

"LOVE AND WAR" & "FOUL FOR YOU": GENDER PORTRAYAL ON YAOI AND NON-YAOI FANFICTIONS

"LOVE AND WAR" & "FOUL FOR YOU": MELIHAT GENDER DALAM FANFIKSI YAOI DAN NON-YAOI

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Abstract: *Until today, studies on sociolinguistics which are focusing on the discussion of gender and language have been highlighting the issue of how males and females use language differently. The highlight is, particularly, females use more inferior language than males in many cases. As in this digital era, the discussion about that issue has been touching on the new genre of literature – fanfictions. One of the most popular theme in fanfictions is yaoi or gay which means a fanfiction with a love story between boys which portrays the masculine and feminine sides of male characters. As in the Deficit theory by Lakoff (1975) shows that females tend to have inferior language than males, it is interesting to find out whether there are some differences in yaoi fanfictions. Related to that, this paper discussed about the differences of the language use by feminine male characters and female characters by exploring the use of exaggeration expressions – empty adjectives, italic expressions, and hyperboles in two famous fanfictions "Love and War" & "Foul for You" from a famous fanfiction platform – Asianfanfics. The result of this paper shows that the Deficit theory by Lakoff (1975) is still present in the language use of the characters analyzed.*

Keywords: *gender, fanfiction, yaoi*

Abstrak: Sampai saat ini, studi tentang sociolinguistik yang berfokus pada diskusi gender dan bahasa telah menyoroti isu tentang bagaimana laki-laki dan perempuan menggunakan bahasa secara berbeda. Secara khusus, isu tersebut menggarisbawahi bahwa perempuan menggunakan bahasa yang lebih rendah daripada laki-laki dalam banyak kasus dan setting. Di era digital ini, diskusi tentang masalah tersebut, bahkan, telah menyentuh pada genre baru sastra - fanfiction. Salah satu tema paling populer dalam fanfiction adalah yaoi atau gay yang berarti fanfiction dengan kisah cinta antar sesama laki-laki yang menggambarkan sisi maskulin dan feminin dari karakter laki-laki. Teori Defisit oleh Lakoff (1975) yang menunjukkan bahwa perempuan cenderung memiliki bahasa yang lebih rendah daripada laki-laki menjadikan hal yang menarik untuk melakukan penelitian tentang apakah teori tersebut juga berlaku dalam fanfiction yaoi. Terkait dengan itu, makalah ini membahas tentang perbedaan penggunaan bahasa oleh karakter laki-laki feminin dan karakter perempuan melalui eksplorasi penggunaan exaggeration expression – empty adjective, italic expression, dan hyperbole dalam dua fanfiction terkenal, yaitu "Love and War" – fanfiction yaoi & "Foul for You" – fanfiction non-yaoi dari salah satu platform fanfiction terkenal – Asianfanfics. Hasil dari makalah ini menunjukkan bahwa teori Defisit oleh Lakoff (1975) masih berlaku dalam bahasa yang digunakan oleh karakter yang dianalisis.

Kata kunci: gender, fanfiksi, yaoi

1. INTRODUCTION

Language is known as the tool for communication to deliver messages in a society. According to Yule (2006), the existence of language in a society is also influenced by the people. The influence of the society to the language can be shown in the form of how language

can represent class, gender, age, etc, and the connection between the two factors is discussed in the field of sociolinguistics.

The interesting point about studies in sociolinguistics, until today, has been focusing on the discussion of gender and language which is highlighting the issue of how males and females use language differently (Pan, 2011; Mohindra & Azhar, 2012; Xia, 2013; Jinyu, 2014; Li, 2014; and Onem, 2016). Some of the discussions concern with how males and females use language in social interactions for example in work places, novels, advertisements, songs, and movies differently. Interestingly, the discussion about gender and language has not really touch fanfiction, especially in the issue of the comparison of the use of exaggerating expressions in *Yaoi* and *Non-Yaoi* fanfictions. In the previous studies of fanfictions (Black, 2006; Oakey, 2011; Kaldmae, 2014; Milli & Bamman, 2016; Barnes, 2015), mostly, they discussed about the difference about fanfictions and the fiction which is not a fanfiction, the impact of fanfictions in the culture, and the psychological aspects of the writers. Moreover, the studies about *Yaoi* themed fictions have not touched fanfictions. In addition, the discussion does not concern with the use of exaggeration expressions of the characters (Zsila & Demetrovics, 2017; Zsila, et al, 2018). Mostly, those studies concern the issue of the motive of reading *Yaoi* fictions.

