal processes, relational processes, existential processes, and meteorological processes (Gerot & Wignel, 1995). The processes are realized through verbs in which ach type has its own labeling of participants.

Material processes are clauses which describe events of doings or happenings. It is usually in the form

of verbs preceded by participants called actors and goals. Behavioral processes are physiological and psychological behavior. Its participants are called behaver and range Mental processes focus on how people express their feeling (affective), thinking (cognitive) and perceiving of their five senses (perceptive). Participants in this process are called sensers which will be always a conscious being and another participant named phenomenon (Halliday, 2004). Verbal processes are used to realize meanings of saying something and to deliver some information. There are four types of participants in this one; sayers (a conscious being), receivers (the one who is addressed to), targets (one acted upon verbally), and range/verbiage (verbalization). Relational processes realize meanings of beings and having. It is also served as characterizing and identifying. It is divided into two types with its own participants; Attributive and Identifying. Existential processes realize meaning of existences or happenings. The participant is labeled as existents.

Short Stories in Indonesian Context

In literary texts, a short story belongs to the group of narratives. According to Thornborrow and Coates (2005), it can become an object of research. Narratives can be defined as a sequence of events (Abbott, 2002). Narratives in the form of a short story can be found in many cultures, including Indonesia. A short story in Bahasa Indonesia is called *Cerita Pendek* or *Cerpen*. A short story or *cerpen* can be defined as a story which can be completed in one seating because it has fewer words than a novel (Nurgiyantoro, 2000). Zulfahnur et al (1997) states that every one-event story with a conflict of a character can be considered as a short story. The conflict is usually associated with a theme; for example, a sexuality conflict between males and females in one of themes called Sastra Wangi.

Sastra Wangi is a media label which refers to literary works written by Indonesian female authors (Khristianto, 2008). The label is partly seen as an offense because it

differentiates female authors with the male ones (Khristianto, 2008). Every literary works written by female is not always referred as Sastra Wangi. This is because Sastra Wangi raises a certain issue about females which is usually seen as a taboo in public consumptions (Khristianto, 2008). Furthermore, this issue is presented in sexual and vulgar way with an addition of "dirty" words. Many Sastra Wangi authors claim that the issue is chosen to show females' perspective instead of men's (Zulfardi, 2017). This attempt is considered as a feminism movement because it tries to break the stereotypical thinking of females being inferior to males in Indonesian society (Ikhsano & Inkiriwang, 2015). One of Indonesian female authors who writes Sastra Wangi in her short stories is Djenar Maesa Ayu.

Djenar Maesa Ayu is one of Indonesian female authors who is known for her theme of feminism (Amiruddin, 2016). She writes about sexual identity of females that is related to her experience (as cited in Amiruddin, 2016). According to a news article written by Amiruddin (2016), Djenar wants to relay a message that females have issue with their sexual identity which is usually covered in society. She thinks that females should aware of their own sexual identity as early as they can. She also thinks that people should know the perspective of females in regard to this issue.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher used a qualitative research method to conduct the study. The term, qualitative methods, refers to the lack of using any statistical procedures which are often found in quantitative methods (Silverman, 2000). One of the reasons using this approach is to provide an in-depth analysis of rich data (Angouri, 2010). It is a method which heavily focuses on describing data analysis. Meanwhile, data collection technique in this research is reading, note-taking, and several other steps. The data of this research were collected from a published book entitled *Cerita Pendek tentang Cerita Cinta Pendek* written by Djenar Maesa Ayu. From thirteen

short stories found in the book, three short stories were chosen: (1) *Cerita Pendek tentang Cerita Cinta Pendek,* (2) *Ha…Ha…Ha…,* and (3) *AL+EX=CINTA.*

