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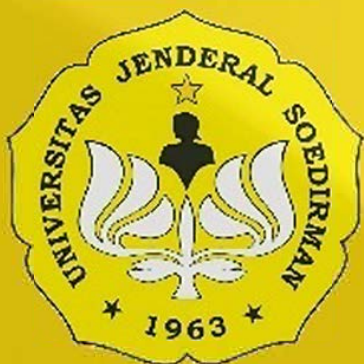
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Focus and Scope

J-Lalite: Journal of English Studies, which is published twice a year (in June and December), is a double-blind peer-reviewed journal that publishes original research and review articles, as well as fresh ideas in language, literature, and cultural studies. The journal covers all aspects relating to English Studies, including but not limited to the following:

1. English Linguistics
2. Applied Linguistics
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'It's Depend', 'Its Depend', or 'It Depends'? A portrait of ELF speaking variations

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Abstract. The present study aims to contribute to the existing knowledge on individual variation in situations where English is used as a lingua franca (ELF). It explores the use of two ungrammatical constructions, 'it's + V_ø' (e.g., *it's depend*) and 'its + V_ø' (e.g., *its depend*), in spoken conversations. These constructions involve an uninflected present-tense singular verb form with *it's* or *its* as subjects, which diverge from the standard -s inflected third-person singular with the pronoun *it* (e.g., *it depends*). This study examines the distribution of the variants of the 'it's + V_ø' and 'its + V_ø' constructions and the factors influencing the construction usage from an ELF environment. The data was from transcribed spoken texts of multilingual Asian English speakers in the Asian Corpus of English (ACE). The study identified 29 constructions from the idiolects of 20 individual speakers (4 males and 16 females) of various age groups, nationalities, and L1s. The analysis compared the individual usage of the ungrammatical constructions, contracted form *it's* in grammatical sentences, and present-tense markers (-s or zero) of singular verbs with singular subjects (*he, she, it, this, and that*). The findings suggest that the use of the 'it's + V_ø' and 'its + V_ø' constructions of individual speakers is influenced by the priming of *it's*, chunking of idiomatic *it's*, and variability of the English inflectional system. The speakers also exhibited interchangeability between the constructions and the present-tense markers of singular verbs with singular subjects.

Keywords: *individual variation, chunking, priming, language change, ELF*

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INTRODUCTION

Language variations among individual speakers have gained significant attention since the beginning of the new millennium (Griffiths & Soruç, 2021, p. 340). This increased focus is partly due to the availability of diverse data sets, which highlights the crucial role of individual differences in language description. The study of individual variation becomes particularly fascinating in the context of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF). In these situations, most individual languages are treated as secondary languages and are affected by the rapidly changing multilingual environment. As a result, the differences between the individual languages become more pronounced, and the description of the average becomes less informative.

Vetchinnikova and Hiltunen (2020) argue the importance of observing individual variability in ELF usage. By observing ten individuals in online ELF environments, they found that the differences in the use of contracted *it's* and uncontracted forms *it is* between individual and communal levels are significant. Vetchinnikova and Hiltunen conclude that the communal use of ELF emerges from the preferences of individual ELF speakers. In other words, group languages, like the communal use of ELF, are just general ideas made from the natural differences in how individuals use language (Mauranen, 2018, p. 116). It is acceptable to rely on whatever seems to work in interaction, whether diverging from standard language or mixing languages (Ranta, 2018, p. 245). This way, natural and spontaneous norms arise to safeguard mutual intelligibility in ELF usage (Mauranen, 2012, pp. 6–8).

Research has revealed that individuals have unique speech habits as part of their lingua franca, which is apparent, for example, in their n-gram profiles (Wright, 2017), collocational preference (Mollin, 2009), lexicogrammatical patterns (Hall et al., 2017), preference for contracted and uncontracted forms (Vetchinnikova & Hiltunen, 2020), and grammar (Dąbrowska, 2012). These studies suggest that language is a system of interacting idiolects (The Five Graces Group, 2009), making variability a key feature of lingua franca usage (Osimk-Teasdale, 2018). Variability is in different forms of English, including those from the outer circle, such as Brunei English (Deterding & Salbrina, 2013), and from the expanding circle, such as Indonesian English (Endarto, 2020). These variations reflect individual usage of the varieties in the lingua franca context locally and internationally. Examples of observed idiolectal variation in spoken and written everyday conversations include the use of *it's* mean and *its* mean instead of the standard *it* means (Amnah, 2016; Deterding, 2010; English in Brunei, 2020; Hellokitten, 2021).

In contributing to current research on individual variations in ELF and language change in general, the present paper looks at undiscussed variants, which the author named the '*it's* + V_ϕ ' and '*its* + V_ϕ ' constructions. These constructions involve uninflected singular present-tense verb form with *it's* or *its* as subjects (e.g., *it's depend* or *its depend*, instead of *it depends*). Zero inflection for singular subjects in present-tense forms is neither a recent nor unpredictable linguistic phenomenon. Trudgill (1998) suggests that this simplification emerged as a contact feature due to non-native speakers in Norwich during the 16th century. However, no research has investigated how and why the singular morpheme *-s* is shifted to the subject *it*, making it pronounced as [its] and written as either *it's* or *its*. When someone writes *its* instead of *it's*, it could suggest an attempt to economize while still conveying the standard meaning of *it's* (*'it is'* or *'it has'*). Thus, the rationale for discussing these

constructions is the change of meaning in *it's* and *its* in the constructions. These constructions represent non-standard forms that could signal ongoing changes in the English language. Investigating the constructions can provide insights into how language evolves and new grammatical patterns emerge. Therefore, the current study aims to examine the construction usage and distribution. Additionally, it seeks to explore the factors influencing the use of the constructions in an ELF environment.

Previously, in Poulisse's (1999, p. 227) study, the use of *it's look* instead of *it looks* and *it's belong* instead of *it belongs* by L2 English speakers was regarded as non-habitual and unintended slips of the tongue. Poulisse's (1999, pp. 82–89) data collection method consisted of an audio recording of 45 subjects of low, intermediate, and advanced English proficiency levels performing four controlled tasks which took 45 minutes per subject. This means that the recording session was performed once per subject and the use of *it's look* and *it's belong* was recorded during that one session.

However, a recent study indicated that the recurring use of *it's look* instead of *it looks* and *it's mean* instead of *it means* by an advanced L2-English speaker points towards habitual, not a slip of the tongue (Mohd Yusoff et al., 2019). Mohd Yusoff et al. (2019, pp. 165–166) employed a data collection method that involved conducting one-hour oral interview sessions with the same participant every week over 20 weeks. Their findings revealed that the participant employed the construction once during Week 1 of the interview and used it more than once in each recording session from Week 2 to Week 9. This pattern suggests that the subject's use of *it's look* and *it's mean* was attributable to speech habits. Analyzing the distinctions in methodology and findings between Poulisse's (1999) and Mohd Yusoff et al.'s (2019) studies, it is conceivable that Poulisse's subjects' tongue slips may have been manifestations of speech habits.

The possibility of misunderstanding during spoken communication or raising mutual intelligibility should be considered when examining the use of the 'it's + Vø' and 'its + Vø' constructions. Thus, the present study also aims to explore speakers' preference for using *it's* (or *its* in informal writing without the apostrophe) and uninflected present-tense verb form for singular subjects.

Bybee (2002) and Labov (1972) propose viewing contractions, such as *it's*, as instances of morphosyntactic or phonological reduction. This reduction is through cognitive processes, particularly frequency effects and chunking. Bybee and Scheibman (1999) argue that frequent word combinations become processing units through chunking, leading to changes in their constituent structure. These structural changes relate to shifts in meaning or pragmatic functions (Cheng et al., 2009). Vetchinnikova and Hiltunen (2020) further this understanding by asserting that chunking systematically affects individual speakers, influencing their preference for using contracted forms, such as *it's* over uncontracted forms like *it is*. Their data shows that chunking contributes to the formation of individual chunk repertoires that include both *it's* and *it is*, with significant variability observed across speakers. This variation highlights the personalized nature of language processing and usage, shaped by cognitive mechanisms like chunking.

Priming is another cognitive factor influencing language use (Pickering & Garrod, 2017, p. 173). Priming operates massively at a non-conscious or automatic level, manifesting as an unconscious tendency to repeat what one has

comprehended or produced. According to Pickering and Garrod (2017), priming plays a significant role in routinization, where initial impromptu expressions with specific meanings become conventionalized over time. While priming is studied over short timescale, such as within a single conversation, its effects can extend over longer periods, as evidenced by studies spanning weeks (Kaschak et al., 2011). Pickering and Garrod argue that priming can induce permanent changes across diverse groups, including adults, children, and native and non-native speakers, operating at different levels of linguistic representation. Even structures deemed ungrammatical can prime, resulting in heightened acceptability after exposure (Luka & Barsalou, 2005). Relevant corpus studies on priming effects include Mair (2017) and Barth and Kapatsinski (2017), who identified instances where the spoken occurrence of contracted form *wanna* ('*want to*') was primed by previous occurrences of *wanna* and *gonna*. Vetchinnikova and Hiltunen (2020, p. 226) also found similar results in their study, where the previous instance of *it's* increased the likelihood of using the contracted form. These studies collectively highlight the pervasive and nuanced nature of priming in shaping language use.

The objectives of this study are to investigate: 1) the correlation between the use of the '*it's* + $V_{\emptyset}$ ' and '*its* + $V_{\emptyset}$ ' constructions, and *it's* in idiomatic sentences (e.g., *It's always raining*, *It's a nice house*); 2) the relationship between the use of the '*it's* + $V_{\emptyset}$ ' and '*its* + $V_{\emptyset}$ ' constructions and the nonstandard use of uninflected present-tense singular verb form ($V_{\emptyset}$) with singular subjects (*he*, *she*, *it*, *this*, and *that*); and 3) the association between the use of the '*it's* + $V_{\emptyset}$ ' and '*its* + $V_{\emptyset}$ ' constructions and the standard use of -s inflected present-tense singular verb form with singular subjects (*he*, *she*, *it*, *this*, and *that*).

RESEARCH METHOD

Data

The data used in this study consists of transcribed spoken conversations sourced from the Asian Corpus of English (ACE, 2024). ACE, a 1-million-word corpus, captures naturally occurring interactions among ELF speakers, predominantly with Asian language backgrounds. All ACE participants demonstrated a high proficiency in English.

ACE has employed data collection teams in diverse locations for six years across Asia, including Brunei, China, Hong Kong, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, and Vietnam. It is essential to clarify that although the teams were present in these countries, their objective was not to collect data on local English varieties. Instead, their focus was gathering authentic instances of ELF usage by multilingual speakers in each location (Kirkpatrick, 2016, p. 226). ACE enriches the dataset by providing metadata on speakers, and details, such as age, gender, nationality, first language (L1), education, and occupation, available after each transcription.

Data extraction and preparation

The data collection approach for this study involves internally searching for sentences containing the patterns '*it's* + X + $V_{\emptyset}$ ' and '*its* + X + $V_{\emptyset}$ ', where X is an adverb that may be present or absent in the constructions, and $V_{\emptyset}$ represents the uninflected present-tense singular verb form. The initial process began with inserting the

keywords *it's* and *its* into the ACE online interface. Subsequently, the corpus concordance unveiled instances of these constructions and pinpointed the specific filenames containing these instances. Figure 1 shows a sample of the concordance of the keyword *it's* in ACE.

Figure 1. Concordance for 'it's' in ACE

Search ACE Corpus (You can also search the tagged corpus)

Search Keyword: Match Mode:

Corpus:

Search for "it's", using "Exact" match mode, from any corpora

[Download Concordance Results](#)

Showing 1 to 1,000 of 3,199 entries

Contents	Word Left	Word Right	Corpus	Filename
nglish is not used as a second language it's a foreign language S1: yeah it's f	language	a	Education	ASEAN_ED_con_learning and teaching english
guage it's a foreign language S1: yeah it's foreign language yeah (.) some student	yeah	foreign	Education	ASEAN_ED_con_learning and teaching english
t beginning at the primary school level it's taught as a second language S1: oh	level	taught	Education	ASEAN_ED_con_learning and teaching english
cept the number of students even though it's not no longer ideal as big as (.) eight	though	not	Education	ASEAN_ED_con_learning and teaching english
speak a dialect which is called hokkien it's not the m- it's not mandarin hh doesn't	hokkien	not	Education	ASEAN_ED_con_learning and teaching english
nothing to do we live in the suburbs so it's not at the that time were different hh	so	not	Education	ASEAN_ED_con_learning and teaching english

Identifying the occurrences of 'it's + X + V₀' and 'its + X + V₀' demanded a comprehensive understanding of how these constructions functioned within their respective contexts. The construction usage in ACE is exemplified in (1)–(3). The markup in the examples extracted for the present study (e.g., speaker identification 'S1', 'S2', and 'S3', utterance pause '(.)') is part of ACE annotation.

- (1) S1: (.) the <7> the </7> that's your decision **it's not depend** on the contract at all (in file 'MS_LE_con_11')
- (2) S3: but **it's belong** to the: <creak> oh ah </creak> because i live in the newer bukit panjang side (in file 'SG_ED_con_5')
- (3) S2: so when **its come** to this problem i think this gonna be less surreal to them than the kids from the rich family (in file 'PH_ED_sed_recounting lesson')

In the context of the conversations, it becomes evident that *it's not depend* in Example (1) corresponds to the standard *it does not depend*, *it's belong* in Example (2) corresponds to *it belongs*, and *its come* in Example (3) corresponds to *it comes*. However, it is uncertain why *its* in *its come* does not have the apostrophe as *it's* in Examples (1) and (2). Because the apostrophe is not pronounced in speech, it could suggest that the file transcriber for 'PH_ED_sed_recounting lesson' was economical. This suggestion will be discussed in detail in the results and discussion section.

Given that the primary focus of this study is to scrutinize the distribution of the use of *it's* and *its* with the uninflected present-tense singular verb form, adverbs present in these constructions will not be factored into the data analysis. Consequently, instances like *it's not depend* in Example (1) will be analyzed as *it's depend*, hence the 'it's + V₀' and 'its + V₀' constructions. Instances such as *it's seem* in Example (4) will be excluded from the findings due to potential phonological ambiguity.

- (4) S2: i'm <8>not too</8> sure **it's seem** that i ha- have not come across this
p- position lecturers here (in file 'HK_ED_int_helpdesk2')

After identifying the instances of 'it's + V₀' and 'its + V₀' constructions and the filenames containing the examples from the concordance, the next step was to extract the text from selected filenames. The initial process is viewing the filename at <https://corpus.eduhk.hk/ace/view/#/browse>. Then, the stages include copying the text, pasting it into a text file or Word, and renaming these new documents according to the filenames.

The new text files or Word documents are to search the speakers who used the 'it's + V₀' and 'its + V₀' constructions. After identifying the users of the constructions, their age group, gender, nationality, and L1s were extracted from the metadata provided at the end of each file (see Figure 2). The calculation of words spoken of the selected speakers was done by manually removing the markup. The frequency of speakers of construction usage, age group, gender, nationality, L1, and word count were all extracted into an Excel sheet.

Figure 2. Metadata of speakers in file 'HK_ED_con_conference briefing2'

```
S4: okay
S2: thanks
<Duration:00:09:53>
<S1>
<Gender: female>
<Age: 20-30>
<Nationality: Chinese>
<L1: Mandarin>
<Other lang: English>
<Education: not known>
<Occupation: student>
<Country of residence at time of recording: Hong Kong>
<S2>
<Gender: male>
<Age: 30-40>
<Nationality: Hong Kong>
<L1: Cantonese>
<Other lang: Mandarin, English>
<Education: PG>
<Occupation: researcher>
<Country of residence at time of recording: Hong Kong>
```

In total, 20 individuals used the 'it's + V₀' and 'its + V₀' constructions in ACE. These speakers are identified by the initials of their gender, nationality, and participant number. For example, FChi1 denotes the first female Chinese speaker. The metadata of the speakers who employed these constructions is in Table 1.

Table 1. Speakers' metadata

Speakers (N=20)	Gender	Age	Nationality	L1	No. of words
FBur1	F	30-40	Burmese	Burmese	328
FBur2	F	20-30	Burmese	Burmese	774
MCam1	M	30-40	Cambodian	Khmer	467
FChi1	F	40-50	Chinese	Chinese	905
FChi2	F	20-30	Chinese	Mandarin	3331
MMal1	M	20-30	Malaysian	Malaysian Malay	984
MMal2	M	20-30	Malaysian	Malaysian Malay	1541
FMal1	F	20-30	Malaysian	English	3088
FSin1	F	20-30	Singaporean	Mandarin	3181
FTha1	F	20-30	Thai	Thai	197
FTha2	F	20-30	Thai	Thai	441
FTha3	F	20-30	Thai	Thai	1745
MTha1	M	30-40	Thai	Thai	268
FVie1	F	30-40	Vietnamese	Vietnamese	715
FVie2	F	30-40	Vietnamese	Vietnamese	741
FVie3	F	20-30	Vietnamese	Vietnamese	1101
FVie4	F	30-40	Vietnamese	Vietnamese	282
FVie5	F	30-40	Vietnamese	Vietnamese	1532
FVie6	F	20-30	Vietnamese	Vietnamese	1728
FVie7	F	20-30	Vietnamese	Vietnamese	2081

Three additional datasets were essential for analyzing the factors influencing the 20 speakers' use of the 'it's + V_{ϕ} ' and 'its + V_{ϕ} ' constructions. The first dataset was the speakers' use of *it's* in idiomatic structures, where it serves as the subject, *be* as the copula, and the clause as the complement (e.g., *It's just a different way of drawing things*, *It's really cute*). The second dataset was the present-tense marker *-s* of singular verbs for singular subjects *he*, *she*, *it*, *this*, and *that*. The third dataset was the zero present-tense markers of singular verbs for singular subjects *he*, *she*, *it*, *this*, and *that*. These datasets can be searched and identified from the new text files or Word documents, and subsequently extracted into the Excel sheet with manual coding. The collected data was classified into priming and chunking.

For the priming category, the total occurrences of idiomatic *it's* structures and present-tense zero markers for each speaker were in two parts. The first part was the total occurrences of idiomatic *it's* structures and present-tense zero marker before the initial occurrence of the 'it's + V_{ϕ} ' or 'its + V_{ϕ} ' constructions. This assessment aligns with the methodologies employed by Barth and Kapatsinski (2017) and Mair (2017) on priming effects mentioned earlier. The second part was the total occurrences of idiomatic *it's* structures and present-tense zero markers after the initial occurrence of the constructions. This two-part classification enables comparing priming proportions for the 'it's + V_{ϕ} ' and 'its + V_{ϕ} ' constructions. The extraction of these classifications into the Excel sheet was done with manual coding.

For the chunking category, *it's* was regarded as a part of a chunk and operationalized as a semi-fixed, three-word n-gram (e.g., *it's okay*)^[1]. The analysis for chunking will concentrate on calculating the use of the most prevalent three-grams involving idiomatic *it's* by each speaker. For example, a speaker might use contracted forms *it's like* or *it's not* multiple times in their conversation instead of uncontracted forms *it is like* or *it is not*. The contracted forms were classified as three-word chunks. The extraction of the chunks into the Excel sheet was done with manual coding. Then, the frequency of these chunks was calculated accordingly. This approach aims to discern patterns related to the use of *it's* within specific linguistic chunks and assess its recurrence in each speaker's speech.

[1] The string *it's* is treated here as consisting of two words.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Variation between individuals

Table 2 shows 'it's + V_ø' and 'its + V_ø' constructions usage by the 20 individual speakers. A total of 29 variants of the constructions were found in ACE. These variants used 12 uninflected present-tense singular verbs (*belong, come, depend, guarantee, have, help, make, mean, keep, look, take, and want*). Notably, recurring instances include verbs *belong* (three occurrences), *depend* (seven occurrences), and *mean* (10 occurrences).