The main reason to do this study is to show how the feminine character in the *Yaoi* fanfiction of *Love and War* is portrayed as feminine by the way the writer gives the main feminine attributes to the character in the matter of the language of exaggeration expressions in the comparison of how the writer gives the same feminine attributes to the main female character in *Foul for You Non-Yaoi* fanfiction. Both fanfictions are featured fanfictions in Asianfanfics which mean those are famous fanfictions with a lot of people reading them. In this sense, those fanfictions give more influence than the other fanfictions who are not featured. Moreover, the characters in the two fanfictions are from a famous Kpop idol group which is EXO. *Love and War* tells about boys love story in a mafia world, while *Foul for You* tells about an unrequited love from a girl to her best friend that she ended up with another boy and her best friend with another girl that he loved.

The exaggeration expressions that are discussed in this study are the use of emotional emphasis (italic expression), the use of hyperbole, and the use of empty adjectives which according to Jespersen (1922) and Lakof (1975) is the attribute of women language. At the end of this study, the writer wants to show whether the feminine character in *Yaoi* fanfictions portrays the deficit theory proposed by Jespersen (1922) and Lakof (1975) more than the female characters in *Non-Yaoi* fanfictions or not.

Otto Jespersen in his book of *Language: Its Nature, Development and Origin* that was published in 1922 and Robin Lakoff in her book of *Language and Women's Place* that was published in 1975 have proposed that women's language is more deficit than men's. According to Jespersen (1922), some characteristics of how women's language is more deficit than men's are that women tend to talk more than men because they have smaller vocabularies that make them less hesitant in speaking than men who tend to speak with precise words in their large vocabularies; women use half-finished sentences because they speak before they have thought about it; women link sentences with 'and' because they are more emotional than grammatical; women use adjective such as 'pretty' and 'nice', and they fond of using 'so' – 'so pretty' and 'so nice'; women use adverbs a lot and tend towards hyperbole; women tend to be more indirect and less effective than men; men are those who are responsible for introducing new vocabularies in a language. As the addition, Lakoff (1975) states that women speak more quietly than men and tend to use higher pitch range of voice; women speak in italics which means they speak with emphatic stress such as 'so', 'very', and 'quite'; women tend to be more uncertain than men in expressing their idea by making declarative statements into questions;

women use more hedges such as 'sort of', 'kind of', and 'it seems like'; women use super-polite forms, for example, 'would you mind..', 'I'd appreciate it if...', and '... if you don't mind'; women apologize and use tag questions more than men; women use empty adjectives such as 'lovely', 'adorable', 'great', 'wonderful', and 'fantastic' because they tend to use more emotion than intellectual; women tend to use more intensifier such as 'so' and 'very'; women tend to be more indirect in commands and requests; women use more adjectives to describe approximate amount such as 'around' and 'about'.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

In this study, the writer used the qualitative and quantitative research method. The reason in using the qualitative method is that this study concerns with the analysis of meaning, concept, and description of symbols and things in the materials analyzed. Moreover, concerning with the quantitative method, the reason to use that is because this study presents the percentage of the exaggeration expressions found in the materials analysed.

The data was collected with the Internet-based data collection method from a fanfiction's website, *Asianfanfics*. The reason of using that website is because the writer can easily find the most famous fanfiction in a certain time so that the writer can use that as the criteria to see which fanfiction has the most influence to the readers.