The data are analyzed by using Fairclough's framework of critical discourse analysis which is divided into three stages. The first stage is describing the data by following Halliday's transitivity (2004) as a mean to analyze the textual elements. In the second and the third stage, the transitivity analysis will be interpreted and explained. The steps of data analysis are as follow: (1) collecting all the sentences found in the short stories and breaking it into clauses. Here is the example: *Saya yakin kamu akan lebih bahagia tanpa saya* [I am sure you will be happier without me] into *Saya yakin…* [I am sure…] and …*kamu akan lebih bahagia…* […you will be happier…], (2) classifying the clauses into the category of process types of transitivity in the table. This step used the first stage of Fairclough's three dimensional stages (description stage), (3) identifying further the participants of

each process types, (4) doing a more detailed analysis to investigate how different the types of processes embedded to male and female characters. This step includes the interpretation stage of Fairclough's CDA framework, and (5) drawing conclusion after interpreting the result of analysis. Before drawing conclusion, the data is analyzed again by using explanation stage attempts to reveal the hidden meanings of the data.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In the three short stories, the types of process embedded to male and female characters are material process, mental process, verbal process, relational process, existential process, and behavioral process. In term of occurrences, female characters have higher number than male ones. For female characters, mental processes appear 106 times, verbal processes also appear 51 times, referential processes appear 50 times, behavioral processes appear 11 times, and existential processes appear only 6 times. As for male characters, mental

processes appear 34 times, referential processes appear 32 times, verbal processes appear 18 times, existential processes appear 12 times, and behavioral processes appear only 5 times. This result suggests that the type of processes embedded to female characters is more dominant compared to male characters in the short stories. Additionally, it is useful to have some general sense of the types of participants in the processes. This is because participants tend to be construed grammatically as powerful or powerless. It also helps to reveal the hidden meanings.

The analysis of the meanings of the process types embedded to the characters show two most important meanings. First, the numbers of female characters being the main participant in process types shape females to be more powerful participants than males. Second, the numbers of process types acted upon the female characters mean that they are a victim (ex: *...ia dipukuli...* (…she was beaten up…) and the numbers of process types embedded to female characters also show how

they struggle as being a victim (ex: *...saya membuat Ia semakin terluka* (I make him more in pain).

The meanings that show female characters are represented as more powerful participants are gained by looking at the participants of each process. Firstly, actors are a label for participants in material processes. Actors are a source of energy that do things and bring changes which means it holds power (Halliday, 2004). The other participant such as goal in material processes does not hold any power since it is acted upon by actors. Based on the findings above, male characters as the actor in material processes only appear 78 times compared to 115 times of female characters. Here are several clauses to prove it; *Sera menampar pipi saya* (Sera slapped me), and *Saya menciuminya...* (I kiss him…).

Secondly, other type of participant is called senser from mental processes. Sensers have higher power than other participant named phenomenon (Halliday, 2004). Based on the findings, female characters who are represented as sensers in mental clause occur 105

times, far higher than male characters (35 times). Here are the examples: *(Saya) mencintainya* (I love him) and *Saya tak bisa melihatnya* (I cannot see him).

Thirdly, the next type of participant which proves that female characters are seen as more powerful is sayers in verbal processes. Sayers are the one that exercise their power to act semiotically (Halliday, 2004). Based on the findings, male characters who are represented as sayers appear 18 times while female characters appear 51 times. Fourthly, other type of participant is called behaver in behavioral processes. The behavers act as a being who exercise their power to do something which does not usually impinge on another participant. Based on the findings, there are 11 behavers embedded to female characters and 5 behavers embedded to male characters.

Fifthly, the participant for characterizing (attributive) relational processes is called carrier while the participant for identifying relational processes is called token. Carrier and token do not give any significant depiction of power such as the

previous processes (Halliday, 2004). This is because the participants are only assigned an identity or a quality. The last type of participant is from existential processes which are similar with relational processes. In existential processes, there is no power exercise or assigned to certain participant because it only construe the meaning of existence or happening (Halliday, 2004). Thus, it can be concluded that female characters are represented as more powerful.