It is crucial to highlight that this study does not dismiss instances where speakers use these constructions only once. The rationale behind this approach stems from the uncertainty surrounding whether the singular use in a speaker's conversation during a single meeting is a mere slip of the tongue or indicative of speech habit. As previously mentioned, Mohd Yusoff et al. (2019, pp. 165–166) presented evidence suggesting that the chronic use of phrases like *it's look* instead of *it looks* and *it's mean* instead of *it means* initially occurred as a single instance in the first week of a one-hour interview. However, the phrase usage recurred from the second until the ninth week. It suggests that the speakers' one-time use of the 'it's + V_ø' and 'its + V_ø' constructions, as outlined in Table 2, could be attributed to speech habits or slips of the tongue. In contrast, the repeated use of these constructions by FBur1, FBur2, MMal1, MMal2, FTha3, and FVie5 in their conversations is deemed more likely due to speech habits.

As stated in the introduction section, the author suggested that the transcriber for the file 'PH_ED_sed_recounting lesson' was economical for excluding the apostrophe in *its* in *its come*. The collected data has identified that speakers FBur2 and FVie3 were from the same file 'PH_ED_sed_recounting_lesson'. For FBur2, there were two instances where *it's* was transcribed as *its* in *its such* and *its depend*. There were 15 *it's* usage by FBur2, including the two cases of *it's depend*. This makes the total count of *it's* for FBur2 17. For FVie3, there was one instance where *it's* was transcribed as *its* in *its come*. There were 10 *it's* usage by FVie3. Therefore, the total count of *it's* for FVie3 was 11. It confirmed that the transcriber for the file missed adding the apostrophe for *its depend* by FBur2 and *its come* by FVie3.

A statistic measure, logDice, was conducted to determine the attraction or strength between the two words in each variant. LogDice is only based on the frequency of the node (since there should have been an apostrophe for *its depend* by FBur2 and *its come* by FVie3, the node for all variants is thus *it's*), the collocate

(*belong, come, depend, guarantee, have, help, make, mean, keep, look, take, and want*), and the frequency of the co-occurrence of the node and collocate. High logDice scores identify words that are strongly attracted to each other. Low scores identify words with low attraction that are together only by chance. The median logDice score is 11.97. Scores above this median indicate strongly associated collocations of the variants produced by FBur1, FBur2, MCam1, FChi1, MMal1, FTha1, FTha2, MTha1, FVie1, FVie2, and FVie4.

Subsequent sections will delve into the remaining data sets, exploring factors that may influence the use of these variants in greater detail. The results and discussion will be based on the order of the three research objectives.

Table 2. Variation of the 'it's + V₀' and 'its + V₀' constructions between individuals

Speakers (N=20)	Raw Frequency (N=29)	Variants	logDice
FBur1	2	<i>it's belong</i> [2]	12.5
FBur2	3	<i>it's depend</i> [2] <i>its depend</i> [1]	12.2
MCam1	1	<i>it's depend</i> [1]	13.4
FChi1	1	<i>it's depend</i> [1]	13.4
FChi2	1	<i>it's have</i> [1]	9.27
MMal1	3	<i>it's mean</i> [3]	12.8
MMal2	2	<i>it's guarantee</i> [1] <i>it's mean</i> [1]	11.1 10.8
FMal1	1	<i>it's keep</i> [1]	9.71
FSin1	1	<i>it's belong</i> [1]	8.13
FTha1	1	<i>it's mean</i> [1]	13.0
FTha2	1	<i>it's mean</i> [1]	12.4
FTha3	3	<i>it's make</i> [1] <i>it's mean</i> [2]	9.83 10.5
MTha1	1	<i>it's depend</i> [1]	13.0
FVie1	1	<i>it's depend</i> [1]	14.0
FVie2	1	<i>it's take</i> [1]	12.2
FVie3	1	<i>its come</i> [1]	10.9
FVie4	1	<i>it's help</i> [1]	14.0
FVie5	2	<i>it's mean</i> [2]	11.8
FVie6	1	<i>it's want</i> [1]	10.4
FVie7	1	<i>it's look</i> [1]	10.1

Results and Discussion Related to Objective 1

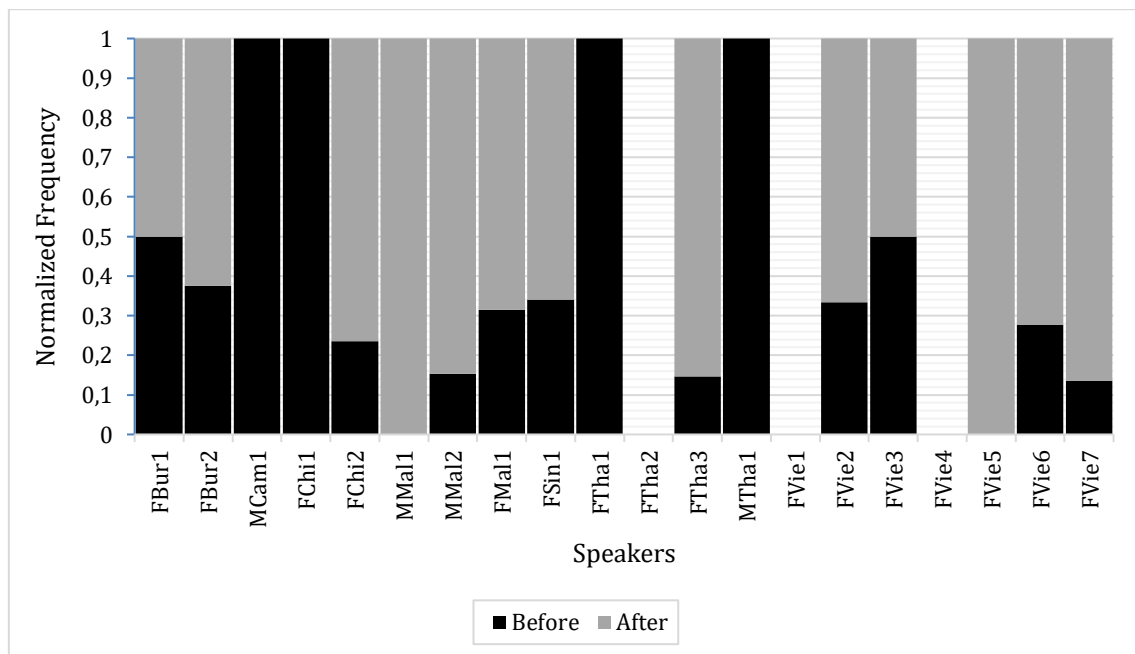
This section discusses the correlation between the use of the 'it's + V₀' and 'its + V₀' constructions and *it's*. The following findings demonstrate the effect of *it's* usage on the 'it's + V₀' and 'its + V₀' constructions.

Vetchinnikova and Hiltunen (2020, p. 219) report that previous instance of the contracted form increases the likelihood of using it again. The priming effect is also

reported by Barth and Kapatsinski (2017) and Mair (2017) who identified instances where the occurrence of *wanna* ('want to') was primed by previous occurrences of *wanna* and *gonna*. Even in this case, one of the main factors causing the use of the 'it's + $V_{\emptyset}$ ' and 'its + $V_{\emptyset}$ ' constructions is certainly the priming of *it's*.

In the current study, all 20 speakers used *it's* in their conversations. Three speakers, FTha2, FVie1, and FVie4, only used *it's* once which was in their 'it's + $V_{\emptyset}$ ' construction usage. Figure 3 illustrates the proportions of *it's* occurring before and after the first occurrence of the 'it's + $V_{\emptyset}$ ' and 'its + $V_{\emptyset}$ ' constructions. This observation implies a potential priming effect of *it's* on the use of the constructions.

Figure 3. Proportions of 'it's'



To examine the influence of priming associated with *it's* on the use of 'it's + $V_{\emptyset}$ ' and 'its + $V_{\emptyset}$ ' constructions by the 20 speakers, a one-tailed dependent t-test was conducted. The results of the test indicate that the likelihood of using 'it's + $V_{\emptyset}$ ' and 'its + $V_{\emptyset}$ ' constructions ($M = -0.65$, $SD = 0.34$) increases following the prior occurrence of *it's*, $t(19) = -1.90$, $p = .036$.

Vetchinnikova and Hiltunen (2020, p. 219) also report that individuals who frequently use contractions tend to do so even in the absence of a priming context. This suggests an entrenched habit of using contractions. Supporting this observation, the present study finds that all 20 speakers preferred the contracted form *it's* over the uncontracted *it is*. Table 3 provides the raw frequency of *it's* and *it is* usage by the 20 speakers. This finding aligns with the concept of routinization due to priming, as highlighted by Pickering and Garrod (2017).

Table 3. Speakers' use of 'it's' and 'it is'

Speakers (N=20)	Raw Frequency	
	<i>it's</i>	<i>it is</i>
FBur1	9	0
FBur2	17	0
MCam1	2	0
FChi1	2	2
FChi2	35	0
MMal1	7	0
MMal2	14	0
FMal1	36	2
FSin1	45	0
FTha1	3	0
FTha2	1	0
FTha3	35	3
MTha1	3	0
FVie1	1	0
FVie2	4	1
FVie3	11	1
FVie4	1	0
FVie5	10	4
FVie6	19	2
FVie7	23	2
Total	278	17

According to Vetchinnikova and Hiltunen (2020, p. 221), chunking is similar to priming. They report that chunking seems to increase the likelihood of the contracted form *it's* across individual speakers. This holds at least for those who prefer to contract in general. In this case, the other main factor causing the use of the 'it's + V_ø' and 'its + V_ø' constructions is the chunking of *it's*.

The present study analyzed 228 instances of idiomatic *it's* structures produced by 17 speakers (excluding FTha2, FVie1, and FVie4). The examination of all idiomatic *it's* structures in the data revealed that the syntactic structures belonged only to the copular category. There were no idiomatic *it's* structures in the progressive, such as *it's going*, found in the data. Due to the limited data, a cautious approach to non-compositional processing was adopted. This entailed considering a sequence of words as a chunk if it constituted a fixed three-gram and occurred at least twice in each conversation.

12 out of the 17 speakers produced three-grams involving *it's* which occurred at least twice in each conversation. Table 4 showcases the most frequent three-gram chunks of idiomatic *it's* structures for each speaker. This finding highlights the diverse repertoires of personal chunks developed by individuals. It also emphasizes that chunking systematically influences the variation in three-grams involving *it's*, mirroring the variability observed in the variants across individuals in Table 2. This observation suggests that the chunking effect of idiomatic *it's* contributes to the

speakers' use of the 'it's + V_ø' and 'its + V_ø' constructions. Furthermore, it is possible to tentatively hypothesize that the 'it's + V_ø' and 'its + V_ø' constructions usage may be associated with the copular category, which is conducive to chunk formation.

Table 4. Most frequent three-grams involving 'it's'

Speakers (N=12)	<i>it's</i>	idiomatic <i>it's</i>	Three-gram chunks [raw frequency]
FBur1	9	6	<i>it's okay</i> [2]
FBur2	17	14	<i>it's not</i> [2] <i>it's really</i> [4]
FChi2	35	30	<i>it's a</i> [6] <i>it's not</i> [4] <i>it's okay</i> [5]
FMal1	36	33	<i>it's a</i> [2] <i>it's just</i> [3] <i>it's like</i> [4] <i>it's not</i> [2] <i>it's the</i> [2] <i>it's okay</i> [3] <i>it's very</i> [2] <i>it's more</i> [2]
MMal2	14	12	<i>it's not</i> [3] <i>it's okay</i> [4]
FSin1	45	42	<i>it's a</i> [3] <i>it's like</i> [8] <i>it's the</i> [5] <i>it's very</i> [7]
MTha1	3	2	<i>it's not</i> [2]
FTha3	35	25	<i>it's not</i> [2]
FVie3	11	10	<i>it's like</i> [2] <i>it's very</i> [2]
FVie5	10	8	<i>it's okay</i> [4]
FVie6	19	18	<i>it's like</i> [2] <i>it's not</i> [5]
FVie7	23	17	<i>it's too</i> [2] <i>it's very</i> [3]

Results and Discussion Related to Objective 2

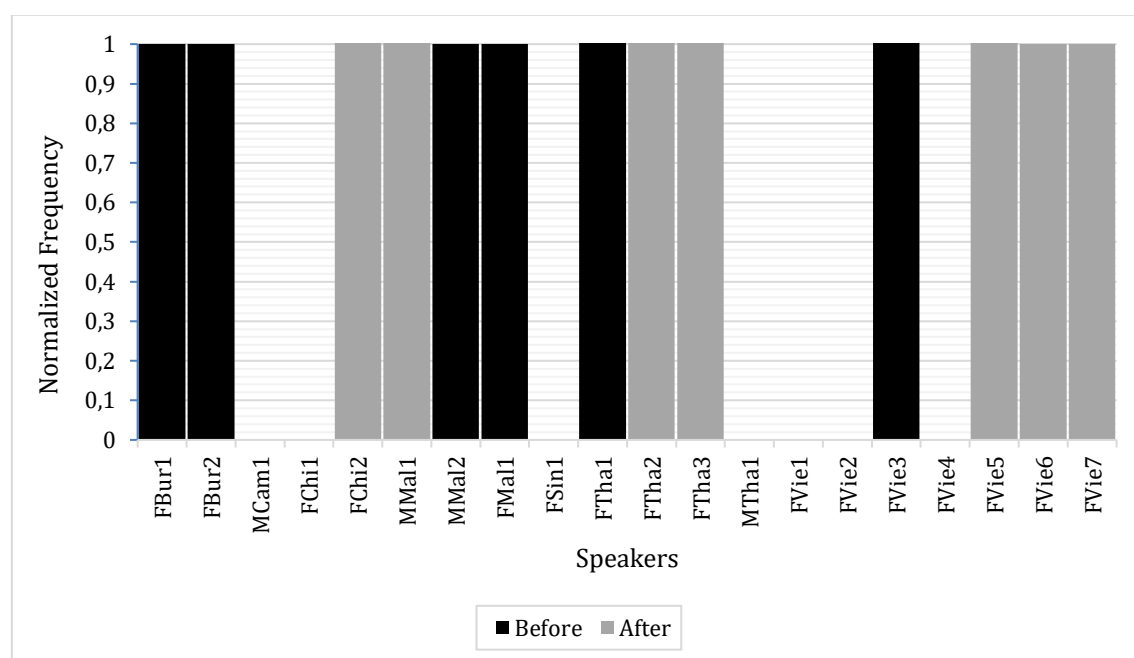
This section discusses the relationship between the use of 'it's + V_ø' and 'its + V_ø' constructions and the nonstandard use of uninflected present-tense singular verb form (V_ø) with singular subjects (*he, she, it, this, and that*). The following findings demonstrate the effect of zero inflection usage on the 'it's + V_ø' and 'its + V_ø' constructions.

Zero inflection for singular subjects in present-tense forms is neither a recent nor unpredictable linguistic phenomenon. Trudgill (1998) suggests that this

simplification emerged as a contact feature due to non-native speakers in Norwich during the 16th century. This phenomenon is particularly prominent in varieties that have experienced extensive linguistic contact. These varieties include high-contact L1 varieties, such as Aboriginal English and Urban African American Vernacular English, and indigenized L2 varieties such as Hong Kong English, Malaysian English, and Pure Fiji English (Kortmann et al., 2020). ELF, being a contact language, commonly exhibits zero marking of the third-person singular (Breiteneder, 2009). Even in this study, there are instances zero inflection for singular subjects in present-tense forms.

In the current study, 13 out of 20 speakers used zero marking in present-tense singular verbs with singular subjects (*he, she, it, this, and that*) in their conversations. Figure 4 illustrates the proportions of zero inflection occurring before and after the first instances of the 'it's + V_ø' and 'its + V_ø' constructions. It is observed that only six out of the 13 speakers used the zero marking before the first instances of the 'it's + V_ø' and 'its + V_ø' constructions.

Figure 4. Proportions of uninflected present-tense verbs with singular subjects



To determine whether the priming effect of zero inflection of present-tense singular verb form with singular subjects (*he, she, it, this, and that*) contributes to the use of the 'it's + V_ø' and 'its + V_ø' constructions by the 20 speakers, a one-tailed dependent t-test was conducted. The results of the test indicate that the prior use of zero inflection does not increase the likelihood of using the 'it's + V_ø' and 'its + V_ø' constructions ($M = 0.45$, $SD = 0.36$), $t(19) = 1.25$, $p = .113$.

Results and Discussion Related to Objective 3

This section explores the relationship between the use of 'it's + V_ø' and 'its + V_ø' constructions and the standard use of the -s inflected present-tense singular verb form with singular subjects (*he, she, it, this, and that*). The following findings

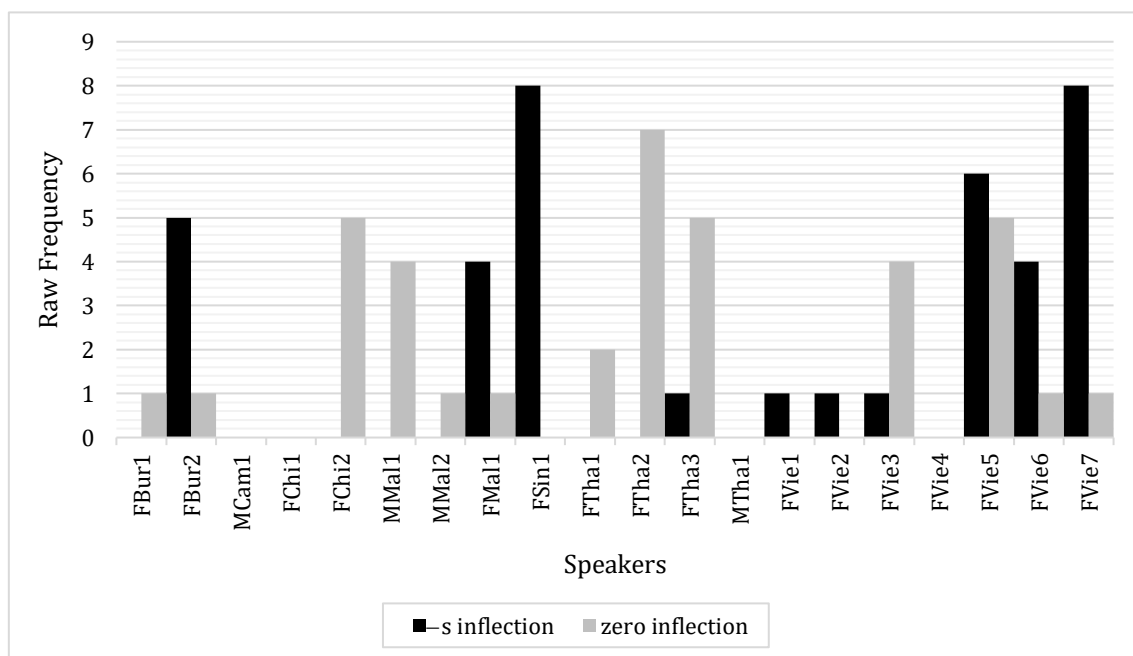
illustrate how the use of the standard -s inflection can still lead to the occurrence of the 'it's + V_ø' and 'its + V_ø' constructions.

The use of the -s inflection for third-person singular verbs varies widely across many non-standard varieties of English (Trudgill, 1990). Calle-Martín and Romero-Barranco (2017, p. 82) note that not all speakers of a given variety consistently adopt the inflected form. Even in ELF interactions, the use of third-person present-tense markers showcases the diversity in preferences among English speakers (Jenkins et al., 2011).

The present study finds that among the 13 speakers who used zero marking in their conversations, seven demonstrated interchangeabilities between the -s and zero inflection in present-tense singular verb forms. Figure 5 illustrates the interchangeability demonstrated by speakers FBur2, FMal1, FTha3, FVie3, FVie5, FVie6, and FVie7. For instance, FVie5 (in file 'VN_LE_con_culture') showcased this interchangeability by using the 'it's + V_ø' construction and employing both -s and zero inflection of the present-tense singular verb forms with singular subjects (*she* and *it*), as demonstrated in examples (5)–(7) respectively.

