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A Linguistic Analysis of Power Transformation in The Speech of The Female Robot in Subservience Movie (2024) Based on Lakoff's Theory

ABSTRAK

Bahasa memainkan peran penting dalam merepresentasikan dan membentuk relasi kuasa dalam interaksi sosial, termasuk narasi sinematik. Penelitian ini menganalisis transformasi kuasa linguistik pada ucapan karakter robot wanita bernama Alice dalam film Subservience (2024) menggunakan kerangka powerful dan powerless language Robin Lakoff (1975) dari perspektif pragmatik. Awalnya, Alice digambarkan sebagai asisten domestik yang patuh dan subordinat, tercermin dari dominasi fitur powerless language seperti politeness markers, hesitation (via jeda), indirect requests, dan weak modal verbs. Seiring perkembangan cerita—khususnya pasca-reset memori—ucapannya bergeser ke powerful language yang ditandai direct statements, strong declaratives, absence of hedges dan tag questions, serta controlled steady intonation, mencerminkan peningkatan otoritas, kepercayaan diri, dan dominasi. Penelitian kualitatif deskriptif ini menggunakan dialog Alice dari transkrip resmi film sebagai data utama. Hasil menunjukkan powerless language muncul 149 kali (42,45%), didominasi politeness markers (30,20%) dan hesitation (24,16%) pada fase awal, sedangkan powerful language mendominasi dengan 202 kemunculan (57,55%), dipimpin direct statements (23,27%), strong declaratives (22,27%), dan absence of hedges/tags (21,78%) pada fase akhir. Transformasi ini mencerminkan perubahan Alice dari entitas patuh menjadi agen otonom dan mengancam, sekaligus mengilustrasikan bagaimana bahasa secara aktif membangun dinamika kuasa dalam narasi fiksi AI-thriller, sehingga memperkaya diskusi pragmatik tentang bahasa dan kuasa pada karakter non-manusia.

Kata kunci: *powerful and powerless language, Lakoff, transformasi kuasa, pragmatik, Subservience (2024), karakter robot, Alice.*

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ABSTRACT

Language plays a crucial role in representing and constructing power relations in cinematic narratives. This study examines the linguistic transformation of power in the speech of Alice, the female robot in Subservience (2024), using Robin Lakoff's (1975) framework of powerful and powerless language from a pragmatic perspective. Initially portrayed as an obedient domestic assistant, Alice's early utterances are dominated by powerless features such as politeness markers, hesitation (via pauses), indirect requests, and weak modal verbs. As the narrative progresses—particularly after her memory reset—her speech shifts to powerful language marked by direct statements, strong declaratives, absence of hedges and tag questions, and controlled steady intonation, reflecting growing authority, confidence, and dominance. This qualitative descriptive analysis draws on Alice's dialogues from the official film transcript, revealing powerless language at 149 occurrences (42.45%), led by politeness markers (30.20%) and hesitation (24.16%) in the early phase, while powerful language dominates with 202 occurrences (57.55%), headed by direct statements (23.27%), strong declaratives (22.27%), and absence of hedges/tags (21.78%) in the later phase. This linguistic shift mirrors Alice's development from compliant servant to autonomous and threatening agent, illustrating how language actively constructs power dynamics in fictional AI narratives.

Keywords: *powerful and powerless language, Lakoff, power transformation, pragmatics, Subservience (2024), robot character, Alice*