Another meaning hidden in the representation is that female characters as struggling victims. Being victims mean that they are acted upon violently by others. The act of this can be seen in material processes. Although female characters have higher number of occurrences of material processes, the action that they do affects other female characters. Here are the examples: *(Sera) menginjak-injak kaki Saya.* (Sera was stomping at my feet) and *(Ia) menyiram bir ke muka Saya.* (She poured beer to my face). Additionally, there is no violence actions done by female characters

which affects male characters in material processes. Thus, while female characters seem to have higher power, they are still struggling.

Other proof which shows the struggle of female characters is in mental processes. Most of the feelings represented in affective mental processes are feeling of being victims. The following is the examples: *...(Saya) begitu pasrah…* (…I give up…) and *...(Saya) Takut.* (I am so scared). On the other hand, female characters are represented 23 times in cognitive mental processes. While it is true that the number occurrences of affective mental processes is higher than the cognitive ones, it shows that female characters can think for themselves and do not just be passive. Here are the examples: *Tapi saya selalu yakin...* (But I am always sure…) and *Dan saya tahu...* (And I know…).

Meanwhile, in verbal processes, another form of struggling done by female characters can be seen as well. In the short stories, there are clauses which represent female characters' disobedient towards male characters. Here are the examples: *Alex mengajari saya .memanggilnya Ayah.* (Alex teaches me to call him father) and *Tapi saya tetap memanggilnya Alex.* (But I still call him Alex).

The condition in which females are victims to violence actions is almost parallel to the reality in Indonesian society. In 2016 only, there are 259.150 domestic violence cases in which females are the victims to males' violence ("KDRT Tertinggi dalam Kekerasan atas Perempuan di Indonesia," 2017). However, the short stories attempt to show that females can also fight this condition.

This attempt is perceived to have the ideology of the author. Hence, there are differences between language associated with male and female characters. It seems that the author attempts to insert feminism to her stories. West and Turner (2007) state that feminism is an attempt in which females desire to stop persecution and pressures because of their gender. This claim is in accordance with Djenar Maesa Ayu's aim in writing her story.

According to her interview (Amiruddin, 2016), she wants to tell that females have their own problem with sexuality which society tends to cover up. She thinks that people should know the perspective of females in regard to this issue.

In addition to the author, the media in which the three short stories are published is also important to analyze. Purbani (n. d.) states that literary works are an important and effective tool to construe a value. It spreads out moral and educational values to the readers. Nodelmen (2002) supports this idea by saying that literary works are amusing so it can be a powerful tool to spread out values without readers being aware of it. This implies that the author's ideology can also be spread out effectively through her short stories.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that five types of process embedded to female characters in the three short stories outnumber the male ones (material process, mental process, behavioral process, verbal process, and relational process). This can be

understood that the author tries to represent females as more dominant and active compared to males. Considering the author is associated with Sastra Wangi (Indonesian female authors who write about females), it can be interpreted that the author deliberately represent the characters as so.

This is because the author of these short stories has power to construe reality that can influence readers' opinion or point of view toward something or someone (Purbani n. d.). Leaning to this, the short stories try to tell people that females can still act actively and voice out their opinion even when being oppressed by males. This can be seen in how female characters are represented more as a main social actor in the process types.

Furthermore, in regards to the hidden meanings in the representation of male and female characters in the three short stories, the explanation stage suggests that the three short stories are inclined to pose similar ideology with the author. The three short stories are struggling to contribute establishing

females' equality with males and to bluntly outspoken taboo issues of females in Indonesian society. Thus, it suggests that these short stories are indirectly in line with the perspectives of feminism in which females should be equal with males.

Due to limited time and materials, the scope of this study only comprises three Indonesian short stories written by Djenar Maesa Ayu in which the study is narrowed to analyze the dominant patterns of transitivity. The researcher recommends other researchers to investigate other language aspects with different frameworks; for example, recontextualization by Van Leeuwen (2008), sociocognitive approach by Van Dijk (2009), modality system in Halliday's functional grammar (1994), and historical approach by Wodak (2009). Lastly, it is also suggested for further studies to take data from different authors to see how the same phenomenon is represented by different authors.

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