The two fanfictions which is analyzed are *Foul for You* and *Love and War*. *Foul for You* is a Non-*Yaoi* fanfiction which tells about an unrequited love from a girl to her best friend that she ended up with another boy and her best friend with another girl that he loved. *Love and War* is a *Yaoi* fanfiction which tells about boys love story in a mafia world. The reason of using the two fanfictions is because they are famous fanfictions which means every person who visit the website will be able to find them in the first page. *Foul for You* has more than 45k views and 3,7k followers, while *Love and War* has more than 46k views and 3,1k followers.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of some parts of the two fanfictions which contain the italic expressions, empty adjectives, and hyperboles are presented as follows.

Table 1. The Use of Italic Expressions

No.	Data	
	Foul for You	Love and War
1	... is that so hard to understand? (ch.2; line:14)	.. so breath taking and handsome. (ch.2; line: 11)
2	I thought that maybe I had gone a little too far... (ch.2; line: 16)	..I hate you so much.. (ch.2; line: 97)
3	I mock scolded him for being so careless with my purchases. (ch.2; line: 19)	..become so beautiful.. (ch.2; line: 111)
4	His desperate decline came out a little too loud.. (ch.2; line: 48)	.. so damn beautiful. (ch.2; line: 143)
5	Plus you are not being very convincing right now.. (ch.2; line: 62)	.. he's so beautiful. (ch.3; line: 15)
6	I'm not so sure I want to go (ch.2; line: 62)	I'm so sorry for not knocking.. (ch.4; line: 13)
7	So the dork actually had some pretty good game... (ch.2; linne: 79)	..I'm so sorry for... (ch.4; line: 15)
8	I scurried after him, still very much confused.. (ch.3; line: 13)	..I'm so sorry.. (ch.4; line: 134)
9	... too lethargic to articulate words. (ch.3; line: 53)	.. so beautiful, so tender, so attractive and so small. (ch.4; line: 8)
10	It was too damn early. (ch.3; line: 53)	Thank you so much ... (ch.4; line: 40)

No.	Data	
	Foul for You	Love and War
11	I feel so appreciated right now, (ch.4; line: 87)	.. I really do love you so much. (ch.4; line: 51)
12	This dude was so pretty, (ch.6; line: 32)	.. so naughty.. (ch.4; line: 96)
13	... eyeing the all too relaxed turn of his lips. (ch.6; line: 77)	..you're so evil.. (ch.4; line: 171)
14	The way he so impassively brushed it off made me smile. (ch.6; line: 124)	.. so disgusting.. (ch.4; line: 193)
15	That secretary sounded way too breathy.. (ch.7; line: 27)	.. so foolish to ask.. (ch.6; line: 31)
16	Baekhyun had been here last night, too drunk off his ass to actually go home. (ch.8; line: 10)	.. so stupid Baekhyun.. (ch.6; line: 31)
17	.. too occupied with boring holes... (ch.8; line: 71)	.. I really hate you Chanyeol so much.. (ch.6; line: 59)
18	... I was pretty sure... (ch.8; line: 127)	.. I fucking hate you so much... (ch.6; line: 71)
19	.. my voice was pretty damn obvious.. (ch.8; line: 130)	I hate you so much. (ch.6; line: 88)
20	I fell for the little stutters when he spoke too excitedly... (ch.8; line: 151)	..I'm so sorry.. (ch.6; line: 108)
21	Either these knives are too blunt... (ch.9; line: 97)	I'm so sorry Chanyeol.. (ch.6; line: 110)
22	.. the sun didn't shine too bright. (ch.10; line: 19)	You're so evil Chanyeol. (ch.7; line: 56)
23	The queue wasn't too long. (ch.10; line: 19)	...it hurts so much... (ch.7; line: 167)
24	.. there were far too may people.. (ch.10; line: 22)	..I'm so full.. (ch.7; line: 208)
25	.. for looking too damn cheerful.. (ch.10; line: 26)	... so beautiful.. (ch.7; line: 210)
26	Baekhyun had so many chances.. (ch.10; line: 51)	I missed you so much.. (ch.8; line: 113)
27	I was too afraid of the broken image.. (ch.10; line: 70)	..I was so lonely.. (ch.8; line: 120)
28	The restaurant wasn't too crowded.. (ch.10; line: 71)	I miss you so much.. (ch.10; line: 114)
29	But I was too far afraid.. (ch.10; line 81)	.. I missed you so much you jerk. (ch.10; line: 123)
30	Time passes by pretty fast, (ch.10; line: 93)	..I missed you so much. (ch.10; line: 129)
31	... I've invested too much into this friendship... (ch.12; line: 66)	..I felt so lonely.. (ch.10; line: 129)
32	..he'd be so close, yet so wrong. (ch.12; line: 87)	...my heart was so lonely.. (ch.10; line: 129)
33	.. I had never been so thankful.. (ch.13; line: 119)	I missed you so much. (ch.11; line: 6)
34	.. too lazy.. (ch.13; line: 123)	It hurts so much.. (ch.11; line: 13)
35	The morning sun seemed so much warmer.. (ch.14; line 12)	Thank you so much Chanyeol.. (ch.11; line: 103)
36	He was around so often... (ch.14; line: 13)	Luhan I'm so sorry.. (ch.14; line: 8)
37	I was so sure... (ch.14; line: 38)	I know I'm so cold.. (ch.15; line: 157)
38	...I knew so well ... (ch.14; line: 40)	I miss dad so much. (ch.17; line: 40)
39	...and I wonder if it's too late.. (ch.14; line: 59)	
40	As if Baekhyun too agreed with my choice. (ch.14; line: 100)	
41	.. suddenly he was too bright.. (ch.14; line: 107)	
42	...because it's too early.. (ch.15; line: 14)	