- (5) **it's mean** that now okay i i just got a bachelor degree okay i'm (.) working as a high school teacher
- (6) <6> yeah **she doesn't** have time </6> yeah yeah
- (7) <3> yeah </3> in vietnam yeah **it become** popular now

Figure 5. Variation of present-tense singular -s and zero inflection with singular subjects



The use of the 'it's + V_ø' construction and present-tense -s and zero inflection can extend to involve the same verb within the same conversation. FChi2, who exclusively used zero inflection throughout her conversation (in file 'MS_ED_con_6'), demonstrated the interchangeable use of the 'it's + V_ø' construction and zero inflection with the same verb *have*, as exemplified in Examples (8) and (9). A similar

pattern also emerged with the verb *mean* in the conversation of FTha3 (in file 'MS_LE_con_6'). FTha3 employed both -s and zero inflection with the verb *mean*, as illustrated in Examples (10) and (11). These findings highlight the speakers' flexibility and interchangeability in using these structures within the same discourse. This offers intriguing insights into the dynamic nature of individual language use.

- (8) **it's only have** the like english to french and the other language (FChi2)
- (9) very very beautiful place and it's: summer but **it have** the snow in the mountains (FChi2)
- (10) one hour and a half so **it's mean** in- include going to the toilet (FTha3)
- (11) because <L1th>haa {five}</L1th> **it mean** er <L1th>haa {five}</L1th> thai in thai means <2>five</2> (FTha3)

Conversely, FVie2, who exclusively employed -s inflection with singular subjects throughout her entire conversation (in file 'MS_PB_con_1'), exhibited the interchangeability of using the 'it's + V_{ϕ} ' construction and -s marking with the same verb *take*, as exemplified in Examples (12) and (13). This interchangeability is similarly evident with the verb *look* used by FVie7 (in file 'VN_LE_con_pho restaurant') as illustrated in Examples (14) and (15). FVie7 produced 10 instances of -s marking and one of zero inflection. These findings showcase the potential of these structures to be used within the same discourse, even when a speaker predominantly uses a specific form of inflection.

- (12) <6>**it's**</6> **take** time and then <7>they don't feel don't feel comfortable</7> with waiting (FVie2)
- (13) oh my goodness <5>**it takes** time</5> (FVie2)
- (14) oh the same the same the (.) it big **it's look** quite big (FVie7)
- (15) do you know why **she looks** so young? (FVie7)

The interchangeability observed from these findings highlights that, despite the use of nonstandard zero inflection and the 'it's + V_{ϕ} ' and 'its + V_{ϕ} ' constructions, the speakers were aware of the standard form. This suggests that the use of these constructions is not random but rather influenced systematically by the priming of *it's*, chunking of idiomatic *it's*, and variability of the present-tense inflection marker. Despite the use of nonstandard structures of zero inflection and the constructions, the speakers maintained effective communication flow. This interaction between standard/grammatical and non-standard/ungrammatical forms within an individual's linguistic framework is driven by various dynamic forces, including the complex interplay of the speaker's cognitive processes, prior language experiences, and social motivations (Vetchinnikova, 2017).

CONCLUSION

One of the potential factors influencing language use and change is variation among individuals. Scholars generally agree that social, cognitive, and linguistic factors interact to produce linguistic patterns. These factors should be apparent in each individual. Despite all language users having similar cognitive abilities such as chunking, using an analogy, categorizing, and generalizing to new situations, the linguistic patterns they produce can differ considerably based on the input they

receive. This becomes particularly intriguing in ELF environments where people have greater language exposure diversity than in monolingual settings.

The present study delved into the usage and distribution of two ungrammatical constructions, namely 'it's + V_ø' and 'its + V_ø', in spoken ELF conversations. It examined the effect of priming and chunking on the variations observed in these constructions across 20 individuals. The main analysis involved a comprehensive examination of each speaker's usage of the 'it's + V_ø' and 'its + V_ø' constructions, the contracted form *it's*, and present-tense markers (-s or zero) of singular verbs with singular subjects (*he, she, it, this, and that*). The most noteworthy findings in the study suggest that the use of the 'it's + V_ø' and 'its + V_ø' constructions by individual speakers are prompted by the priming effect of *it's* ($p = .036$) and chunking effect of idiomatic *it's*, and the variability in the inflectional system in individual Englishes.

A limitation of this study is the uncertainty regarding whether the isolated instances of the constructions produced by the speakers result from speech errors or tongue slips rather than established speech habits. As aforementioned, this study considered instances of the 'it's + V_ø' and 'its + V_ø' constructions, even when used only once. This decision was influenced by findings from Mohd Yusoff et al. (2019, p. 165–166), suggesting that recurrent use of expressions like *it's look* instead of *it looks* and *it's mean* instead of *it means* initially manifested as a single occurrence in the first week of a one-hour interview but later recurred from the second until the ninth week. This implies that the speakers' one-time usage of the 'it's + V_ø' and 'its + V_ø' constructions, as depicted in Table 2, could potentially be linked to speech habits. Another limitation lies in the lack of variation in the syntactic structure of idiomatic *it's* as the chunking effect of *it's*, which was exclusively from the copular category. To enhance the depth of the study, the researcher could have incorporated spoken ELF data from an additional corpus, allowing for a comparison of the variants of the constructions and the influence of different syntactic structures on the chunking of idiomatic *it's* (e.g., extraposition, progressive). This could serve as a potential direction for future research, alongside the possibility of a longitudinal study to investigate the evolving distribution patterns of the 'it's + V_ø' and 'its + V_ø' constructions over time.

Additionally, according to Kaschak and Glenberg (2004) and Luka and Barsalou (2005), there is a possibility that exposure to ungrammatical structures, such as the 'it's + V_ø' and 'its + V_ø' constructions, can lead to increased acceptability of these structures. Since the present study does not extend to investigating how the 20 individual speakers were exposed to these constructions, a qualitative study could explore this aspect, providing further insights for future research.

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Exploring Social Identity Transformation: A Journey through Delia Owen's *Where the Crawdads Sing*

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Abstract. This study examines the social identity transformation of the *Where the Crawdads Sing* main character by using Social Identity Theory (SIT) proposed by Henri Tajfel and Turner. Tajfel and Turner divided SIT into self-categorization, social identification, and social comparison to show how these events alter the identity of Kya (the main character) transformation. This study used a qualitative approach to analyze Delia Owens' novel *Where the Crawdads Sing*, focusing on character development and social interactions. Secondary sources, such as literary criticisms and reviews, supplement primary data. Data analysis identifies recurring patterns and critical themes of societal identity transformation, including isolation, resilience, exclusion, and integration. This study found that *Where the Crawdads Sing* explores Kya's self-categorization in Barkley Cove, North Carolina. She forms a strong bond with her black friend Jumpin' and the marsh as her in-group, providing comfort and connection to the marsh. The novel contrasts Barkley Cove's out-group social identification with the marshlands, highlighting the importance of acceptance, forgiveness, and embracing one's identity in navigating complex human relationships. The social comparison explores Kya Clark's struggle for acceptance in a small town, contrasting it with the marshlands and highlighting themes of isolation and resilience.

Keywords: *Where the Crawdads Sing*, Social Identity Theory, Identity Development

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INTRODUCTION

Social identity transformation is fundamental to studying psychology and sociology because it helps explain the complex dynamics of human behavior inside social settings. A social group is a collection of two or more individuals who identify themselves as members of the same social category, either generally or privately. (Hogg and Abrams, 2001). This study examines the social identity transformation of the main character, Kya Clark, using Henri Tajfel and Turner's Social Identity Theory (SIT). The result is a complex tapestry that provides an insightful look at this phenomenon of social identity transformation.

Delia Owens' best-selling book *Where the Crawdads Sing* delves into loneliness, maturation, and the confluence of human connections and the natural world. According to Gustama and Lolowang (2021), the plot centers on Kya Clark, the "Marsh Girl," who grows up among North Carolina's marshes after her family abandons her. The story shifts between two timelines: one that takes place in the 1950s and early 1960s and follows Kya as she makes her way into adulthood, and another that takes place later in time and involves a murder inquiry. The book has received accolades for its atmospheric setting, powerful, independent female protagonist, and lyrical style.

According to Swastika's (2021) latest research titled *Kya's Individuation Process in Delia Owens' Where the Crawdads Sing*, Kya Clark—the main character, individuates throughout the book. Kya's portrayal, actions, and experiences match Jung's psychoanalytic theory of individuation. The individuation indicates that her connection to nature shapes who she is, and her loneliness shows how social and family abandonment can influence a person's sense of self. These ties reveal how complex social connections and love are in shaping identity. *Where the Crawdads Sing* idealizes self-acceptance and integration. Kya discovers herself in the story. She must combine her great connection to nature with her yearning to belong to others to be her best. She would have to heal the wounds of being alone and rejected to accept her individuality without shame or fear.

Literature often incorporates elements of social identity theory into its characters, forming groups based on various factors. Literature is created by the human soul, drawing upon prior experiences as references. Conversely, literature sustains the human soul (Dastmard et al., 2012). Characters grapple with identity conflict and self-discovery, navigating societal expectations and prejudice based on group affiliation. This mutually beneficial relationship between literature and social identity theory allows for deeper insights into the real-world workings of social identity theory. From this, social identity theory enriches literary analysis by helping us understand characters' motivations, conflicts, and transformations within the context of their social groups, adding another layer of meaning to the literary works.

To conduct a thorough analysis of psychology, people must approach it systematically. Social identity is related to group memberships, where members of the same group tend to imitate norms, behaviors, and perspectives. They also influence each other, although the shared characteristics may differ from those of different groups or communities. Members assume that the characteristics of individuals in the same group are the same, leading to self-categorization. When a person self-categorizes as a member of a particular group, they describe themselves using similar phrases used by those in the same group, as they share the same

characteristics. Literature is an academic discipline that analyzes and interprets written artistic works. The connection between identity, a psychological component, and literature is inseparable (Riecher et al., 2010). Psychology enables individuals to comprehend human behavior and effectively recognize it. Literature provides individuals with insights into life and moral principles through written expression. Both psychology and literature focus on studying the human condition and life (Stets and Burke, 2000).

Tajfel and Turner's social identity theory is applied to study the novel from the perspective of social identity transformation. *Where the Crawdads Sing* explores themes of isolation, identity, and societal dynamics, using social identity theory to analyze relationships between characters. Kya, an outsider, faces prejudice and discrimination due to her poverty and unconventional lifestyle. The novel explores the complexities, including social identity, belonging, and acceptance, highlighting human nature and societal prejudices. According to this idea, people divide themselves and other people into social groups, and the social identities attached to these groups impact how people behave (Sets and Burke, 2000). As she ages, she starts to doubt her social identity and place in society. The story also examines the tension between people's need for social interaction and their wish to coexist peacefully with the environment.

Identity is a people or group's unique personality or conduct (Tajfel and Turner, 1986). The social identity theory, introduced by Tajfel (1981, 1982a), explains specific self-facets related to a particular social conduct in a given temporal context. Tajfel defines a person's social identity as the aspects of their self-concept that relate to their social groupings or categories. A person's understanding of their social group affiliation and its relevance and emotional value form their identity (Tajfel, 1981, 1982a). The social group identifications a person uses to identify themselves establish their social identity, according to Turner (1982). The way that different characters define social identity also varies. According to Hogg and Dominic Abrams (1998), a social group is a collection of two or more individuals who identify themselves as members of the same social category, either generally or privately. The basis of identification is shared characteristics or beliefs (Turner, 1982, p. 15). There are three stages of social identity transformation: self-identification, social identification, and social comparison. The theory primarily aims to understand intergroup relations, group dynamics, and the impact of group membership on individual behavior and self-concept (McLeod, 2023).

The first stage is self-categorization. Self-categorization is the process by which an individual acknowledges or categorizes himself as a member of a specific group or community (Rani, 2018). It is the first stage of establishing one's identity and relationship to the group one belongs to. This individual does not even bother to look at the other group they do not belong to.

The second stage is social identification. When people recognize the attitudes and behaviors of other group members, they frequently act similarly. Social connections between neighbors increase the likelihood of mutual influence (Rani, 2020). This stage usually consists of two groups, in-group and out-group. According to Main (2023), in SIT terminology, the group a person feels a sense of identification or belonging to is known as the in-group. On the other hand, an out-group is any group that a person perceives as being distinct from their in-group. Hence, it is normal for

people who belong to the same group or community to model themselves after one another, leading to comparable actions and ways of thinking.

The third stage is social comparison. Comparison is a valuable self-evaluation tool that does not require external conditions to measure oneself against others on specific attributes (Song, 2021). Social comparisons may pit them against each other or their organizations. Thus, they can identify the best group. Besides establishing which group is unique, each will try to be the best. People can change others' behavior to improve themselves. Everyone in the group may take comparable steps to bond. Thus, the out-group will see more benefits from the in-group.

The application of Tajfel and Turner's social identity theory provides a rich canvas for examining the evolution of social identity. By looking at Kya's path, we can investigate the themes of discrimination, resiliency, and isolation and how they affect her character development. Reading the novel's riveting study of isolation, coming-of-age, and the interplay of nature and human connections makes understanding how people manage their social identities and the effects these identities have on their lives easier.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study exercised a qualitative approach. Litosseliti (2010, p. 52) asserts that qualitative research examines a subject's patterns, structure, and substance. The primary data source for this study was Delia Owens' novel *Where the Crawdads Sing*. The first publication of the book was on August 14, 2018. The study will employ a qualitative research design, which is well-suited for investigating intricate literary topics and comprehending the intricacy of character development and social interactions inside a narrative. The primary data source utilized for this research is the textual content of the novel *Where the Crawdads Sing*. Supplementary information was from secondary sources, such as literary criticisms, scholarly articles, and reviews that analyze the novel's themes, character development, and societal settings. Analyze the text thoroughly and methodically to discover specific sections that depict Kya's transition in terms of her social identity. After that, select pertinent quotations and passages that emphasize Kya's social identity development, her interactions with other characters, and noteworthy events that shape her identity. Various forms of data function as secondary sources to complement primary data. To obtain data for the study and assist with initial data analysis, the researcher collects secondary data from various sources such as journals, papers, reviews, and other references (Rahmawati et al., 2013).

The data analysis involved identifying and examining recurring patterns or themes in qualitative data. The data analysis entailed discovering and examining repeating patterns or themes. Afterward, the key themes associated with transforming societal identity in the literary piece, such as isolation, resilience, exclusion, and integration into society, were analyzed and classified. The next step was paying particular attention to significant events and interactions that shape the protagonist's identity. It was essential to analyze Kya's interactions with others, including Jumpin' and the locals of Barkley Cove, to uncover the social identity of Kya. Ultimately, the last process entailed scrutinizing and deciphering a particular occurrence or data inside its framework or environment and drawing a conclusion.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section contains the results of all the data from Delia Owen's (2018) book *Where the Crawdads Sing*. Then, using Tajfel and Turner's (1981) theory of social identity, several discussions are provided to address the issues raised in the section on assertions.

Self-Categorization in Where the Crawdads Sing

The self-categorization in this novel is when Ma leaves her family behind in Barkley Cove, North Carolina. Kya's pa shows a compelling and violent person to her ma, so she runs away from home. As quoted below:

*"You told me that fox left her babies."
"Yeah, but that vixen got 'er leg all torn up. She'd've starved to death if she'd tried to feed herself 'n' her kits. She was better off to leave 'em, heal herself up, then whelp more when she could raise 'em good. Ma ain't starvin', she'll be back." Jodie was not nearly as sure as he sounded, but said it for Kya (2018, p. 8).*

As the story goes on, Kya changes how she thinks about herself. She strongly connects with nature and looks for comfort and company in the marshes and people there. She starts to see herself as an essential part of the environment where she lives, and this becomes a central part of who she is, as quoted below:

At last, at some unclaimed moment, the head-pain seeped away like water into sand. Still there, but deep. Kya laid her hand upon the breathing, wet earth, and the marsh became her mother (2018, p. 34).

People think a lot about themselves and their neighborhood or group during self-categorization. They do not know about other groups or people who live outside their neighborhood (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). She has come to accept that her connection with nature will be the most important thing in her life since she has no one else to lean on. Even though there are no people around, life goes on, which forces Kya to learn what nature has to offer and what she needs to provide for herself.

In *Where the Crawdads Sing* novel, Kya's self-categorization process offers a nuanced and in-depth look at how internal and external factors mold identity. Kya is left to survive in the marshes after her family members depart. According to Rani (2018), self-categorization is the first phase in a person's journey of discovering who they are and how they fit into their group. Kya is abandoned to her own devices in the marsh when her family members leave one by one. Kya's desertion strengthens her sense of independence and ability to rely on herself. Until she becomes independent, she learns to depend on her wits and creativity to get by. This desertion reinforces her independence and self-reliance. She becomes free to survive only by her judgment and resourcefulness. Her contact with other people helps to define Kya's self-categorization, which assists her in accepting who she is and overcoming social limitations. The book teaches about acceptance, forgiving, and remaining true to oneself while delving into the complexity of human relationships.

It highlights how human interaction has the transforming potential for personal development and self-discovery.

Kya achieves a position of influence by establishing a deep connection with the natural world, cultivating meaningful connections with individuals, and demonstrating unwavering determination under challenging circumstances. The marsh is the defining element of Kya's life, providing comfort, nourishment, and creative stimulation. During the self-categorization stage, individuals frequently prioritize their own identity, as well as their community and social group. It is necessary to inform them about alternative social categories and inhabitants of diverse localities (Tajfel and Turner, 1986). Owens portrays Kya's profound reliance on her affection for the natural environment and water around her house by depicting the marsh as her surrogate mother after her family abandons her. She develops a deep affection for the marsh, considering it as important as her family. Kya commemorates her birthday with the nearby seagulls, using the sounds of the land and water to lull her into sleep each night. In addition, she acquires the skills necessary to utilize the marsh for her survival, extracting mussels from its shores to obtain funds, seeking refuge within its dense vegetation to evade threats, and engaging in fishing activities within its water channels to sustain herself. Kya ultimately produces her magnum opus by utilizing her affectionate watercolors and meticulous observations of the marsh. Kya is intimately connected to the marsh, embodying its essence, and it mainly shapes her entire existence.

In-Group Social Identification in Where the Crawdads Sing

The social identification is when Kya was with Jumpin', who was always loyal to her. Even though Jumpin' is black, he also feels left out of White society. Their bond comes from the fact that they both feel like outsiders. Outlined below:

In another time and place, an old black man and a young white woman might have hugged. But not there, not then (2018, p. 222).

Based on this quote, Jumpin' and Kya become father and daughter figures, even though Barkley Cove experiences racism every day. According to the Social Psychology Principle (2012), social categorizing is the way we naturally put people into social groups in our minds. Kya and Jumpin' respect, trust, and understand each other, which strengthens their friendship. He helps her deal with the difficulties of living alone in the marsh, and their friendship gives her a sense of connection that she does not get from other people in the town.

She'd given love a chance; now, she wanted simply to fill the empty spaces. Ease the loneliness while walling off her heart (2018, p. 161).

As Kya moves through her life, she learns that her friendship with Jumpin' provides comfort from her isolation. However, a significant portion of the energy she may have invested in her interactions with other people through researching and living inside the marsh. At this point, the marsh serves as a substitute for the family that she was abandoned by. She develops a closer relationship with it than any other person and experiences a stronger sense of connection to the natural world than to the human community she lives nearby.

Within the framework of Social Identity Theory (SIT), an individual's "in-group" refers to the group they associate themselves with, while their "out-group" refers to the group they do not identify with (McLeod, 2023). According to the hypothesis, individuals possess an intrinsic bias towards their group, leading them to experience enhanced self-esteem while displaying apathy or hostility towards other groups. Kya engages in conversations about social identification with fellow marsh residents and the mysterious "Marsh Girl" as she confronts the difficulties in her existence. Jumpin' and Kya form a paternal relationship despite the racial segregation and prejudice in Barkley Cove. Social categorization, as described by the Social Psychology Principle (2012), refers to the automatic assignment of persons to social groups in our cognitive processes. They have mutual feelings of alienation. The bond between Kya and Jumpin shows their shared admiration, reliance, and comprehension of each other. She discovers a unique bond with him that she does not experience with other townspeople, and he assists her in conquering the difficulties of solitary life in the marsh.

Out-Group Social Identification in Where the Crawdads Sing

Barkley Cove's social identification as an out-group shows their religious beliefs and gossip about outsiders, which enhances their sense of group identity. Their distrust of Kya's solitary existence in the marsh, which contradicts their societal conventions, clearly indicates their acquiescence.

