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Poetic Language and the Emotion of Love in the Movie Dilan 1990: A Psycholinguistic Perspective

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze how the emotion of love affects the production of poetic language through a case study of the character Dilan in the film *Dilan 1990*. Using a descriptive qualitative approach and a case study design, this research employs the film's dialogue as the main data, which are analyzed thematically and psycholinguistically. Dilan's utterances, which are rich in metaphors, hyperbole, and personification, are examined to reveal the relationship between emotional states and linguistic creativity. The findings show that love as a dominant emotion triggers complex brain activity, including the activation of the limbic system, inferior frontal gyrus, and insula, resulting in poetic and aesthetic language expressions. In addition, the use of novel and idiomatic metaphors in dialogue indicates the involvement of the right hemisphere and the embodied cognition system, reinforcing that the emotion of love not only expresses feelings but also shapes cognitive structures and narrative memory in language. This study contributes by providing a psycholinguistic explanation of how emotional processes influence figurative language production and by offering insight into the interplay between emotion, brain, and language in the context of Indonesian popular culture.

Keywords: Psycholinguistics, love, poetic language, affective neuroscience, emotional metaphor

INTRODUCTION

Humans are emotional beings capable of experiencing a wide spectrum of emotions, ranging from joy to sadness and from anger to love. These emotions not only influence behavior and decision-making but are also reflected in language use. In certain emotional states, especially when individuals are in love, a person who is normally inexpressive can become highly communicative and poetic. This supports a popular expression among Indonesian writers that a phlegmatic person can become poetic when falling in love, indicating a close relationship between emotional states and the production of creative and figurative language.

Psycholinguistics, as a field that examines the relationship between cognitive processes and language, provides a framework for understanding how emotions influence word choice, sentence structure, and other forms of verbal expression. In this context, the emotion of love is particularly significant because it involves the activation of the limbic system, which is responsible for processing emotions and rewards. Studies in affective neuroscience have shown that falling in love increases activity in areas such as the ventral tegmental area and nucleus accumbens, which are associated with motivation and creativity, thereby influencing language production toward more metaphorical and expressive forms.

This phenomenon can also be observed in fictional works such as films. The film *Dilan 1990*, adapted from a novel by Pidi Baiq, portrays the main character Dilan as a teenager with a distinctive and poetic way of speaking, particularly in expressing his feelings toward Milea. His dialogues demonstrate various forms of linguistic creativity, including metaphor, irony, and wordplay, which reflect underlying emotional states. These expressions indicate that language use in the characters' dialogues is closely related to the way emotions, especially love, are constructed and communicated.

Therefore, this study focuses on examining the relationship between language use and emotional expression in the main characters' dialogues in the film *Dilan 1990*. By employing a psycholinguistic and affective neuroscience perspective, this research aims to analyze how emotional experiences, particularly love, shape linguistic choices and contribute to the production of poetic language. This study is expected to provide a deeper understanding of the interplay between emotion, cognition, and linguistic creativity within the context of Indonesian popular culture.

METHOD

This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study design, as it aims to examine in depth the linguistic phenomena that arise in a particular emotional context, namely falling in love, as represented in the film *Dilan 1990*. This study not only focuses on language as a system but also considers the psychological and affective context in which language is produced, making it relevant within a psycholinguistic framework. It is grounded in Language and Brain theory, which emphasizes the relationship between neurological processes and language production and comprehension (Field, 2003).

The primary data source of this study is the film *Dilan 1990* along with its dialogue script. The focus is on the main character, Dilan, whose utterances represent the transformation of emotional experiences into poetic language, particularly in his interactions with Milea. The data are selected purposively based on criteria such as the presence of figurative, poetic, and emotionally expressive language.

The researcher serves as the main instrument of analysis through processes of close reading and thematic categorization. A classification framework is used to identify stylistic features such as

metaphor, hyperbole, personification, and irony. Data collection is conducted through dialogue transcription, identification of relevant utterances, and compilation of a linguistic corpus from selected scenes.

The data analysis is conducted through several systematic steps. First, the researcher identifies and selects relevant utterances that contain emotional and figurative language. Second, each utterance is categorized based on its linguistic features, such as metaphor, hyperbole, or personification. Third, the utterances are interpreted to examine how emotional expressions, particularly love, are constructed through language use. Fourth, the findings are analyzed within a psycholinguistic framework by linking the linguistic features to cognitive and neurological processes, including insights from affective neuroscience. Finally, the results are interpreted to explain the relationship between emotional experience and linguistic creativity in the characters' dialogues.

Through this approach, the study aims to reveal how emotional experiences, especially love, shape the structure and aesthetic quality of language and how this phenomenon can be explained through a psycholinguistic perspective in the context of Indonesian popular culture.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This research aims to understand how the emotion of love affect the production of poetic language in Dilan's character in the movie Dilan 1990. Based on dialog excerpts collected from the film, various forms of figurative and aesthetic emotional language were found. The utterances reflect how the emotion of love encourages linguistic creativity, whether in the form of metaphors, hyperbole, personification, or statements that contain high affective intensity.