No.	Data	
	Foul for You	Love and War
43	, and I was pretty sure I looked a little creepy.. (ch.15; line: 78)	
44	.. if you had been too engrossed.. (ch.15; line: 88)	
45	.. which she seemed to believe pretty easily. (ch.15; line: 92)	
46	Obviously, they were too drunk.. (ch.16; line: 132)	
47	.. just minutes which felt all too long. (ch.16; line: 201)	
48	.. the emptiness I felt for so long.. (ch.16; line: 203)	
49	I was pretty sure.. (ch.17; line 22)	
50	That is a little too loud.. (ch.17; line: 54)	
51	.. he did pretty crazy things.. (ch.17; line: 96)	
52	.. roaming a little too vulgarly.. (ch.17; line: 97)	
53	..into too much trouble.. (ch.17; line: 97)	
54	.. when it’s a little too late.. (ch.17; line: 103)	
55	..he hadn’t hurt anyone too much.. (ch.17; line: 104)	
56	.. after one too many drinks.. (ch.17; line: 109)	

From the table above, there are 56 data of italic expressions in *Foul for You* with 8 words of *pretty*, 32 words of *too*, 2 words of *very* and 14 words of *so*. On the other hand, there are 43 data of italic expressions in *Love and War* with 41 words of *so* and 2 words of *really*.

Table 2. The Use of Empty Adjectives

No.	Data	
	Foul for You	Love and War
1	A lovely shade of pink fluttered across his face... (ch.2; line: 57)	
2	Just great . (ch.6; line: 3)	
3	Just great . (ch.6; line: 14)	
4	This dude was so pretty ... (ch.6; line: 32)	
5	Great ... (ch.6; line: 72)	
6	Great . Just great . (ch.8; line: 32)	

The table shows that there are 7 data of empty adjective in *Foul for You* with 1 word of *lovely*, 5 words of *great*, and 1 words of *pretty*. On the other hand, there is no empty adjective in *Love and War*.