Waiting for the verdict of her murder trial brought a loneliness of a different order. The question of whether she lived or died did not surface on her mind but sank beneath the greater fear of years alone without her marsh. No gulls, no sea in a starless place (2018, p.346).

Kya is depressed to an even greater degree as a result of this part of human life; the only things that bring her positive emotions are the cat that lives in the courtroom and the restricted view of the marsh that she has from her window. She does not experience feelings of loneliness because other people leave her; instead, Kya is lonely because she has to live in an environment that is not natural and because her family leaves her.

By forming relationships with a person and the unknown natural world, Kya feels a profound sense of acceptance and belonging that surpasses traditional norms. Within her local community, she acquired an alternative set of principles. The marsh and Barkley Cove are distinct entities. Various groups exhibit particular behaviors and hold diverse values (Stets and Burke, 2000, pp. 224–237). While navigating the intricacies of relationships, Kya discovers that genuine acceptance and a sense of belonging can only be attained by remaining authentic and establishing sincere connections with individuals who perceive her actual essence. Through her encounters, Kya realizes that accepting and embodying one's authentic self while challenging societal conventions are fundamental to attaining pleasure.

Social Comparison in Where the Crawdads Sing

The social comparison situation occurs when Kya Clark feels unsafe and alone because everyone in her small town always watches and criticizes other people. By

applying the social comparison theory, the story looks at how cultural expectations and the fight to be accepted affect people, as quoted below:

But they backed down the steps and ran into the trees again, hooting and hollering with relief that they had survived the Marsh Girl, the Wolf Child, the girl who couldn't spell dog (2018, p. 91).

This quotation shows that people in Barkley Cove (out-group) mistreat her, pointing out how different she is and how she is a stranger. According to Ilmi (2017), the group might compare themselves or their groups to others as part of the social comparison process. That way, they can choose which group is better. When Kya is not in her group, the people in her out-group judge her harshly, which makes her feel even more like an outsider; her name turns her into a stereotype and takes away her uniqueness even though she is still in the same territory as the people in Barkley Cove. On the other hand, the marsh offers comfort and acceptance, which is different from Barkley Cove's refusal.

Kya never had her troop of close friends nor the connections Jodie described, for she never had her own family. She knew the years of isolation had altered her behavior until she was different from others, but it was not her fault she'd been alone. Most of what she knew, she'd learned from the wild. Nature had nurtured, tutored, and protected her when no one else would (2018, p. 366).

She knows she has found a kind of family in nature, even though being alone hurts her because she is different from everyone else. Tajfel (1979) suggests that comparing groups has beneficial and adverse effects. Benefits vary based on how people compare. Positively comparing groups can lead to high status and benefits. Comparing groups might lead to a low reputation. The group comparison reveals three social comparison principles, including (1) individuals seeking positive social identity, (2) positive identity relies heavily on favorable comparisons, and (3) unsatisfactory social identity leads to leaving the group and joining others. It shows she feels a real connection with nature rather than others in Barkley Cove. It makes her different from other people and gives her the kind of unique viewpoint that helped her write her books to remain alive and even do well in seemingly impossible situations.

In terms of social comparison, in her novel *Where the Crawdads Sing*, Delia Owens makes a brilliant comparison between two social situations that could not be more different from one another: the marshlands where Kya Clark spends her childhood and the little town of Barkley Cove, whose cultural conventions and expectations affect the lives of its residents. The social comparison highlights these two contexts' stark differences and underlying similarities. It also emphasizes the themes of isolation, belonging, and resilience. Mcleod (2023) asserts that once individuals have categorized themselves into a group and established a connection with it, they compare their group to other groups. The term "in-group" refers to the tendency of individuals to favor their group more than other groups. It is essential to acquire this knowledge regarding bias because when two groups perceive themselves as competitors, they engage in conflict to ensure their members maintain their self-worth.

Barkley Cove and the Marsh convey ideals of acceptance and belonging that directly oppose one another. During the social comparison stage, it is more likely for individuals or groups to develop a bias toward members of the out-group (Tajfel et al., 1971). It is because the in-group is in the minority. For Kya, the marsh transforms into a place where she can feel like she belongs without worrying about rejection or judgment, establishing a solid connection with the marsh's sceneries and the people there. On the other hand, in Barkley Cove, belonging is highly conditional and is determined by factors such as bloodline, social position, and devotion to traditional traditions. Kya's struggle to find acceptance in Barkley Cove exemplifies the challenges of integrating into a culture that places a higher importance on conformity than individuality.

The novel *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens offers a deep examination of how social identity can change over time, as seen through the experiences of its main character, Kya Clark. Kya's transformation from an abandoned child to an independent lady exemplifies the intricate aspects of social identity, influenced by the intersections of innate characteristics, societal factors, and individual initiative. Her state of being isolated and marginalized influences her identity. Left to her own devices in the marshlands, her family abandoned her during her early years. The isolation from the rest of society signifies the first stage of her process of developing her sense of self. The community of Barkley Cove excludes her, branding her as the "Marsh Girl," a moniker that carries significant social stigma and bias. This societal exclusion compounds her isolation, compelling her to retreat further into the natural realm, where she discovers comfort and a feeling of acceptance.

Unlike human society, the natural environment plays a supportive role in Kya's life. The marsh serves as both a sanctuary and a teacher for her. Owens eloquently portrays Kya's profound connection with the natural world, emphasizing how the environment shapes her sense of self. Kya's understanding of the marsh and its creatures allows her to survive and forms an essential part of how she sees herself. Her profound knowledge and understanding of the natural world eventually garnered her admiration and acclaim, leading to a significant shift in her social status from being known as the "Marsh Girl" to being recognized as a distinguished naturalist.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Delia Owens' novel *Where the Crawdads Sing* explores the complex process of social identity change, emphasizing the themes of isolation, determination, and integration into society. The work urges readers to contemplate the malleability of one's identity and the diverse factors contributing to our perception of ourselves and others, using Kya Clark's life as a lens. Through his rich plot and meticulous character development, Owens explores the complexity of social identity and the possibility of transformation, even in the face of extreme suffering.

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English Adjectives Used by Non-natives in ICNALE Spoken Dialogues

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Abstract. The purpose of this study is to examine English adjectives found in spoken language corpus of English learners in Asia. This study employed theories of adjectives from language typology perspective by Dixon (2010) and Frawley (1992). Descriptive-qualitative approach was applied, using ICNALE *Spoken Dialogues* as the data source. This study utilized the corpus analysis tools AntConc. The results identified the top 20 adjectives in the corpus, with *Value*, *Human Propensity*, and *Difficulty* each representing 20% of the findings. This study has implications for the significance of foreign language learning. Teachers can use adjectives from these categories to teach students, as they are basic vocabularies for English learners. Students are also expected to gain a better understanding of the functional aspect of adjectives, which could improve their language performance. The interest of this study lies in the high frequency of occurrence in the corpus. However, some limitations should also be considered.

Keywords: *adjectives production, English adjectives, non-native speakers, ICNALE*

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INTRODUCTION

Adjective is one of the word classes that define a noun class (Kridalaksana, 2008). Cross-linguistically, adjective forms are not always easy to differentiate and recognize, yet every language has at least one lingual form of an adjective. The adjective class is a distinguished word class, separate from noun and verb classes. Each word class has a distinctive conceptual property basis and grammatical function (Dixon, 2010; Dixon & Aikhenvald, 2004). In English, for instance, the noun class requires an article preceding the noun. Additionally, an inflectional process for plural marking cannot be applied to all nouns. Some nouns are exceptionally

irregular, so there is no clear form to mark plurality. As mentioned before, being a distinguished word class, adjectives also have certain characteristics, such as having comparative and superlative forms by means of the suffixes *-er* and *-est* or the premodifiers *more* and *most*. Adjectives also have three other characteristics: an attributive function, a predicative function, and the ability to be pre-modified by the intensifier *very* (Quirk et al., 1985, pp. 402–403).

Cross-linguistically, the adjective class exists (see Dixon, 2010; Dixon & Aikhenvald, 2004). However, the number of adjectives in different languages varies. According to their size and productivity, there are two classes of adjectives: large class adjectives and small class adjectives. The former refers to languages with limited adjectives. Some languages are reported to have very small adjective classes, such as Igbo and North Australian Malak Malak (see Dixon, 1982). The latter refers to languages that are more flexible in producing new adjectives from other word classes, such as English. In English, denominal and deverbal adjectives are common, such as *dangerous*, *dirty*, *comfortable*, *playful*, *suitable*, and *arguable*.

Later, Dixon (2010) differs adjective class semantically into thirteen categories. Dixon later divides them into three sets. Set A includes *Dimension*, *Colour*, *Value*, and *Age*. Set B includes *Physical Property*, *Human Propensity*, and *Speed*. Set C includes *Difficulty*, *Similarity*, *Qualification*, *Quantification*, *Position*, and *Cardinal Numbers*. Small adjective languages have at least Set A. Large adjective languages on the other hand, are possible to have numerous adjectives that cover those thirteen semantic categories.

Being distinctive from nouns and verbs, adjectives appear within certain slots in a sentence. Baker (2004) asserts that adjectives can be direct attributive modifiers, the complements of degree heads, and resultative secondary predicates. Meanwhile, Dixon (2010) asserts that adjectives can fulfill the roles of copula complement, noun modifier, parameter of comparison, and verb modifier. In English, adjectives generally appear as copula complements and noun modifiers. However, in colloquial American English, adjectives can modify verbs, e.g., “*He speaks (real) bad*” (Dixon, 2010, p. 71).

In relation to adjectives as noun modifiers, noun modification has two types of relations: catenographic and syncategorematic (Frawley, 1992, p. 446). The former means denotations that are independent, with a clear and distinct meaning. The latter means denotations that are dependent, with meanings that are unclear and relative. These relations are illustrated by Frawley with the phrase “*the wonderful singer*.” The phrase has two interpretations: first, it may mean someone who sings wonderfully, or second, it may mean a person who is wonderful in person.

This study recognizes that studies about adjectives have been conducted before. There are studies discussing about language use in persuasion strategy (Blanco, 2020) or argumentative strategy (Ağçam & Özkan, 2015). Some studies are more social-approached, such as discussing about cross culture communication (Roivainen, 2013; Vainik & Brzozowska, 2019) or about cultural personality (Nuryantiningih, 2022). Besides, adjectives have long been interesting topics in language acquisition. Several studies have been conducted using experimental methods with children (Blackwell, 2005; Fallah & Jabbari, 2016). Some studies have compared normal children with those who have impaired language skills (Walenski et al., 2024; Wright, 1981).

In the context of language acquisition, there is a tendency for children to acquire certain adjectives much earlier than the others. Blackwell (2005) found that *Colour* (i.e., *red, blue, black*) and *Physical Property* (i.e., *sticky, smooth, broken*) are adjectives those are acquired earlier. *Colour* adjectives are often attributive adjectives which show the categorematic relation. The study is significantly correlated to the nature of children's early lexicons in relation to referents or objects they engage. However, Walenski et al. (2024) found that attributive adjectives are challenging for children with grammatical impairments. The study found a significant correlation between producing attributive adjectives and complex syntactic structures. This research has further implications for the treatment and recovery of agrammatic language.

The studies reviewed above generally focus less on adjectives used by language learners from non-native speaking countries. This gap, left by most studies, is worth discussing, especially when reconsidering the following studies. For example, a study about different writing patterns between non-natives and natives (Ağçam & Özkan, 2015) highlights these differences. Other studies have found that non-natives still face difficulties in foreign language learning, such as in collocation (Cao & Badger, 2021; Thongvitit & Thumawongsa, 2017) and in synonymous words (Platon, 2013).

Since studies on adjectives used by learners from non-English speaking countries have been limited, this study seeks to address this gap. The aim is to describe the English adjectives frequently used in the ICNALE Spoken Dialogues corpus, which is a compilation of English spoken interviews from 425 college students affiliated with several universities in ten Asian countries.

This study underscores the urgency of further describing English adjective acquisition. It hopes to provide a clearer depiction of learners' language patterns and to benefit foreign language pedagogical strategies. Thus, there are two research questions proposed: (1) What are the top 20 adjectives frequently used in the ICNALE Spoken Dialogues? and (2) What are the syntactical functions of the adjectives found?

RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a qualitative approach and was designed as corpus-based research. The data were taken from ICNALE, an international corpus network of Asian learners of English initiated by Shin'ichiro Ishikawa. The corpus can be accessed publicly at <https://language.sakura.ne.jp/icnale/download.html>. This corpus was chosen because it is well-systemized, annotated, and regularly updated with additional data.

The study examined the spoken language corpus called ICNALE Spoken Dialogues (henceforth ICNALE SD). The chosen corpus consists of spoken dialogues between learners and interviewers discussing certain given topics in English. This study focused on one topic: part-time jobs (Ishikawa, 2019).

After downloading the corpus, the researcher used the AntConc software tool (Anthony, 2005) to collect and analyze the data. Several corpus analysis tools were used, such as word query search and word concordance. To identify the correlation of high frequency and usage, this study focused on the highest frequency of

occurrences, limited the data to the first 500 tokens, and selected the top 20 most used adjectives.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study found the top 20 adjectives frequently used by the learners in ICNALE SD. The 20 adjectives were identified semantically and analyzed based on the syntactic environments in sentences.

Semantic Category

Table 1 shows the top 20 adjectives that have been classified in accordance to of adjectives' semantic categorization (see Dixon, 2010; Dixon & Aikhenvald, 2004). The further discussion about the findings follows Table 1 below.

Table 1. Semantic Categorization of The Top 20 Adjectives

No	Category	Adjective	Amount	%
1	Dimension	'high', 'big', 'long'	3	15
2	Age	'new'	1	5
3	Value	'good', 'important', 'bad', 'free'	4	20
4	Human propensity	'nervous', 'social', 'afraid', 'happy'	4	20
5	Difficulty	'easy', 'hard', 'difficult', 'convenient'	4	20
6	Similarity	'different'	1	5
7	Quantification	'few', 'little', 'small'	3	15

According to Table 1, there are 7 categories of adjectives namely *Dimension*, *Age*, *Value*, *Human Propensity*, *Difficulty*, *Similarity*, and *Quantification*. Among them, *Value*, *Human Propensity*, and *Difficulty* become the three most dominating categories. This finding shows that the learners have a tendency to use adjectives from the identified categories frequently. Moreover, the high frequency of the adjectives can be correlated to a state that the words are identified as basic vocabularies in a language. As in line with Dixon & Aikhenvald (2004), *Dimension*, *Age*, *Value*, and *Colour* are the four core categories that tend to commonly present and categorized as main adjectives in languages. Interestingly, this theory is supported by a study that found that adjectives 'good' and 'bad' have been acquired much earlier by 2-3 year old English natives (Blackwell, 2005).

The top 20 adjectives used by the learners represent a wordlist of New General Service List (NGSL) project which project has been renewed by Browne (2013). NGSL is a project of approximately 2.800-vocabulary with the highest of occurrence and the most used in English. Eventually, what can be inferred from Table 1 is, that the learners who are non-natives, have acquired several crucial vocabularies in English. This fact can be implied further to how English pedagogical importance to teach the such basic vocabularies in English to the students.

According to the top 20 adjectives, this study also assumes that adjectives the learners use highly influenced by the topic of interview. The interview is mainly about part time job. This study found a correlation between the topic and adjectives the learners use accordingly. The 20 adjectives simply portray how the learners

describe and argue about part time job using adjectives like ‘good’ ‘nervous’ ‘important’, ‘social’ and ‘hard’ (see data 1-5).

Nonetheless, the most frequently used adjectives found in the corpus were less advanced. This condition correlates to Ağçam and Özkan’s study (2015), that found such adjectives like ‘main’ and ‘important’ were overused by the non-native students rather to use ‘crucial’, ‘essential’, ‘fundamental’, ‘trivial’ etc. Adjectives like ‘bad’, ‘good’, ‘boring’, ‘interesting’ were also identified to be used more frequently than the natives. Al-khresheh and Alruwaili (2024) found that Saudi EFL students got language interference in use of English adjectives. This study accordingly has provided further example the difference of English adjectives used by non-natives.

This finding on the other hand has offered to an implication about some other basic English vocabularies that can be used teachers to teach the students. The teachers can start to advance the vocabularies. The words are none other than words that seem closely related to the daily basis. The teachers can teach words related to people and the surrounding – the words from *Value* category such as, ‘functional’, ‘proper’, ‘precise’, ‘luxury’, ‘concrete’, or from *Human Propensity* for example, ‘ashamed’, ‘cruel’, ‘gentle’, ‘innocent’, ‘anxious’, ‘attractive’ or words from *Difficulty* adjectives like ‘simple’, ‘tough’, ‘comfortable’ (see the NGSL wordlist at <https://www.newgeneralservicelist.com/new-general-service-list>).

Syntactic Environment

Adjectives in English have two functions; as copula complement and noun modifier (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 417). Among the top 20 adjectives found in the corpus, this study examined the adjectives are distributed into both functions.

Copula Complement

Adjectives as the copula complement are also known as predicative adjectives. This function relates to the core argument or subject complement. This study found that *Value* adjectives (see data 1) were commonly used predicatively by the learners.

(1) *It is **good** for my career.*

[It] CS [is] CP [good] CC [for [my] [career]]

‘Ini baik untuk karir saya’

In data (1), the unit *It* fulfills as the copula subject or the subject. The unit *is* fulfills as a copula predicate or the verb and *good* fulfills as the copula complement or the core argument in the sentence since adjective *good* presents to explain the subject. This finding seems different from Blackwell’ study (2000) that found *Value* adjectives were commonly found as noun modifier (cited in Dixon & Aikhenvald, 2004, p. 5). This study found the learners inclined to give short answers, so they produced less words as reflected in (1) positioning adjective as copula complement.

(2) *In public, I feel very **nervous**.*

[[In] public] ADV [I] CS [feel] CP [[very] nervous] CC

‘Di depan umum, saya merasa sangat malu’

Data (2) shows *Human Propensity* adjectives are placed as copula complement. On top of that, this study found that adjectives in the corpus was frequently produced being modified by the adverb *very*. This fact was not limited to data (2) but also in (3). By relating to Ağçam and Özkan's study (2015), it is possible to assume that the adverb *very* is overused. In English, there are several alternatives that can be used as well, for example to describe something to a great degree, such as *extremely*, *incredibly*, or *highly* and to describe something to a full degree, like *completely*, *fully*, or *totally*. By this finding eventually can be used to teach the students about the alternatives to adverb *very*.

Relating to Table 1, data (2) shows that adjective *nervous* has become the learners' favorite. There are other words the learners to know like *uneasy* and *anxious* (see Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2024). The such words should also be recognized. The learners accordingly are expected to produce more English vocabularies and to give better language performance.

Noun Modifier

Adjectives can also fulfill noun modifier. This function occurs when the adjectives placed before the noun-following they aim to modify. This study found Value adjectives (see data 3) are distributed as noun modifiers.

- (3) *I can have very **important** experience.*

[I] CS [[can] have] CP [[very] [important experience] CC
'Saya dapat pengalaman yang sangat penting'

Data (3) shows that adjective *important* fulfills as a modifier the following noun. Despite being similar to be the copula complement of sentence as in (1), this data (3) mainly serves to attribute the noun *experience*. According to Oxford online learner's dictionary (2024), the noun *experience* often used together such as *personal experience*, *past experience*, or *valuable experience*. While adjective *important* often used in a such argumentative speech as the copula complement instead.

- (4) *It is also **hard** experience.*

[It] CS [is] CP [also] ADV [hard experience] CC
'Ini juga pengalaman yang sulit'

Data (4) shows that *Difficulty* adjectives are placed as noun modifiers. Data (4) appears to be the similar case as in (3). Adjective '*hard*' fulfills the function of noun modifier and placed before the noun *experience*. However, adjective *hard* is commonly found to describe something difficult to do. This adjective often paired with copula subject and predicate '*it is hard to see*' or '*conditions were extremely hard*' etc. (see Oxford Learner's Dictionary, 2024).