1. Figurative vs Literal Neural Activation

The phrase:

"Don't miss. Missing is hard. You won't be strong. Let me do it. *(Jangan rindu. Rindu itu berat. Kamu tidak akan kuat. Biar aku saja.)*" (Dilan, minute 17:48)

This iconic sentence shows a combination of metaphor and hyperbole. From a psycholinguistic point of view, this sentence evokes strong affective processing. The word "heavy" is usually used in a physical context, but here it is used in an emotional context-marking the activity of the insula (internal feeling area) and amygdala, the processing center for basic emotions such as love, fear and longing.

Research by Citron et al. (2016) showed that emotional metaphors like this triggered greater brain activation than literal sentences, especially in the left and right inferior frontal gyrus (IFG) and medial temporal cortex, which are involved in processing figurative semantics and emotions.

2. Electrical and Emotive Figurative Brain Networks

The Phrase:

"Believe me I'm reading you goodnight from afar, and you won't be able to hear. (Percayalah aku sedang membacakan selamat tidur dari jauh, dan kamu tidak akan bisa mendengarnya.)" (Dilan, 1:00)

Analysis:

It represents long-distance emotional communication that is highly imaginative. Neuroscientifically, the processing of this sentence most likely involves bilateral work (both hemispheres), namely the right prefrontal cortex (for creativity and empathy) and the inferior temporal gyrus (for spatial and affective visualization).

Research by Bohrn et al. (2012) found that processing distant metaphors (such as 'goodnight from afar') increased the work of the parietal cortex responsible for spatial and affective cognitive mapping.

3. Hemisfer Kanan, dan Novelitas Ekspresi

The Phrase:

"Today's proclamation in Bandung... Dilan and Milea are officially dating...*(Proklamasi hari ini di Bandung... Dilan dan Milea dengan penuh perasaan telah resmi berpacaran...)"* (Dilan, 03:58)

Analysis:

The use of this satirical-rhetorical style is an unusual form of novel metaphor. Based on the Graded Salience Hypothesis theory, processing new and unusual metaphors like this requires the right brain to work more dominantly, especially the right superior temporal sulcus and right inferior frontal cortex (RIFG).

This suggests that love not only strengthens emotions, but also activates linguistic creativity through the right brain pathway, as per Schmidt & Seger's (2009) results, which state that novel metaphors activate creative and interpretive cognitive areas in the right hemisphere.

4. Embodied Cognition: Motor and Indra Emotif

The Phrase*:*

"Longing is an individual longing in my chest, inside me is a sea of longing... *(Kerinduan adalah kerinduan individu di dadaku, di dalam diriku adalah lautan rindu...)*" (Milea, 02:33)

Analysis:

This is a fully embodied metaphor. Words like "sea of longing", "ever-flowing river" describe emotions as physical and dynamic entities. From the angle of embodied psycholinguistics, these metaphors are processed not just as symbols, but processed by the brain's sensorimotor system.

Aziz-Zadeh et al. (2006) explain that action metaphors trigger activation in the primary motor and premotor areas of the brain - translating emotions into “feelings” in the body.

5. Emotion-Inference Connection: ACC & Insula

The phrase:

“Don't ever tell me someone hurt you. That person will disappear. *(Jangan pernah bilang kepadaku ada yang menyakitimu. Nanti orang itu akan hilang.)*" (Dilan, 1:09:46)

Analysis:
These statements are loaded with protective emotions and implicit aggression. From a neurological perspective, these utterances are processed not only semantically but also in the context of social conflict and threat, involving the anterior cingulate cortex (ACC) and anterior insula areas.

The ACC plays a role in affective conflict detection and ethical decision-making, while the insula connects visceral feelings with cognitive awareness. This suggests that love also produces profound social and moral responses.

6. Context-Emotion Interaction: Modulation of Figurative Comprehension

The Phrase:

“...He who has made me on this day into a nest of longing.” *(...Dia yang telah membuat aku di hari ini menjadi sebuah sarang rindu.)”* (Milea, 1:50:59)

Analysis:
The words “nest of longing” describe a love that is not just present in the past, but becomes part of a person's psychological structure. It is a very typical affective narrative that triggers activation of the default mode network (DMN)-the brain network involved in constructing self-meaning, memory and life narrative.

In fMRI studies, personal narratives like this show activation in the posterior cingulate cortex, precuneus, and medial prefrontal cortex, areas that store life schemas and long-term emotional representations.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the emotion of love has a significant influence on the production of poetic language, as reflected through the utterances of the character Dilan in the movie Dilan 1990. Through psycholinguistic and affective neuroscience approaches, it is evident that metaphors, hyperbole, and personification used in dialog are not only aesthetically pleasing, but also trigger neurological brain activation, particularly in the limbic area, inferior frontal gyrus, insula, and prefrontal cortex.

Love, as the dominant emotion, has been shown to promote linguistic creativity through the activation of the right hemisphere in the processing of new and complex metaphors, as well as the involvement of embodied cognition systems that bring together emotional experience and sensorimotor perception. This reinforces that figurative language in emotional contexts is not only a cultural reflection, but also the product of complex cognitive and neurophysiological processes.

Utterances in the movie, such as "longing is heavy" or "nest of longing", not only express feelings, but form psychological and affective representations in the characters' narrative memory. As such, the results of this study broaden the scope of understanding the relationship between emotion, brain and language in the context of Indonesian popular culture.

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