Table 3. The Use of Hyperboles

No.	Data	
	Foul for You	Love and War
1	...he probably would’ve coughed up blood at my lack of creativity. (ch.1; line: 11)	
2	... God personally crafted them . (ch.2; line: 34)	
3	...probably wishing the ground would swallow him up and hide him away.. (ch.2; line: 51)	
4	My face was probably in the verge of splitting into half . (ch.2; line: 60)	
5	Baekhyun seems absolutely ethereal . (ch.2; line: 82)	

No.	Data	
	Foul for You	Love and War
6	Normally, he'd be talking my ear off , (ch.3; line: 4)	
7	But he drove in dead silence (ch.3; line: 5)	
8	The tunes playing over the radio were the only thing that saved me from death by awkwardness . (ch.3; line: 6)	
9	A million and one different thoughts flooded my mind, (ch.3; line: 7)	
10	Sure, that earned me a ton of unpleasant wake up calls, (ch.3; line: 19)	
11	He did that stare-into-my-soul thing again, (ch.3; line: 25)	
12	I could barely see over the mountain of material on my arms, (ch.3; line: 97)	
13	...I could feel my shoulders beginning to fall out of their sockets . (ch.3; line: 97)	
14	...I had been crushing on a boy probably a decade younger than I was. (ch.3; line: 110)	
15	...I realized that the entire mountain of clothes.. (ch.3; line: 113)	
16	It was a full on storm in there, the worst hurricane that had ever occurred on earth , (ch.3, line: 137)	
17	All I did was stand at the edge of his bed and laugh my ass out .. (ch.5; line: 7)	
18	...hoping that shirt didn't cost an arm and a leg . (ch.6; line: 74)	
19	...had willingly decided to declared war on my vacuum, (ch.8; line: 15)	
20	...as if to create a dozen more from air. (ch.14; line: 67)	
21	...I feel his eyes bore into my side . (ch.15; line: 22)	
22	... the dozens of men are all hugging.. (ch.16; line: 155)	

The table shows that there are 22 data of hyperboles in *Foul for You*; however, there is no data of hyperboles in *Love and War*.

This study used only the female main character in *Foul for You* and only a feminine male of the main character in *Love and War*. As what is portrayed in the findings, we can see that the amount of data from both main characters are not equal. The data of exaggeration expressions used by the female main character are more than the expressions used by the other character in the other fanfiction.

This is so interesting because in the *Yaoi* fanfiction, the character who was analyzed does not portray the gender theory although the character is supposed to be the feminine character in the fanfiction. However, another interesting point is that although the character does not really so distinct from the other male characters, in terms of the language used, the writer of the fanfiction, indeed, gave the feminine attributes to the character in the comparison of the other male characters.

For example, in describing the feminine character, the writer of the fanfiction described him as beautiful instead of handsome or any masculine characteristics, "...*his beautiful waist*." (ch.2; line: 25); "...*very attractive and beautiful*..." (ch.2; line: 33); "...*beautiful and angelic face*." (ch.2; line: 142); "...*his beauty is out of this world*." (ch.3; line: 15). This is different from what

the writer of the fanfiction gave the characteristics of the masculine characters, for example, "...his manly waist..." (ch.2; line: 1); "...handsome and manly..." (ch.2; line: 8); "...so breath taking and handsome." (ch.2; line: 11); "...a cool smile lingering on his lips." (ch.2; line: 73). Moreover, in chapter 4, line: 8, the writer also described that the feminine character is far from the masculinity, "... so beautiful, so tender, so attractive and so small". In the fanfiction itself, the feminine character is also portrayed as a shorter man than the masculine characters. This is so interesting to know when in the story, the feminine character is actually a mafia boss.

4. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The portrayal of gender theory can be found in the Non-*Yaoi* fanfiction since the distinction between the female and male characters' way of speaking are pretty clear. However, the portrayal of gender theory in *Yaoi* fanfiction is not so distinct between the feminine and masculine characters' way of speaking. The distinction of the feminine and masculine character in *Yaoi* fanfiction is more to be in the descriptions of their distinct physical appearances. Even so, the clear portrayal of gender differences can also depend on the gender of the writers themselves in which this study did not cover.

This study did not cover the analysis of the fanfictions' writers' gender that somehow can be the factor of how the writers will portray the characters in the fanfictions. It can be a suggestion for the next study in this field of gender and language in fanfictions. Moreover, using a lot of fanfictions will also be helpful.

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