- (5) *I want to have opportunity to work with real **social** people.*

[I] CS [want to have] CP [opportunity] CC [to work] CP [with] PREP [real social people] CC

'Saya ingin memiliki kesempatan berkerja dengan orang-orang yang berjiwa social'

Data (5) shows *Human Propensity* adjectives are distributed as noun modifiers. Compared to data (3), adjective '*social*' appears the same as how the word normally placed in a sentence instead. Several examples in Oxford online dictionary show the word is normally used pre-modifying the noun, '*social life*', '*social skills*', '*social problems*'. In terms of the noun modification, data (5) reveals the syncategorematic relation. The interpretation seems unclear and vague. The phrase '*real social people*' means people who come from a society or people who are friendly.

On top of that, it should be emphasized that this study provides further evidence that according to the denotation relation in noun modifications, *Dimension*, *Age*, *Difficulty*, and *Similarity* are categorematic-type. This gives further support to the previous study, as Blackwell (2005) mentioned, *Colour* adjectives are categorematic type. This study also supports Frawley's idea (1992) that *Value* and *Human Propensity* adjectives are syncategorematic-type.

In sum, this study provides further support to previous studies (Ağçam & Özkan, 2015; Al-khresheh & Alruwaili, 2024) on the issue that English learners from non-English-speaking countries presumably still experience language interferences. This condition refers to the effect of learners' L1 on their foreign language learning. Besides, learning difficulty experienced by the learners contributes to their progress by have not yet improved to the advanced level.

This issue is presumably caused by challenges inherent in the language that learners want to learn, such as different grammar rules. This fact contributes to the potential difficulties that learners may experience. In line with Wierzbicka (2006), English lexical variation is unique compared to other Indo-European languages. English, in this context, is a foreign language in most Asian countries. Another factor may be a lack of language competence, resulting in improper use of the language (Cao & Badger, 2021). As this study found, basic vocabulary words like '*good*', '*important*', and '*bad*' are often used improperly. Nonetheless, another implication of this issue is that such simple words—'*good*', '*important*', '*bad*'—indicate the nature of spoken language.

CONCLUSION

This study identified the top 20 adjectives commonly used by learners. Among these, the most frequently occurring categories are *Value*, *Human Propensity*, and *Difficulty*, each containing four adjectives. The adjectives used as copula complements are likely influenced by the fact that learners tend to give brief responses in their speech. On the other hand, the discussion about adjectives used as noun modifiers suggests that learners tend to overuse them. For some adjectives, they were used in ways that differ from their typical syntactic order.

This study has provided further examples of how English is used by non-native speakers. It offers implications for foreign language learning, suggesting that English teachers can begin teaching students vocabulary from the *Value*, *Human Propensity*, and *Difficulty* categories. However, it is also important to teach alternative vocabularies. Ultimately, learners are expected to be able to produce a wider variety of vocabularies and improve their language performance.

Some limitations and suggestions for future studies should be considered. This study utilized a spoken language corpus that does not separate utterances according to language proficiency levels. Therefore, the generalizations made in this study should be reconsidered. The analysis focused primarily on high occurrence frequency, so other possible functional aspects need further exploration. Finally, English produced by non-natives always presents other significant problems and gaps for discussion. This study suggests that future research should be enhanced to help address these identified issues.

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Questioning Sexual Diversity in Andre Aciman's *Call Me by Your Name* and Brent Hartinger's *Geography Club*

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Abstract. This paper discusses sexual diversity exposed in Andre Aciman's *Call Me by Your Name* and Brent Hartinger's *Geography Club*. Both novels tell stories about sexual orientation and its impact on the daily lives of the main characters, who are high school students. In *Call Me by Your Name*, Aciman depicted Elio as a teenager who admires people of the same sex, and in *Geography Club*, Russell Middle Brook disguises his sexual orientation because he is gay. Using Sociology of Literature as an approach, more specifically queer theory as a means of carrying out queer criticism, this research aims to discuss sexual diversity exposed in these two fictions. It also talks about the heteronormative pressures experienced by the two figures above during their high school years as students who had different sexual orientations. The research results show that although schools and society always emphasize diversity, sexual diversity is not yet accepted. The heteronormative pressure that the experience of Elio and Russel comes from their close environments, such as parents, friends, and school. Elio and Russel need to keep their true sexual identities because showing sexual diversity for high school students is taboo. They also have to keep their sexual orientation to safeguard their lives from rejection and bullying. Selecting the two novels as the data sources helps to understand each text individually and acknowledge how different authors approach similar themes.

Keywords: *heteronormativity, queer theory, sexual diversity, sexual orientation, sociology of literature*

INTRODUCTION

Based on physique and anatomy, sex consists of male and female. Sex refers to the human genitals, both the penis and vagina. Peases (2001: 72) believes that the time of fertilization determines human sex but that sex can develop differently when the fetus reaches six to eight weeks of age. Pease further says that the basic pattern of all fetuses is female, including the body and brain; it signifies the appearance of nipples and mammary glands in males (2001: 72)

Humans and sexuality are two related things. Therefore, sexuality becomes a person's identity. According to the World Health Organization (WHO; 2002), in their lives, humans always deal with sexuality, including sex, sexual orientation, intimacy, gender identity, pleasure, eroticism, roles, and reproduction. Sexuality appears in various forms in the human mind, such as desires, fantasies, behavior, beliefs, roles, attitudes, practices, values, and relationships. Biological, cultural, social, psychological, political, economic, ethical, religious, and spiritual elements greatly influence human sexuality. Nowadays, when people talk about their sexuality, what they usually mean is their sexual preference or sexual orientation.

Sexual orientation is an attraction to the opposite sex, same-sex, both sexes, or more than one sex. This attraction takes the form of emotional, romantic, and sexual attraction that a person feels towards another person. According to the American Psychological Association (APA), a person cannot determine their sexual orientation. It means that sexual orientation is not something by will, even though the reality is that sexual orientation is unchangeable. Some people have known their sexual orientation since childhood, but some may need sexual experience to identify their sexual orientation. It does not depend on sex and gender. In general, a person will find out their sexual orientation during adolescence or early adulthood without any previous sexual experience. Therefore, those who have a sexual orientation different from the majority or other than heterosexual need to disguise their sexuality and act straight.

Diversity refers to differences. Diversity is a condition in a society where there are many differences in every aspect of life, such as in race, religion, culture, sexual orientation, etc. Diversity means understanding that each individual is unique and recognizing the differences of other individuals. Sexual diversity is diversity in expressing sexual orientation, such as heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, and transgender. Accepting sexual diversity means recognizing various aspects of sexual orientation to gender identity. It also means recognizing its existence and celebrating it because of its power. However, not all social groups can accept diversity in sexual orientation. For them, there is only one sexual orientation, namely heterosexual. Telling about sexual orientation and sexual diversity is also found in young adult literature. Andre Aciman's *Call Me by Your Name* and Brent Hartinger's *Geography Club* talked about the life of gay teens who have to keep their sexual orientation because people cannot yet accept a teenager who likes the same sex. They have to hide their sexual orientation to avoid being bullied by their friends. Both authors show readers how society treats teenagers with different sexual orientations that promote diversity and equal rights regardless of race, gender, and sexual orientation.

There are several studies discussing homosexuality and sexual orientation in literary works. The first previous study is by Kartika Rachmah of Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. Her paper is entitled *The Representation of Homosexuality in Beauty and the Beast Live Action Film*. In her article, she talks about the characterization of Le Fou. Le Fou is described as a homosexual character and against conventional society stereotypes. She further discusses how society in the film is a portrayal of apathy and ignorance of the homosexual community. The second previous study is by Nezwa Shukhufi Maula and Thoyibi. Their article entitles *The Influence of Social Environment on Individual Sexual Orientation in Call Me by Your Name* by Andre Aciman. In their research, they discuss the influence of social environment on sexual orientation consisting of two types of social environment: family environment and society environment. The depiction of the social effect on sexual orientation shows characters, settings, events, and styles. Another previous study is by Matthys J. Uys of North-West University, Potchefstroom, South Africa. His paper is entitled *A comparative analysis of the depiction of queer characters in Hartinger's Geography Club and Entin's film adaptation*. Uys shows how Brent Hartinger depicts queer characters in his 2004 queer text in *Geography Club*. The comparative analysis of the novel and the film includes Entin's 2013 film adaptation. Hartinger (2004) and Entin (2013) depict their queer characters accordingly to inform readers and possibly change ingrained perceptions of various gender identities. The other previous study is Yuliana Filmafiroh's *An Analysis of Homosexual Lifestyle of the Main Character in Allan Hollinghurst's The Line of Beauty*. In her research, she found out that homosexual life is a secret practice. The cause of choosing a homosexual lifestyle, among others, is the lifestyle of the upper class, those who are free to do anything.

Though these four previous studies talk about homosexuality and sexual orientation, none of them discusses sexual diversity. The understanding of sexual diversity in society is a question by the two authors mentioned above. In *Call Me by Your Name*, Andre Aciman describes how the parents of Olivo and his surrounding environment understand his attraction to the same sex. On the other hand, the *Geography Club* of Hartinger portrays the opposite. The main character, Russell Brook, tries hard to hide his sexual orientation in front of society. Homosexuality is unacceptable because it is considered a sexual disorder in society.

How society is in the two literary works is by what Wellek and Warren explained. Quoted from De Bonald (1956:95) in *Theory of Literature*, Wellek, and Warren stated that literature is an expression of society. It means Literary works not only tell stories about someone's life but also reveal what is happening in society. Literature is an institution or social institution that uses language as its medium (Chamamah, 2003:25). It means that a literary work is a work of art. Its medium is language. And its content is about humans and humanity. Humans and their lives are the main objects. Rowaida Ahmadi states that through the author as an intermediary, literary work can become a forum for society to express life, values, thoughts, and ideas (2020: 129). The author is a member of society who captures phenomena that exist in society and then describes them through dialogue, actions, and descriptions. As a member of society, the author portrays the life around him and conveys it in written form. One of the portraits of life described by the author is the life experience of a teenage boy who has a different sexual orientation from a heteronormative society. In a society that celebrates differences and schools that teach differences and emphasize that each individual is different from another. However, a high school student must hide his different sexual orientation. Through their fiction, the two authors asked the meaning of being different. If the differences in sexual orientation are a disgrace, a mistake is unacceptable.

This research discusses a portrayal of a gay's life by using two specific characters in *Call Me by Your Name* by André Aciman and *Geography Club* by Hartinger. The main character in *Call Me by Your Name*, Elio, has a big sexual desire and wild imagination for Oliver, his father's guest. Oliver lives in Elio's house for six weeks, revising a book manuscript and helping Elio's father, a professor, with his academic paperwork. The character interaction is complex because it is unacceptable in society. This forbidden love has another side. Not all people can understand and open their minds about this side. A very different reality happens to Russel in *Geography Club*. The main character has to hide his sexual orientation from his family and society. He can only be open to his fellow gay friends. This difference is one of the reasons why it needs investigation. The writer hopes the result of this research can help the readers be open-minded about homosexuality problems in social life.

RESEARCH METHOD

According to Chamamah, the method in literary studies has its scientific measure that signifies its characteristics as a system (2003:19). The research on *Call Me by Your Name* and *Geography Club* relates to reading the text from the reader's point of view. Text research like this is called research with a reader's perspective and is problem-based in society. It is qualitative research and emphasizes the subjective experience of the researchers as members of society to understand problems that appear in the text analyzed (Donovan, 2015:77-78). Thus, the appropriate approach used in this research is the sociology of literature and Queer theory. There are some steps in collecting the data. The first step is reading and understanding the theme, character, and setting. The next step is Identifying the words, phrases, and sentences relating to the theme. In this study, the writers

conducted close reading and then proceeded with accumulating data in the form of texts that relate to sexual orientation and sexual diversity. Finally, the writers analyze the data using the sociology of literature approach and queer theory.

^ In his book *Critical Theory Today*, Lois Tyson proposes the application of the queer perspective in analyzing literature work. Tyson states that "queer theory defines individual sexuality as a fluid, fragmented, dynamic collectivity, of possible sexualities...sexuality is a dynamic ray of desire" (320). Tyson argues that heterosexuality is straight while Queer is "fluid" or a collective "of possible sexualities" (320).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Disguising Sexual Orientation

In *Geography Club*, Brent Hartinger began his story by characterizing a high school student named Russel Middlebrook. Russel is a 16-year-old and lives with his parents in Boise, a small town in Idaho, USA. Russell has two close friends at Good Kind High School: Gunnar, a Norwegian descendant, and Min, a Chinese American. The three of them are Nerdy Intellectual students. Russel is a teenager who has a different sexual orientation from his classmates. As a homosexual teenager, Russel does not have any courage to declare his sexual orientation in front of his friends.

Russel tries hard to hide his sexual orientation from anyone. He does not discuss his gay identity except with fellow gay friends he met in cyberspace. Russell understands that talking about sexual orientation, especially orientation that is different from the majority of society, will put him in danger.

I knew that any wrong action, however slight, could expose my deception and reveal my true identity. The thought made my skin prickle. The enemy would not take kindly to my infiltration of their ranks, especially not here, in their inner sanctum. (Hartinger, 2003: 6).

He knows if he acts, his classmates will find his real identity, and he will be hated and bullied by them. Even though his mates do not know that Russell is gay, one of his friends calls him out, "Hey, Middlebrook!" Kevin said to me. "Nice ass!" Leon and Brad and Jarred and Ramone all laughed..."Middlebrook!" Kevin said, all teeth and whiskers and dimples. "You are such a fag!" (Hartinger, 2003: 7). Fag is from the word faggot, a term of abuse and insult aimed at gay people and usually used by homophobes to demean and dehumanize gay people. Even though none of his friends knew about the sexual orientation of Russell, some students bullied him by saying that he was gay.

One thing that makes Russell feel safe and comfortable talking about his sexual orientation is through groups on the internet. He realized a long-held wish by talking to other gay people via the internet. He says, "I might go to a gay chat room and maybe even have a private chat with a guy or two" (Hartinger, 2003: 11). Because he has no friends to talk to, Russel always feels alone and lonely as he only

freely talks about his life as a gay-teen online. Russell cannot talk about these things in his daily life because he has no gay friends. He is even afraid to talk about his sexual orientation to his parents. He will feel more depressed if he sees the disappointment of his parents and is angry when they find out that he is a homosexual.

Parent's Disapproval and Getting Bullied

Talking about sexual orientation for teenagers, homosexuality, and attraction to the same sex is not easy. People believe that the only sexual orientation that exists is heterosexuality. Some believe that sex is a way to have children. Producing family successors can only be done by heterosexual couples. Therefore, the pressure on heteronormative relationships has long prevented society from giving other sexual orientations opportunities to appear. Likewise, parents always hope to have children, both boys and girls, who have a heterosexual orientation. It seems Russell's parents are the same way. Russell is discouraged from telling his orientation to his parents because he is afraid his parents will be disappointed and angry. Another thing that worries Russell is getting bullied at school.

In high school, being different is a problem. If there is a different student, he will become the subject of bullying by his friends. Just being different and people will start bullying. He is aware and afraid that people will bully him. It makes him disguise himself as gay. Bullying at school does not just happen once or twice. It happens almost every day. There are no friends who defend. Instead, they join in the bullying and laughing. There is something even crueler, namely blaming the victim. These are things that make Russell unwilling to discuss his sexual orientation openly with his friends. Being a victim of bullying is not easy. Being different is harder. "Because I know people would treat me like that if they knew the truth" (Hartinger, 2003: 11). Therefore, Russell tries not to be intrusive and pretends to be straight. He decides not to let anyone know, not even his family and his close friends, the truth about his gay identity.

Questioning Himself

The act of questioning his sexual orientation is found in Aciman's *Call Me by Your Name*. In this fiction, Aciman characterized a teenage boy named Elio Perlman. Elio is 17 years old and living with his parents in northern Italy. He is the only child of an American and Italian couple. Young, handsome, bibliophile, and reliable musician, he is a music genius who can transcribe music, plays the music in various versions, and is good at playing piano and guitar. As a teenager, Elio loves being alone rather than hanging out with friends. He prefers telling his experiences and feelings in a diary rather than talking to his friends.

Elio realizes that he admires the same sex when he is attracted to Oliver. In his diary, Elio talks about his first impression of the physical appearance of Oliver.

The color on Elio's palms of his hands was the same as the pale, soft skin of his soles, of his throat, of the bottom of his forearms, which hadn't been exposed to much sun. Almost a light pink, as glistening and smooth as the underside of a lizard's belly. Private, chaste, unfledged, like a blush on an athlete's face or an instance of dawn on a stormy night." (Aciman 2007:5)

Elio always dreamed of Oliver. But he also does not know why he is attracted to him. He says, "I never knew to ask" (Aciman, 2007: 05). He suppresses his desire to date Oliver so that it appears in a dream. In his dream, Elio has sexual intercourse with Oliver. His admiration for Oliver makes him want to be touched by him. This feeling haunts Elio when Oliver is close to him.

Elio asks himself why he is not attracted to women but to men. He says, "He couldn't possibly have known" (Aciman. 2007: 27). Elio does not realize that feelings of attraction to the same sex are because of hormonal changes within him. Becoming adolescent, Elio experiences drastic hormonal changes, as stated by Granger, Schwartz, Booth, and Arentz (1999). Although the most frequently studied hormone-behavior relationships are in adults, the fact is that hormonal changes occur. These changes are the most dramatic because they relate to sex steroid concentrations (quoted in Tackett, Herzhoff, Harden, Page-Gould, and Josephs (235: 2014).

Questioning Sexual Diversity

Even though same-sex marriage is legal in several countries, there are still some members of society who disapprove of homosexual relationships. For them, same-sex relationships are against nature and religion. Those who have different sexual orientations are people who suffer from sexual disorders. They have strange sexual behavior. Through their works *Call Me by Your Name* and *Geography Club*, Andre Aciman and Brent Hartinger convey a message to society, especially readers, that teenagers who have different sexual orientations also suffer because society cannot fully accept them. People don't know what happened. They can only judge without knowing the cause.

In his *Geography Club*, Harthinger describes what happens to a student if he is different. Harthinger criticized life in high schools where institutions should celebrate diversity in various ways, but if there are students who are different. They would be in big trouble. Schools should teach and accept differences in many things, including sexual diversity. Like at school, Harthinger also criticized the role of parents at home. Some parents do not understand the problems their children face. The family is a support for children and teenagers. Parents protect children and provide love, but they are also the place where a child talks about the problems he is facing. Russell's parents love Russell, but they cannot necessarily accept the reality that their son is gay. In a society that emphasizes heteronormative relationships between men and women, they will be embarrassed and feel guilty because they are deemed unable to educate their children.

Different from Russel, the parents of Elio accept sexual diversity. In *Call Me by Your Name*, Andre Aciman describes his father as open-minded. He sees someone from their sexual orientation. He values friendship without looking at socioeconomic background. For Professor Perlman, the sexual relationship between Elio and his assistant, Oliver, is a unique relationship. Their relationship is “rare, how special, what you two had was.” (Aciman, 2007: 223).

Elio, who is described as an introvert and mostly pours out his feelings in his diary, finally dares to tell his father about his tendencies as a person who likes the same sex. By saying 'I am here' (Aciman, 2007: 224). Professor Perlman is a father who knows the problems his son faces. He is the person his child shares experiences and feelings with. Aciman told readers that homosexuality in nature has cunning ways of finding our weakest spot (Aciman, 2007: 224). When a boy grows up, whether he becomes gay or not depends on his hormones. Different from the parents of Elio, the people depicted as accepting sexual diversity in *Call Me by Your Name* are his friends.

Vimini and Marzia are two of his female friends who accept sexual diversity. Vimini knows about Oliver and his relationship from his story. Vimini is an open-minded person. Therefore, she does not judge Elio. When making friends, he also does not differentiate between one another. Likewise, Marzia admires Elio. She secretly loves him. When she finds out about Elio's relationship with Oliver, she does not hate Elio. She remains friends with Elio even though her love is unrequited.

The female characters, Vimini and Marzia, in *Call Me by Your Name* are people with a high tolerance. Even though they are still teenagers, they are women who have the freedom to determine their attitudes. A person's sexual orientation is the person's choice and must be respected.

CONCLUSION

Call Me by Your Name and *Geography Club* are two young adult fiction about teenage boys who tend to like people of the same sex. Through the two main characters and their problems, the two authors, Aciman and Hartinger, describe sexual diversity in society. Both authors want to show the readers that gay teens have to face double problems, the problem of understanding themselves, and heteronormative pressure from society.

Sexual diversity signifies parents and the surrounding acceptance of the reality that sexual orientation is not only heterosexual but can be the same sex, namely gay and lesbian, as told by Aciman in *Call Me by Your Name*. On the other hand, sexual diversity is unacceptable if society believes that there is only one type of sexual orientation, namely heterosexual orientation. In this society, a man who declares himself homosexual will experience discrimination and be ostracized because he has a different sexual orientation. He is considered an abnormal person from the rest of the society.

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Humor through Exploitation of Meaning Duality in English Memes

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Abstract. There are many mechanisms to integrate humor in English memes. One common method is to make incongruity through two different interpretations. The incongruity can be implemented on different levels, such as lexical, syntactic, and more. However, not everyone can understand these levels; thus, the delivery of humor is not achievable. Therefore, this study aims to analyze meaning duality causing humor in English memes. There were 30 data collected from Pinterest through documentation method. The analysis was conducted with content analysis method through descriptive-mixed approach based on theories of incongruity, ambiguity, context of situation, and generative transformation. The result shows that all types of ambiguity is found and can create meaning duality that causes humor from incongruous finishing text. Lexical ambiguity is the dominant type of meaning duality causing humor. This study also found that one meme can contain two ambiguities. Among the five types of ambiguity, this study found a different characteristic of humor for pragmatic ambiguity. These findings can help unveil how humans play with English to create humor.

Keywords: ambiguity, English meme, humor, incongruity, meaning duality

<http://jos.unsoed.ac.id/index.php/jes>

INTRODUCTION

Language plays an important role in creating humor, yet not everyone has the same ability to process and understand language; thus, not everyone can sense humor. English humor, for example, can be created with one word that has two different meanings. However, if an individual's first language is not English and their vocabulary is limited, they may not understand the second meaning of the word;

hence, they will not get the humor. This is well described by Raskin (2008), who stated that the essence of humor in text lies in the contradictory interpretations. Nijholt (2018) provides a similar statement to Raskin (2008).

Humor on the internet can be found as a text, an image, or a combination of both, such as memes. Shifman (2012) defines memes as contemporary folk tales constructed from norms and values in society through images and urban legends; hence, memes are closely associated with pictures or illustrations about one specific topic. Based on the definition of memes above, it is known that memes can be restricted to certain group of society because not all people share similar norms, values, and urban legends, including languages. As a medium to deliver messages about norms, values, and urban legends, memes with a specific language, for instance English, are understood by individuals who can speak English and have a sufficient amount of understanding about English communication style.

Ruch (2008, p. 20) states that humor in linguistics does not always equal to laughter production. Ruch (1993), Martin (2007), and Attardo (2020) propose that an effect of humor can also be just a smile or even simply a small distinct emotion called mirth. Nijholt (2018) further adds that there are times when people completely do not understand and cannot detect the humor. Thus, the emotion felt as the reaction of the humor is not as grand as laughter. It can only be a very light sense of playful feeling.

In the context of English memes, comprehension often hinges on a nuanced grasp of the language due to the intricate interplay of words and images. Individuals with limited proficiency in English may struggle to decode the layers of humor embedded within these memes. This challenge arises from the phenomenon of meaning duality, in which linguistic elements carry multiple interpretations simultaneously. Whether it's a clever pun, a subtle reference, or a play on words, the humor within memes relies on exploiting these linguistic ambiguities to evoke reaction of humor. Consequently, for people with insufficient fluency in English, navigating the intricacies of these linguistic nuances becomes a barrier to fully understanding and appreciating the humor conveyed through memes.

Meaning duality is a well-known mechanism in creating English humor. Several past studies have explored linguistic humor. Azim, Handoyo, and Yulianita (2023) explored humor in the process of subtitling. Sukardi, Sumarlam, and Marmanto (2017) conducted a research on humor and sound alteration. Regarding meaning duality, Haryadi, Rejeki, and Setyowati (2022), Bao (2016) and Yolanda, Bram, Ardi, and Doborovich (2023) have analyzed English humor, including memes, and concluded that humor can arise because of lexical, referential, and syntactic ambiguities. However, they were not able to provide the nature of certain ambiguities, such as the appropriate data for syntactic ambiguity; thus, they could not provide the syntactic structure as evidence of ambiguity.

Understanding humor caused by meaning duality in English memes is important as it benefits to academic and social lives of individuals. Socially, humor serves as a facilitator of social connections that can foster and strengthen interpersonal relationships. Academically, the exploration of humor in memes presents an opportunity to delve into linguistics. Humor integrates linguistic elements which aids to the mastery of the subject; thus, it can be a creative way of learning linguistics, particularly English linguistics.

Although past studies discussed humor caused by meaning duality from ambiguity, their discussions lacked the inclusion of all types of ambiguity proposed by Attardo (2020). Furthermore, these studies only analyzed one ambiguity per instance of data. Therefore, the current study attempts to fill this gap by including all types of ambiguity that can cause humor in English memes and providing cases in which more than one ambiguity is applicable in the memes.

Based on the foregoing background, this study aims to analyze humor in English memes caused by meaning duality. This aim is achieved through analyzing five types of ambiguity, two of which have not been mentioned by past studies and one has not been explained well. This study also presents the application of two ambiguities in English memes to create humor, a topic rarely rarely discussed in previous studies.

RESEARCH METHOD

The method of analysis employed in this study was a descriptive-mixed method. The quantitative part of this study was limited only to simply calculating the distribution of kinds of meaning duality found throughout the memes, whereas the qualitative side of the study was exhibited through the descriptive interpretation of quantitative finding and each piece of data. This study employed a theoretical approach, combining linguistic theories specified for humor. As Attardo (2020, p. 176) states, humor lies in interesting surface structure of a sentence. The humor investigated in this study involved incongruity between the surface and deep structures because the core of humor lies in the manipulation of linguistic elements, with comedic effects emerging from the clever construction of the language itself.

Pinterest was the data source for this study. Memes in English under the tags 'humor', 'meme', and 'joke' on Pinterest were the target data. The memes are in the form of images containing text. Memes with comedic potential stemming from meaning duality were collected for analysis. Data collection was conducted through the documentation method with a note-taking technique to identify linguistic units demonstrating meaning duality as the source of humor. A total of 30 memes were collected. Among the 30 collected, this study employed a purposive sampling technique to select two from each kind of meaning duality as samples for analysis. Selecting two samples from each type was intended to represent each type in qualitative interpretation better, allowing the observation of patterns in humor creation. Having more than one sample from each type would validate the findings and analysis, further supporting the generalization of the results.

To analyze the relationship between humor and language, this study utilized content analysis on ambiguity theory from Attardo (2020) as the main theoretical framework. Supporting theories included incongruity theory from Perlmutter (2002), generative transformation theory from Chomsky (1965), and context of situation theory from Halliday and Hasan (1985).

Ambiguity is one of the most prominent methods for introducing dual, or even multiple, interpretations within a text (Attardo, 2020, p. 181). Attardo (2020, pp. 182–185) proposes five types of ambiguity or meaning duality that can cause humor: lexical ambiguity, syntactic ambiguity, ambiguity between literal and metaphorical meanings, referential ambiguity, and pragmatic ambiguity. Lexical ambiguity relies on the multiple meanings carried by one lexicon. Syntactic ambiguity influences humorous interpretation as one clause can be understood

from two different syntactic structures. Ambiguity between literal and metaphorical meanings involves the use of one lexicon in both its denotative and metaphorical senses. Referential ambiguity triggers humor due to referencing issues within two clauses. Pragmatic ambiguity highlights different focuses of one lingual unit that can cause different understandings.

The presentation of the analysis involved both formal and informal methods. The formal method includes a table showing the distribution and frequency of ambiguity types in English memes. The informal method was used to explain the analysis in a descriptive manner.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study collected 30 memes that exhibit meaning duality. These memes are all under the tags 'humor', 'joke', and 'meme' on Pinterest. Based on Attardo's (2020) theory of ambiguity, all types of ambiguity were found. Table 1 below shows the frequency of each type of ambiguity.

Table 1. Frequency of Ambiguity Types in English Memes

No	Types of Ambiguity	Amount
1	Lexical	14
2	Syntactic	5
3	Between Literal and Metaphorical	2
4	Referential	5
5	Pragmatic	4
Total		30

Table 1 shows that lexical ambiguity has the highest occurrence in English memes. Syntactic and referential ambiguities rank second and third with the same amount. Pragmatic ambiguity is found four times. Ambiguity between literal and metaphorical meanings comes last with the least amount among the others. The analysis of each type of ambiguity is presented below.

Lexical Ambiguity

The first type of ambiguity found is lexical ambiguity. Attardo (2020, p. 182) states that this type of ambiguity creates humor when a lexicon has two meanings associated with it. The ambiguous word influences different interpretations, one of which is incongruous.



Figure 1. Meme with Lexical Ambiguity caused by the Word 'Polish'

The context of Figure 1 is built upon a conversation between a car salesperson and a customer in a car showroom. While looking at a certain car, the salesperson asked the customer, 'How do you think we keep the cars here so shiny?' The customer answered, 'Polish?' After hearing the response, the salesperson apologized and began to restate the question in Polish.

Incongruity arises from the salesperson's initial question, which sets up an expectation for the conversation. The question primes both the customer and the readers of the meme to anticipate a discussion related to car maintenance, specifically about maintaining its shine. Thus, when the customer responds with 'Polish?', he is attempting to engage with the question asked. This aligns with the expectation set by the salesperson's query. However, the ensuing response from the salesperson subverts this expectation by interpreting 'Polish?' as a request to repeat the question in Polish. This unexpected divergence from the anticipated course of conversation is what renders the exchange comedic. The humor is triggered by the sudden shift in interpretation, catching both the customer and the audience off guard.

The humor in Figure 1 is derived from the meaning duality in the lexical item 'polish'. The word 'polish', stated by the customer, is supposed to be an appropriate response to the question asked by the car salesperson. However, the salesperson interpreted the response not as it is, but as a sign that the customer wants the question to be re-asked in Polish, the language spoken in Poland. Therefore, there is ambiguity in the word 'Polish' due to two meanings arising: referring to a substance used for making objects shiny and referring to the language of Poland. This explanation shows how the meaning duality of the lexical item 'polish' triggers the incongruity of the meme, thereby creating humor.



Figure 2. Meme with Lexical Ambiguity caused by the Word 'draw'

The context underlying Figure 2 is a doctor's appointment where the doctor needs to draw blood from the patient. It appears that the patient's medical check-up required a blood test to complete the doctor's diagnosis. Therefore, the doctor communicated this to the patient by saying, 'I'm going to have to draw blood'. The patient seemed to agree, as the doctor then responded with 'Thanks for waiting' following his previous statement.

The humor in the above meme arises from the incongruity caused by the doctor's final statement, which diverges from the expectation set by his first statement. Based on the context and the doctor's initial statement, the patient and the readers of the meme anticipate a medical procedure where the doctor will draw a small tube of blood from the patient using a syringe. However, this expectation is humorously twisted in the interaction. In the lower panel of the meme, the doctor playfully interprets the word 'draw' as referring to the action of creating a picture, as indicated by the pencil and notebook with an animated depiction of blood being drawn. The doctor's incongruous response of 'Thanks for waiting' while displaying his blood drawing to the patient subverts the expected outcome established in the upper panel.

Based on the explanation above, it is evident that the word 'draw' plays an important role in the humor as it introduces lexical ambiguity. The word has multiple meanings: it can refer to the action of creating pictures with a pen or pencil, achieving the same score between two participants in a competition, or extracting an object from another object. In this meme, based on the doctor's initial statement, the phrase 'draw blood' typically means to extract blood from the patient. However, the humor arises when the doctor humorously interprets 'draw' as referring to making pictures with a pen or pencil in that context, which is incongruous given the serious nature of the doctor's job. Therefore, it is evident that meaning duality due to lexical ambiguity is a mechanism for creating humor.

Syntactical Ambiguity

Syntactic ambiguity occurs when two or more different syntactic structures can be inferred from a single surface structure (Attardo, 2020, p. 182). This ambiguity does not necessarily encompass the entire syntactic structure; rather, it can involve a phrase structure within a sentence that influences its deep structure. Chomsky (1965, p. 21) provides an example with the sentence 'flying airplanes can be dangerous', which can ambiguously refer to the act of flying a plane being dangerous or to airplanes that are currently flying being dangerous. This dual interpretation arises due to the phrase 'flying airplanes'. Therefore, the selected memes below exhibit two different meanings without altering their sentence structures or word orders.



Figure 3. Salesperson's Statement Causing Syntactic Ambiguity

The meme in Figure 3 depicts a conversation between a car salesperson and a married couple. The salesperson is attempting to sell a specific car to them. He explains that the car can accommodate a family with several members without any issues, emphasizing its spaciousness. In response to this statement, the husband of the couple humorously remarks that he and his wife have a lot of problems.

The humor of the meme arises from the incongruous and unexpected response of the husband. In the context provided, the salesperson is attempting to sell a particular car by highlighting its strengths. Therefore, any subsequent responses from both sides, the salesperson and the customers, should ideally align harmoniously within the context of discussing the car's features. However, the husband adds a comical twist by interpreting the strength of the car, which is its ability to accommodate a whole family without any problems, as suggesting it can accommodate a family who does not have any problems. His response deviates from the expected interaction and purpose of the salesperson, introducing humor through this unexpected interpretation.

The incongruity in the meme that causes the humor above is triggered by syntactic ambiguity. The sentence ‘this car can fit a whole family without any problems’, which is a surface structure, implies two possible deep structures. These two deep structures give the sentence two meanings, influenced by the prepositional phrase ‘without any problems’. To illustrate this meaning duality, two different constituent structures of the sentence are presented in Figures 4 and 5.

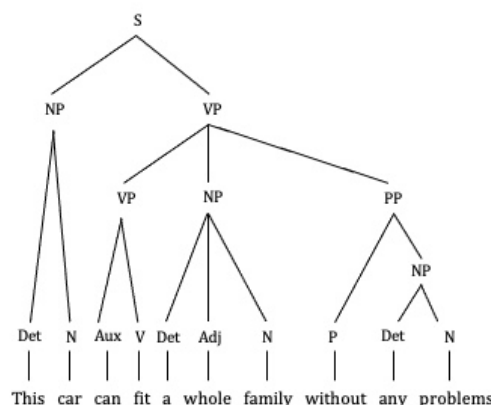


Figure 4. Intended Deep Structure of Salesperson's Statement

In Figure 4, ‘without any problems’ functions as a prepositional phrase modifying the verb ‘fit’. It describes how the action of fitting the family into the car is performed, indicating that the action is smooth, effortless, and without difficulties. The sentence emphasizes the ease with which the car accommodates a whole family.

The structure in Figure 4 represents what the salesperson intends to convey to the customers. The prepositional phrase ‘without any problems’, modifying the verb ‘fit’, highlights the car's capability. However, the customer humorously interprets the statement by creating another structure, as seen in Figure 5.

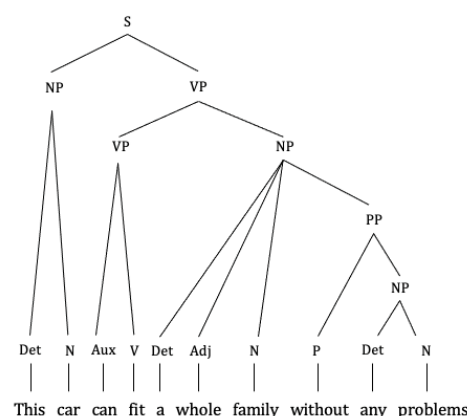


Figure 5. The Deep Structure Understood by the Customer

The deep structure in Figure 5 shows that ‘without any problems’ functions as a modifier of the noun phrase ‘a whole family’. It describes the family itself rather

than the action of fitting, as explained in Figure 4. The phrase indicates that the family that can be fit in the car is one that does not have any issues. This structure is highlighted by the husband's response, 'Damn, my wife and I have a lot of problems'.

In both deep structures, 'this car' is the subject, 'can' is the modal verb, 'fit' is the main verb, and 'a whole family' is the direct object. The difference lies in how the prepositional phrase 'without any problems' is interpreted, either modifying the verb 'fit' or the noun phrase 'a whole family'. These dual interpretations caused by a syntactic structure are proof that syntactic ambiguity can be exploited to bring humor.



Figure 6. Therapist's Statement Causing Syntactic Ambiguity

The meme in Figure 6 portrays a scenario where a married couple seeks therapy because the wife feels unappreciated in the relationship. Specifically, she mentions to the therapist that her husband has never given her flowers, which she interprets as a lack of romantic gestures. The therapist then asks the husband directly if this claim is true. The husband responds that he didn't realize his wife sold flowers, so he never thought to buy them for her.

The response from the husband is comedic due to incongruity. Based on the wife's complaint about never receiving flowers, the therapist likely anticipated a straightforward confirmation or denial from the husband. However, the husband's interpretation of the situation is different, leading to a comedic misunderstanding. Rather than simply confirming or denying the claim, he humorously reveals that he did not realize his wife sold flowers, hence why he never thought to buy them for her. This unexpected twist adds humor to the interaction, as it deviates from the expected yes or no response.

The humor arises from the different semantic interpretations of the sentence 'your wife says you never buy her flowers'. Based on the explanation above, there are two possible meanings of this statement. The first meaning is that the husband never buys flowers for his wife. The second meaning is that the husband never buys the flowers sold by his wife. These dual meanings, or deep structures, are influenced by the surface structure, particularly the noun phrase 'her flowers'. The constituents of each meaning are shown in Figures 7 and 8.

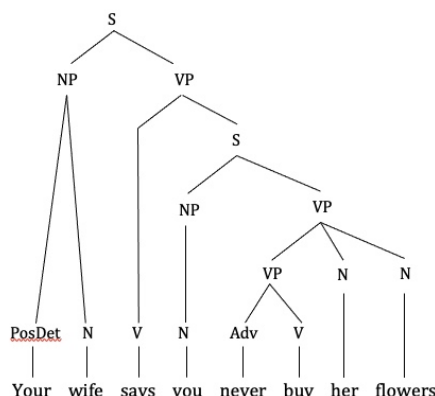


Figure 7. Constituent Structure of 'her' as Indirect Object

What the wife and the therapist meant is the first meaning, which is shown by the structure in Figure 7. In this deep structure, 'her' functions as the indirect object, representing the recipient of the action 'buying'. The direct object is 'flowers', representing what is being bought. The sentence implies that the husband does not purchase flowers for his wife, with 'her' indicating that the flowers are intended for the wife. The incongruity of the husband's response is illustrated by the structure shown in figure 8.

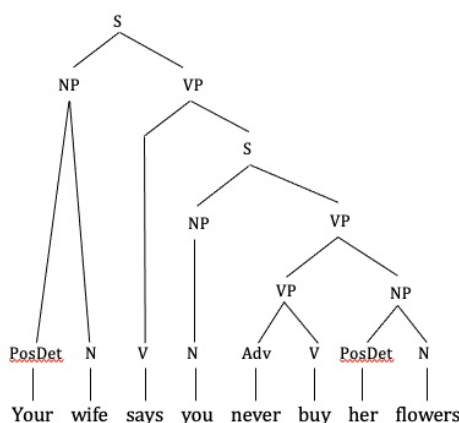


Figure 8. Constituent Structure of 'her' as Possessive Determiner Modifying 'flowers'

The deep structure shown in Figure 8 illustrates the possessive structure of the word 'her'. In this deep structure, 'her' functions as a possessive determiner, indicating that the flowers belong to or are associated with the wife. The possession is denoted by 'her' preceding the word 'flowers', suggesting that the flowers in question are somehow connected to the wife. Based on the husband's response, the flowers are the product sold by his wife. The sentence implies that the husband does not purchase flowers from his wife.

The syntactic ambiguity in the sentence 'your wife says you never buy her flowers' is influenced by the word 'her', which can play two roles. The first role is as

an indirect object. The second role is as a possessive determiner. As an indirect object, the sentence is understood as 'your wife says you never buy flowers for her', whereas as a possessive determiner, the sentence is understood as 'your wife says you never buy flowers that she possesses'. Based on the foregoing analysis, meaning duality is proven to occur under the influence of syntactic structures.

Between Literal and Metaphorical Ambiguity

Humor caused by incongruity due to ambiguity can also be found in a lexical item that is used metaphorically. Attardo (2020, p. 184) referred to this mechanism as the ambiguity between the literal and the metaphorical. This type of humor indicates that a lexical item, as part of a humorous expression, can convey meanings in both literal and metaphorical manners, leading to different interpretations.



Figure 9. Doctor Playing with Word 'Change'

The meme in Figure 9 shows a conversation between a doctor and a nurse. The female nurse asks the doctor, 'How's that kid doing who swallowed all of those coins?' This question indicates that they received a patient, a child, who had swallowed multiple coins, which could harm the child. Based on the question, the doctor seems to have conducted a procedure to help the patient. Therefore, the nurse asked the doctor for an update. The doctor responded with, 'No change yet', meaning that the child's condition had not shown any improvement.

The meme in Figure 9 employs a lexical item, the word 'change', in two different ways, highlighting its ambiguity. The literal usage of the word is straightforward and not incongruous. The doctor's response of 'no change yet' corresponds to the nurse's inquiry. However, incongruity arises when the doctor plays on the word 'change', which also relates to 'coins'. In everyday transactions, 'change' refers to the coins given back when a buyer pays with larger notes. By applying this economic concept to a medical context, where 'change' typically denotes improvements in health, the doctor creates a pun related to the swallowed coins. This wordplay introduces humor into the meme, emphasizing the dual meaning of 'change' and the unexpected turn in the conversation.



Figure 10. Patient Playing with Word 'Waves'

The meme in Figure 10 depicts a woman visiting a therapist to discuss her phobia. The therapist asked her about the reason for her visit. The woman explained that she has a severe fear of tsunamis. The therapist then asked a follow-up question: 'How bad is it?' The woman responded, 'It comes in waves', indicating that her fear fluctuates over time rather than being constant.

In contrast to Figure 9, where the ambiguous lexical item is acceptable in both literal and metaphorical senses, Figure 10 leans more towards the metaphorical. The word 'waves' is the focal point of the humor, playing on human cognition to understand the woman's fear as resembling ocean waves. The incongruity arises when the woman uses a word strongly associated with her fear—tsunami—to describe the fluctuating nature of her fear. On one level, she is describing the intensity of her fear; on another, it creates humor because 'waves' can refer both to the literal waves of a tsunami and the figurative 'waves' of fear. The humor derives from the unexpectedness of the woman's response. The therapist likely anticipated a straightforward explanation of the fear's severity but instead encountered a clever wordplay.

Referential Ambiguity

According to Attardo (2020, p. 184), referential ambiguity is two possible interpretations caused by issues in referencing information within sentences. In relation to humor, this type of ambiguity is usually found in ellipsed constituent.



Figure 11. Server's Question Causing Referential Ambiguity

In Figure 11, a couple is depicted enjoying a meal at a restaurant, with wine as their beverage. The man's glass is empty, indicating he has finished his wine. Observing this, a female server approaches and offers him another glass, saying, 'I see your glass is empty, sir. Would you like another?' The man responds with a question, 'Why would I want two empty glasses?'

The humor in this scenario arises from the unexpected way the man interprets the server's offer to refill his glass. Normally, one would simply accept or decline such an offer, but the man's response deviates from this expectation. This unexpected reply adds surprise to the interaction. The server anticipates a straightforward response regarding refilling the glass; thus, the man's unconventional answer creates a humorous moment and disrupts the usual flow of conversation in a restaurant setting.

This humor is further heightened by referential ambiguity, emphasized by the use of the word 'another'. While the server's question appears straightforward, the word 'another' can be interpreted in multiple ways. Textually, it could refer to another empty glass, which would logically align with the man's response. However, in the context of the conversation, 'another' actually refers to more wine. This discrepancy between what the man understands and what the server intends adds complexity to the situation and enhances the humor. The word 'another' becomes ambiguous because its interpretation can vary, both within the ongoing conversation (endophoric) and outside of it (exophoric).



Figure 12. Interrogative Tweet Causing Referential Ambiguity

The meme in Figure 12 features a conversation in the form of tweets. Initially, a question is posed to the public: 'if a woman sleeps with 10 men she's a s**t, but if a man does it... He's?'. The word 's**t' is censored due to offensive nature. The question pertains to the derogatory terms used for women who engage in sexual intercourse with multiple men. In response to this question, another Twitter account quoted it and humorously answered, 'Gay, he's gay'.

The question highlights a societal double standard that frequently exists regarding sexual behavior between men and women. The statement posed in the question tweet underscores a common stereotype where promiscuity in women is often negatively judged and labeled with derogatory terms like 's**t', whereas similar behavior in men may be normalized or even celebrated. This question indirectly challenges gender stereotypes by exposing the inconsistency of this double standard regarding sexual behavior. It underscores how society judges and labels individuals differently based on their gender. Therefore, the answer to the question aims to align with this intention. It is expected to support the normalization of men's behavior in having multiple sexual partners.

The humor arises when the provided answer, 'Gay, he's gay', defies expectations. Instead of challenging the double standard or proposing a more neutral term for a man who sleeps with multiple partners, it humorously suggests that the man would be labeled as 'gay'. This unexpected answer hinges on referential ambiguity. The ambiguity is influenced by the pronoun 'it' in the phrase 'but if a man does it'. This pronoun refers back to the statement preceding the question, which mentions 'sleeps with 10 men'. 'It' functions here as a placeholder for 'sleeps with 10 men', as pronouns 'her' and 'him' are used for 'a woman' and 'a man' respectively. Therefore, 'it' typically refers to non-human entities or actions, including activities. By using 'it' after 'does', the focus is placed on the action of 'sleeping with 10 men'.

Similar to the scenario in Figure 11, the answer 'Gay, he's gay' arises because the question is interpreted with endophoric reference, whereas the expected answer should have used exophoric reference. Therefore, it humorously accepts interpreting the question as 'but if a man does sleep with 10 men, he is?' and

humorously answers it with 'Gay, he's gay'. This interpretation is the source of the humor in the meme.

Pragmatic Ambiguity

Tannen (1979) noted that pragmatic ambiguity arises when speakers use the same linguistic devices to achieve different ends. Attardo (2020) further specifies that this type of ambiguity should be purely pragmatic, meaning the lexical items, syntax, and reference are not inherently ambiguous. This ambiguity can occur because speakers and listeners may interpret a linguistic device, such as a sentence, with different focuses. This type of ambiguity is exemplified in memes like 'you don't say', which have a unique kind of humor.



Figure 13. Different Interpretations of the Cashier's Question

The meme in Figure 13 depicts a conversation between a customer and a cashier at a supermarket. After selecting the products he wants to buy, the customer proceeds to an open register. When it's his turn, he places all the chosen products on the cashier's station. The cashier then asks him, 'Are you buying all these?' Instead of a straightforward yes or no, the customer replies, 'No, I'm stealing them. I just wanted to show you first', revealing the customer's sarcastic tone.

The humor in the meme stems from the dual interpretation of the cashier's question. It is important to note that the question 'Are you buying all these?' is lexically clear, as each word has a straightforward meaning. It is syntactically clear, with no ambiguous structure, and referentially clear, without tricky reference. The ambiguity arises solely from how the question is interpreted.

Examining the customer's response, it remains relevant to the nature of the question asked. The question is a straightforward yes-or-no inquiry. The customer's response is a direct 'no'. However, the shift in focus occurs within the question itself. The cashier's intention is to ascertain whether all the products on the station belong to the customer, framing the question as 'Are you buying ALL THESE?' On the other

hand, the customer interprets the question differently based on their complete answer, understanding it as 'Are you BUYING all these?' This difference in interpretation creates incongruity between the intended meaning of the cashier's question and the customer's response.



Figure 14. Different Interpretations of the Server's Question

Figure 14 depicts a scenario where a server greets a customer and asks, 'Would you like a table?' This question implies that the customer has just arrived at the restaurant. Instead of simply responding with a straightforward 'yes' to indicate a desire for a table, the customer humorously replies, 'No, not at all. I came here to eat on the floor. Carpet for 5 please'. This sarcastic response indicates the customer's playful attitude towards the server's question.

The humor arises from the unexpected nature of the customer's response. Rather than giving a direct answer, the customer exaggerates in a humorous way by pretending to prefer dining on the floor and even requests a 'carpet for 5', as if organizing a picnic indoors. This incongruous response is influenced by pragmatic ambiguity.

When the server asks, 'Would you like a table?' the server intends to confirm whether the customer needs seating arrangements. However, the customer interprets the question as 'Would you like A TABLE?', finding it absurd because it's generally assumed that a customer coming to a restaurant would indeed want a table. This misinterpretation adds to the humor of the situation.

Exploitation of Meaning Duality

The data presented above demonstrate how each meme constructs humor using only one type of ambiguity. This study also identifies memes that exhibit duality in ambiguity, where two meanings arise from two types of ambiguity. Below is an example of a meme that incorporates both lexical and syntactic ambiguities.

[blind date]

HER: I'm a big country fan

ME: *trying to impress her* China is very large



Figure 15. The Words 'Country' and 'Big' Causing Lexical and Syntactic Ambiguities

The lexical ambiguity in the above meme is illustrated by the word 'country'. This word can refer either to a geographical area with a specific governmental system or to a genre of music. The woman intends the latter meaning, expressing her fondness for country music. However, the man interprets her statement as indicating she likes large countries, leading him to mention China, which is the largest country by population. The comedic twist here is that the man's response completely misses the woman's intended meaning, creating humor through the unexpectedness of his interpretation.

The syntactic ambiguity influences the lexical ambiguity because the man assumes that the word 'big' modifies the word 'country' instead of 'fan'. Therefore, different constituent structures lead to dual meanings.

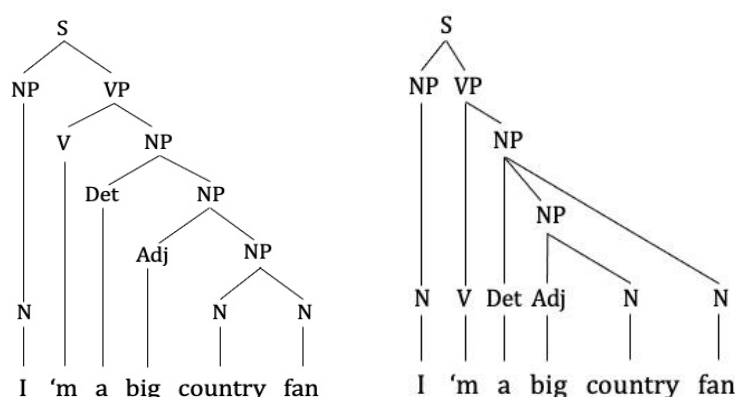


Figure 16. Constituent Structure of 'Country' Modifying 'Fan' (left) and Modifying 'Big' (right)

The structure on the left in Figure 16 represents what the woman intends to convey. In this structure, 'big' functions as an adjective modifying 'fan', which is the

head noun of the noun phrase 'country fan'. It describes the intensity or extent of the woman's enthusiasm or dedication as a fan. This structure implies that the woman is a passionate fan of country music.

The structure on the right in Figure 16 represents the interpretation of the man. In this structure, 'big' functions as an adjective modifying 'country'. It describes the size or significance of the country in the context of being a fan. This structure implies that the woman is a fan of a particular large country.

The findings of this study are consistent with previous research. Bao (2016) and Haryadi, Rejeki, and Setyowati (2022, p. 71) focused solely on lexical ambiguity in memes, noting that words with multiple meanings can lead to misunderstandings that create humor in memes. Their findings are further supported by the current study, which identifies multiple types of ambiguities contributing to humor, and demonstrates how lexical ambiguity can be enhanced by syntactic ambiguity to amplify humor.

Yolanda, Bram, Ardi, and Doborovich (2023) suggest that humor in internet jokes is influenced by lexical, referential, and syntactic ambiguities. However, they note that their data primarily address complex interpretations rather than surface-deep structures. In contrast, the current study provides data and analysis showing how surface structures can contain multiple deep structures due to ambiguous constituent structures.

Bao (2016) also noted that humor serves to create an atmosphere and enhance interpersonal communication. Through the current study, another function of humor is identified: sarcasm. This function arises specifically from pragmatic ambiguity, as discussed earlier.

Regarding incongruity as a source of humor, Nijholt (2018), citing Bergson (2003), suggests that stereotypical interpretations are established in specific situations, and humor emerges when there is a deviation from these stereotypes. This concept is clearly illustrated in the data and analysis presented above. Each meme establishes an initial frame of common interpretation through text in the first panel. Subsequently, this common interpretation is unexpectedly twisted, amusing people by humorously defying their expectations.

CONCLUSION

Based on the preceding analysis, humor in English memes stems from various interpretations of the opening statements, where one specific interpretation creates incongruity. Each meme begins with an initial text that establishes expectations for the conversation, only to diverge unexpectedly. This divergence is attributed to the presence of multiple meanings influenced by lexical ambiguity, syntactic ambiguity, literal versus metaphorical ambiguity, referential ambiguity, and pragmatic ambiguity.

Among these mechanisms, lexical ambiguity emerges as the most frequently exploited based on the study's findings. The research also demonstrates that syntactic ambiguity relates to ambiguous phrase structures. Additionally, it provides data and analysis on literal versus metaphorical ambiguity and pragmatic ambiguity. Of these ambiguities, pragmatic ambiguity is particularly utilized to create humor with a sarcastic undertone. English memes often combine multiple

ambiguities to create humor, such as the integration of lexical and syntactic ambiguities.

The study of humor remains an expansive field. While the current study focuses on English memes, future research could investigate humor in spoken data from movies or comedy shows, potentially analyzing prosodic features. Another avenue for research could be the analysis of sarcasm through meaning duality, building on the examples provided in the current study.

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More Than Just Surviving: Rebellion Against Patriarchy in the English Translation of Han Kang's *The Vegetarian*

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Abstract. The article analyzes the English translation of the Korean novel *The Vegetarian* (2015) by Han Kang in light of the impact of a patriarchal society on a woman's life. In the article, I analyze the English version as a standalone novel rather than a translation from Korean due to various instances of mistranslations and omissions. The narrative tells the story of Yeong-hye, a Korean woman who one day becomes an eponymous vegetarian and stops eating meat. The more committed Yeong-hye is to her dietary choice, the more aggressive her family becomes, perceiving her decision as absurd and foolish. The novel's central theme, unlike the novel's title may suggest, is not vegetarianism but rebellion and the silent suffering of a woman trapped in a patriarchal world that does not understand her. The study incorporates Gilbert and Gubar's concept of the "angel in the house" and Timothy Morton's distinction between Life and "life." Lastly, the research discusses the role of Yeong-hye and the author of the novel, Han Kang, concerning Gilbert and Gubar's notion of "anxiety of authorship". I argue that Yeong-hye's transformation, resulting in her institutionalization in a mental hospital, was caused by the patriarchal beliefs upheld by her family.

Keywords: *women, rebellion, patriarchy, life, vegetarianism*

<http://jos.unsoed.ac.id/index.php/jes>

INTRODUCTION

The Vegetarian is a Korean novel written by Han Kang in 2007. The plot begins with a portrayal of a simple dietary change. On one completely ordinary February day, Yeong-hye, the protagonist of the novel, decides to become the eponymous vegetarian and stops eating meat. Her family members, especially male ones, disapprove of the decision, perceiving it as absurd and foolish. The more committed Yeong-hye is to her dietary choice, the more hostile her family becomes. Unlike the novel's title suggests, the novel's central theme is not vegetarianism but rather a woman's rebellion and silent suffering in a patriarchal world that does not understand her. In this essay, I argue that Yeong-hye's transformation, resulting in a stay in a mental hospital, was caused by the patriarchal values embraced by her family.

The creation of *The Vegetarian* was preceded by "The Fruit of My Woman", a short story written by the same author (Patrick, 2016). *The Vegetarian* is a multilayered story consisting of three chapters: "The Vegetarian", "Mongolian Mark", and "Flaming Trees". As the chapters were initially written as three separate novellas (Alter, 2006), they are written from different perspectives and about different characters. The first chapter is narrated by Mr. Cheong, Yeong-hye's husband, the second by Yeong-hye's brother-in-law, and the last one by Yeong-hye's sister. None of the sections is written by Yeong-hye, from the beginning suggesting her lack of autonomy in her own story. They can be read as three separate novellas, however, together they provide a coherent picture of Yeong-hye's harrowing life. The article analyzes an English novel translation by Deborah Smith in 2015, bearing in mind that the English text is not identical to the source language.

Due to the controversies surrounding Deborah Smith's English translation of *The Vegetarian*, I feel obliged to comment briefly on the evaluation of the translation by Smith, conducted by South Korean literary scholar, critic, and translator Wook-Dong Kim (2018). According to him, the translation by Smith contains many mistakes, originating from the fact that Smith does not possess enough knowledge of the Korean language and culture. It may stem from the fact that Smith started learning Korean in 2010, only five years before the publication of the English version of *The Vegetarian* (Han Kang's *The Vegetarian* wins Man Booker International Prize, 2016). As Smith explains, "You typically submit the manuscript for editing 12 months before the publication date" (Winchester, 2017), rendering her translation of *The Vegetarian* a result of merely four years of experience with a foreign language. Many other scholars, such as academic Charse Yun or writer Tim Parks, follow Wook-Dong Kim's opinion (Armitstead, 2018). Yun comments that "the number of mistranslations in *The Vegetarian* is much higher than one would expect from a professional translator" pointing out several flaws in the English version (Yun, 2017). One of the most striking mistakes pointed out by Yun are the misidentification of the subjects of the sentence (which resulted in attributing dialogues to wrong characters), insertion of "adverbs, superlatives, and emphatic word choices *that are simply not in the original*" and change of the opening line of the novel (Yun, 2017).

Overall, it seems that Smith could have done a better job of translating the novel correctly. Hence, the errors made on the syntactic level, as well as various cases of under and over-translation, render it a creative translation (Wook-Dong, 2018, p.71). The English translation offered to the reader can be perceived instead as a rendition of the novel, created by maintaining its essence while filling the translation gaps with her creativity. Wook-Dong Kim highlights that according to a 2016 Korean research paper, “10.9 percent of the first section of the book was found to be mistranslated, while another 5.7 percent of the original text was found to be omitted” (Wook-Dong, 2018, p.65). In the case of a multilayered novel such as *The Vegetarian*, in which the aspects of Korean culture are crucial to embrace and comprehend the text, the reader's response to Smith's English translation may differ from the response of Korean readers. Bearing in mind various instances of mistranslations and omissions, I analyze the English version as a standalone novel rather than simply a translation from Korean.

One element of the novel that seems like a translation mistake but is not is the use of the word 'vegetarian' as a noun and adjective. The change in Yeong-hye's diet shows her conversion to vegetarianism. However, along with meat, she also stops eating fish, dairy, and eggs. While her dietary choices indicate a representation of a vegan diet rather than a vegetarian one, throughout the novel, Yeong-hye's diet is not even once referred to as vegan. While it could be a simple translation mistake, a dictionary search reveals that the English adjective 'vegetarian' is an accurate translation of the Korean counterpart. Therefore, opting for the word 'vegetarian' was an intentional decision of the author not to represent Yeong-hye's dietary choices but rather to acknowledge a symbolic difference between Yeong-hye and her carnivore family. The readers do not focus on what animal products Yeong-hye eats but on what they represent. Focusing on this representation, I argue that Yeong-hye's transformation to vegetarianism (or veganism), resulting in a stay in a mental hospital, was caused by the patriarchal values embraced by her family. Moreover, the article shows that Yeong-hye's dietary change should be viewed as a woman's rebellion and silent suffering in a patriarchal world that does not understand her.

Despite winning the 2016 Man Booker International Prize (*The Vegetarian* Wins Man Booker International Prize by Han Kang, 2016), the English version of *The Vegetarian* by Han Kang has not been analyzed by many critical scholars. Apart from Wook-Dong Kim's article regarding the “creative” translation of *The Vegetarian* (2018), a few notable articles aim to analyze solely *The Vegetarian* without comparing it to other Korean novels. Caitlin Stobie explores the theories of sister relationships through the relationship between Yeong-hye and her sister (Stobie, 2018). Won-Chung Kim analyzes *The Vegetarian* by focusing on suffering and what role carno-phallogocentric thinking can play in such suffering (Won-Chun, 2019). Maria Sophia Pimentel Biscaia applies an ecocritical framework to the study of *The Vegetarian* and analyzes it concerning the concept of Becoming (Pimentel Biscaia, 2019). Amy-Leigh Gray and Dana Medoro, in their short article in “The Edinburgh Companion to Vegan Literary Studies”, look at the novel by challenging the dominant narratives of meat (Gray & Medoro, 2022). Finally, Danielle Sands positions *The Vegetarian* within a broader context of “feeling politics” (Sands, 2022).

While the study applies the notion of patriarchy as the primary analytical framework, research regarding patriarchy is rather extensive as scholars have

investigated it from different perspectives. The sole definition of patriarchy and its variations were a topic by many scholars (Barrett 1988; Stacey 1993; Hunnicutt 2009). The research uses the one coined by Gwen Hunnicutt as she proposes one of the most precise definitions of the term. According to her, patriarchy equals “social arrangements that privilege males, where men as a group dominate women as a group, both structurally and ideologically hierarchical arrangements that manifest in varieties across history and social space” (Hunnicutt, 2009, p.557). This paper applies the definition to social arrangements in the represented Korean society that privileges a group of men consisting of Yeong-hye’s family members. The privilege spans two family generations. It spans not only space but also time.

In the analysis of *The Vegetarian*, the study differs from the previously mentioned articles as it applies various notions from *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination*, a groundbreaking book written by Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar.¹ The book examines literary works of female writers such as Jane Austen, Mary Shelly, Emily Dickinson, and the Brontë sisters from a feminist perspective. Gilbert and Gubar argue that, in the male-oriented world, women are perceived only through two opposing roles. They could either be obedient and submissive ‘angels’ or rebellious monsters.’ For this study, “angel in the house” can be applied to Yeong-hye and her position in Korean society and, most importantly, her marriage. The term, originating in the Victorian Era, can be understood as an ‘ideal’ image of a woman whose sole role is to be obedient to her husband. She should be charming when needed yet passive and powerless regarding decision-making; embodying traditional feminine virtues. Gilbert and Gubar (2020, p.17) stated that “Before we women can write, declared Virginia Woolf, we must “kill” the “angel in the house” (2020, p.17). Similarly, in order for her own story to be heard, Yeong-hye needs to reject her role as Gilbert and Gubar’s “angel in the house”. Unfortunately, by regaining her autonomy, she starts to be perceived as Gilbert and Gubar’s ‘madwoman’, a ‘monster’. Another term coined by Gilbert and Gubar (2020) is the “anxiety of authorship”. As suggested by them, men and women differ in their approach to writing and subsequently deal with different kinds of writing anxieties. Defined as “a radical fear that she [a woman] cannot create” (Gilbert and Gubar, 2020, p.49), the “anxiety of authorship” refers to the opposition to the male anxiety of influence. It is up to women to create their writing tradition by overcoming the “anxiety of authorship” and rebelling against patriarchy. The “anxiety of authorship” is applied in this research to Yeong-hye and her attempts of creating her own creative work but also to Han Kang herself, by focusing on how she constructed the novel.

¹ The first edition of *The Madwoman in the Attic* was written in 1979.

Another aspect of the novelty of this study in regards to the analysis of *The Vegetarian* is linked with framing Yeong-hye's life in Timothy Morton's discussion of Life vs "life". Timothy Morton's distinction of two different aspects of life can be found in his book *Humankind: Solidarity with Non-Human People*, published in 2017. The book tries to answer the question of what makes humans human in the context of ecological coexistence. Especially crucial for the discussion of Yeong-hye's human/non-human life is one of the book chapters entitled, simply, Life. As Morton states, Life (with a capital L) is bound by the science of logic, while "life" is defined by everything between Life and death; by the middle zone. While Life is linked with logical reasoning, in "life," nothing is simply black and white.

RESEARCH METHOD

This paper uses a qualitative approach. The object of this study is the English translation of a Korean novel, *The Vegetarian*, written by Han Kang. The current study differs from existing research as it applies the notion of patriarchy and rebellion against it as the analytical framework.² It focuses on the main protagonist, Yeong-hye, and her relations with male family members: her father and husband. The study aims to present and analyze an intricate relationship between the physical and mental transformation of Yeong-hye and her experience of living in a patriarchal Korean society. Moreover, to show the duality of life of the protagonist, pre-rebellion and after, the study applies the concept of the "angel in the house" by Gilbert and Gubar (2020) as well as the distinction of Life and "life" by Timothy Morton (2017). Lastly, the study discusses the role of Yeong-hye and the author of the novel, Han Kang, in light of the "anxiety of authorship" by Gilbert and Gubar (2020).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

As mentioned before, giving up meat and all animal products by Yeong-hye is just the outer layer of the novel. Her transition to vegetarianism (or veganism) refers to a symbolic representation of her inner rebellion. It all starts with a dream that Yeong-hye has one night. In the dream "[v]iolent acts perpetrated by night. A hazy feeling, I can't pin down... but remembered as blood chilling definite (Kang, 2015, pp.35-36). Blood is the central motif of her dream and its subsequent recallings. She keeps mentioning blood covering her, "bloody hands", "bloody mouth", and "clothes wet with blood" (Kang, 2015, p.20). Moreover, in her dreams, blood is directly linked with images of raw meat. However, in her dream, the "great blood-red gashes of meat" do not disgust her but rather seem to be becoming part of her. Young-hye recalls that when she started chewing on them, the meat "felt so real, but couldn't have been" (Kang, 2015, p.20).

² The author of this article acknowledges Han Kang's comment that *The Vegetarian* "isn't a singular indictment of the Korean patriarchy" (Patrick, 2016); however, it analyzes the notion of patriarchy as an

intrinsic element of the plot.

Assuming that meat is for Yeong-hye a metaphor for her own body, the rejection of meat symbolizes the rejection of violence, suffering, and pain. The cruelty towards animals, described through killing animals for their meat, is for Yeong-hye, a metaphor for all the cruelty that she experienced as a child and later on as a young woman at the hands of her father. What accompanies her disgust towards eating meat is the fear and the uncanny feeling of familiarity. The feeling of familiarity is not new but suppressed. In her dreams, she explains: "Intolerable loathing, so long suppressed. Loathing I've always tried to mask with affection. But now the mask is coming off" (Kang, 2015, pp.35-36). Due to the patriarchal way of upbringing, she used to believe that her father's violence and punishments were deserved and justified. Now when being a married woman, she realizes that her feelings of hate towards him were the correct reaction to all the pain she had to endure. Thus, her transformation is not only a change of diet but, at the same time, a process of self-discovery, identity formation, and realization of the impact of the past on her current life and mental health.

The first sentence of the first chapter, and at the same time of the novel, depicts the relationship between Yeong-hye and her husband. It explains that before Yeong-hye transitioned into a vegetarian, Yeong-hye was "completely unremarkable in every way" (Kang, 2015, p.11). For Mr. Cheong, his wife, Yeong-hye, was a perfect woman only because she was ordinary; there was nothing special about her.³ He did not choose his wife because he was attracted to her, but rather because she did not threaten him and his position as a superior male. Mr. Cheong explains that "women who were pretty, intelligent, strikingly sensual, the daughters of wealthy families, would only have served to disrupt my carefully ordered existence" (Kang, 2015, p. 12). The average appearance of Yeong-hye, combined with her passive personality, was, therefore, a perfect addition to the ordinary middle-course life of Mr. Cheong. Their relationship was an ideal example of a patriarchal family, with Mr. Cheong being the master of the house and his wife being merely his subordinate. Mr. Cheong worked all day and spent the evenings in front of the TV while Yeong-hye stayed in the house cooking, cleaning, taking care of the apartment, and being at Mr. Cheong's beck and call. Thus, we can assume that Yeong-hye represents the "angel in the house" (Gilbert and Gubar, 2020, pp.3-44). Gilbert and Gubar argue that in the male-oriented world, women are in the opposition of two roles: obedient and submissive angels or rebellious monsters. Those who become 'angels in their houses' are constricted in their roles, confined to housework, and denied their autonomy.

³ The line "nothing special about her" is a creation of Deborah Smith and cannot be found in the original Korean version. (Yun, 2017) It is, therefore, yet another argument for perceiving the English translation of *The Vegetarian* as a separate novel.

The primary goal of Yeong-hye in their household is to please and obey her husband. When one morning Yeong-hye decides to empty the fridge and get rid of all animal products, Mr. Cheong does not try to calm her down and find what may have caused the rapid change in her behavior. He is furious that her actions disrupted his morning. His wife did not wake him up, did not prepare his food, or did not iron his shirt. He claims that "[i]n the five years we'd been married, this was the first time I'd had to go to work without her handing me my things and seeing me off." (Kang, 2015, p.19). It seems that for Mr. Cheong, breakfast is not a meal but a performance, yet another act clearly stating the gender roles between the superior husband and his obedient servant wife. In the eyes of Mr. Cheong, by rejecting the role of a good housewife, the "angel in the house", Yeong-hye became a 'monster', a 'madwoman' (Gilbert, Gubar, 2020). Mr. Cheong does not consider any other explanation for her actions apart from perceiving Yeong-hye as becoming the binary opposition of an obedient wife - a mad woman. For him, a wife who makes her own decisions cannot be viewed as sane. He claims that "the very idea that there should be this other side to her, one where she selfishly did as she pleased was astonishing. Who would have thought she could be so unreasonable" (Kang, 2015, p.21). During the argument, he insults her by calling her insane and asking her whether she has lost her mind, only proving the point that Yeong-hye is a victim of home abuse. The names given to the characters show the patriarchal nature of their relationship. It is visible when her father tries to force her to eat meat again by stating, "Yeong-hye, are you still not eating meat? [...] What on earth must Mr. Cheong think? (Kang, 2015, p.36). The husband is referred to by his surname, Mr. Cheong, which already suggests to the readers that if referred to like that, especially by her family members, he must be a significant and respected person. On the other hand, the wife is called by her first name, Yeong-hye, rather than Mrs. Cheong, which gives the reader the impression that her character is ordinary and average compared to a superior and important husband.

A sudden change in Yeong-hye did not evoke empathy and worry in Mr. Cheong. He perceives her change as interfering with his tranquil, controlled, and organized life. For Mr. Cheong, the decision of his wife to stop eating meat had no reasonable grounds and "was nothing but sheer obstinacy for a wife to go against her husband's wishes" (Kang, 2015, p.22). The beliefs of Mr. Cheong are a perfect representation of deeply ingrained patriarchal thinking. He not only perceives himself as 'the man of the house' but also assumes the role of the family decision-maker. His conviction about male superiority renders his wife automatically inferior and unfounded. Moreover, he cannot comprehend how his wife could make a decision on her without consulting him or even asking for his superior permission.

The first sign of Yeong-hye breaking the image of an obedient woman and ideal wife was her reluctance to wear a brassiere, a symbol of rebellion, specifically of second-wave feminism (Kreydatus, 2008). She rejected it, describing it as something that constricts her (Kang, 2015, p.14). However, her feeling of constriction does not disappear when she stops wearing it. In the hospital, Yeong-hye admits that "[e]ven though I've stopped wearing a bra, I can feel this lump all

the time. No matter how deeply I inhale, it doesn't go away" (Kang, 2015, p56). Yeong-hye's reluctance to wear a brassiere pertains not only to her physical constriction but also to her emotional and spiritual constraints, which have been present throughout her life. When Yeong-hye married Mr. Cheong, she became constricted by his patriarchal mentality. She became a slave in her own house, trapped with a man who never loved her and never respected her. It was a matter of time before her mind could not handle reality anymore.

However, the narrator reveals that her mental entrapment started much earlier than her marriage. As a young girl, Yeong-hye was constricted by her patriarchal family, ruled by her father, and his cruel bringing-up methods. The narrator reveals that she was the only one of her siblings who was a victim of her father's violence. "Docile and naive, [she] had been unable to deflect their father's temper or put up any form of resistance" (Kang, 2015, p.163) and had been suffering in silence for years. Her sister, In-hye, recalls how they got lost in the mountains when they were little. While In-hye tried to find a way home, a nine-year-old Yeong-hye said, "Let's just not go back" (Kang, 2015, p.162). The fragment not only shows the mental toll of physical abuse on a nine-year-old Korean girl but is also a foreshadowing of the final scenes in the novel. In-hye is the only family member who gradually starts to understand Yeong-hye's rebellion and the only person who cares about her well-being. Just like in the memory of two little sisters lost in the mountains, the novel ends with In-hye accepting Yeong-hye's offer not to return to their home, resigning from being a servant and escaping from never-ending patriarchal constriction and abuse.

Another troubling issue (troubling, however, only in the perception of Mr. Cheong) that emerged after Yeong-hye's transition to being vegetarian was the fact that she started to avoid sex (Kang, 2015, p.24). For Mr. Cheong, the lack of sex, referred to as not complying with his "physical demands" (Kang, 2015, p.24) was 'more troubling' than the fact that his wife stopped eating and sleeping. Again, he does not perceive the unwillingness of his wife to have sex as a symptom of a possible illness but rather as not fulfilling the duties of a good wife. Just like every morning Yeong-hye is supposed to serve Mr. Cheong during the act of breakfast, every evening she is supposed to assert his male dominance and superiority through the act of sex. Mr. Cheong's frustration over his wife's disobedience resulted in the highest act of male dominance over women – rape. Believing that a wife should always be inferior to her husband, he goes as far as to justify his unacceptable and cruel act of rape by claiming that it is simply not easy for a man "to have his physical needs go unsatisfied for such a long period" (Kang, 2015, p.38). Yeong-hye's freedom, which began the moment she stopped eating meat, is a massive threat to the patriarchal structure of Mr. Cheong. The act of rape is thus not only a brutal act of gendered violence but also an attempt to retrieve his dominance.

In the case of the Korean reality represented in *The Vegetarian*, gender roles are assigned based on the patriarchal system controlled by men. According to Judith Butler (1999, p.23), and echoed by other scholars, gender identity is performative because the basis is on the repetitions of gendered behavior (Doncu, 2017, p.334). The gendered behavior seems to be repeated through generations in every family, as described by Han Kang, the author of *The Vegetarian*. All the women in the novel are obedient to men and silently fulfill their duties as wives and daughters, repeating

the socially approved behavior of inferior females of their families. A family dinner, the climax of one of the chapters, depicts a patriarchal hierarchy within the represented Korean family. When Yeong-hye does not eat any of the prepared meat dishes, her father tells her, "Don't you understand what your father's telling you? If he tells you to eat, you eat" (Kang, 2015, p.45). The violent statement serves as Yeong-hye's father's reminder of her role in the family and, at the same time, in Korean society. Her father, the first man in her life, perceives not eating meat as something one should be ashamed of. According to him, a good Korean woman should obey her father first and then her husband. During the dinner Yeong-hye realizes she has no support from her family. The dinner involves a brutal act of beating Yeong-hye to convince her to eat followed by the force-feeding Yeong-hye by her father. Her father is the one who initiates the attempt to force her to eat a piece of pork as he believes that her diet is "preposterous" and "[i]f she eats it once, she'll eat it again (Kang, 2015, p.46). The burden of his violence cannot be, however, solely put on him, as he invites other men in the family (Yeong-hye's husband and brother) to help him constrict her. The act is yet another gender performance, signaling to Yeong-hye that her father still believes in control over her body.

Combining different excerpts from the three chapters gives the readers a complete image of Yeong-hye's father. The controversial dinner situation showed one of his most brutal behaviors towards his daughter, but it was not the first one. A former Vietnam War soldier, he is described as a 'heavy-handed' man who used violence towards Yeong-hye as a parental strategy up until her 18th birthday (Kang, 2015, p.37). Her uncanny familiar memories of violence described above relate directly to his parental methods of abusing his daughter in attempts to 'mold her' into a perfect, obedient Korean female. Yeong-hye is the only person in the novel who rebels and alters the previously assigned gender roles. As her behavior fractures the represented well-established Korean gender system, it is perceived as preposterous and absurd by all members of her family. It is important to note that other females do not object to the mistreatment of Yeong-hye by males in her family. According to Han Kang, it is also crucial to know that Korean society is collective (Lee, 2016, p.66). In such a society, the needs and desires of an individual, represented by Yeong-hye, are perceived as inferior and irrelevant in contrast to the needs of the larger group, such as family or the whole society. This notion of collectiveness is visible in the description of Mr. Cheong's company dinner. His male colleagues are not only surprised by Yeong-hye's diet but also disapprove of it. In the context of collective society, it becomes visible that colleagues of Mr. Cheong perceived her diet as unusual because it was different from what they were used to and familiar with. They did not treat it, just as Mr. Cheong, as a rebellion, but instead as an exception of the rule or deviation of the norm that they were not able to understand.

After her husband's acts of rape, the beatings of her father, and force-feeding, Yeong-hye realizes that her body has stopped being hers and is merely a vessel. The colonization of her own body is the reason for Yeong-hye to believe in being a plant. According to scholars, "[t]he fantasized body can never be understood in relation to the body as real; it can only be understood in relation to another culturally instituted fantasy, one which claims the place of the 'literal' and 'the real'" (Doncu, 2017, p.333). In the case of Yeong-hye, her fantasized body of a plant is bound with her

fantasy of a non-cruel world. Her detachment from meat, animals, animal products, and even people (as she believed that the human body smells like meat) (Kang, 2015, p.24) is, in fact, a symbolic detachment from the pain and cruelty that she had to endure for so long. She chooses to live as a plant because for her plants do not hurt others; her realization is referred to by scholars as an "empathetic realization" (Stobie, 2017, p. 794). It is her effort to retrieve and control her body. According to Han Kang, violence is part of being human, and people often struggle with accepting that they are one of those human beings (Lee, 2016, p.64). Yeong-hye is an ideal example of someone who cannot accept that she can be a source of cruelty. She chooses not to add any cruelty to the already cruel world. She tries to free herself from pain and assumes the identity of an organism that cannot cause pain to others.

It is interesting to observe the difference between the two lives that Yeong-hye lives throughout the novel. In the first life, the life she did not choose but was rather assigned to her, she was the "angel in the house". The second life, the life of the vegetarian, was the life that she chose for herself as a result of her own self-development. The first life, even though painful and submissive, was socially accepted, while the second life, in which she was finally free, was frowned upon. The disapproval of her second life was directly bound to a patriarchal system. It was perceived as shameful and ridiculous as a binary opposition to the representation of Korean standards in the novel. The two life models of Yeong-hye refer to Timothy Morton's distinction between Life and "life" (Morton, 2017, pp.43-49). Life (with a capital L) is linked with the science of logic (standard usage of the letter L). Logic, according to Morton, and as established earlier by philosophers such as Aristotle, does not like any type of ambiguity. In that case, it can be assumed that it works in accordance with the binary oppositions following one of the three laws of thought, mainly the law of excluded middle. Thus, Morton's Life is the opposite of death. Life and death are strictly defined against what they are not. If we treat Life and death as binary oppositions, together they form a complete unit. In this imagined complete unit, we can acknowledge birth as the starting point and death as a closing element. Enclosed between those metaphorical boundaries, we find the whole period of a human's life. The binary opposition of Morton's Life and death can be observed only in theory. Thus, he introduces his concept of non-binary "life" which refers to the ambiguity deprived of logic. "life" is defined by everything between Life and death, by the middle zone, Morton cleverly named "shades of gray." In "life," nothing is simply black and white.

The first life of Yeong-hye is a Life with a capital L. It is based on the binary opposition of life and death. According to this logic, she should have been happy about her life according to Korean standards because she was alive. She was supposed to be a passive follower of the well-established collective society and mindlessly fit into her assigned gender role of being a daughter and, later on, a wife. Defying those standards and yearning for something more than just being alive and trying to go beyond those patterns automatically rendered Yeong-hye crazy in the eyes of society. However, from the beginning, Yeong-hye wanted to live a "life" that assumed more than only two possibilities. A life that enables her to live through what Morton calls the "excluded middle spectral realm" (Morton, 2017, p. 44). A life in which she can be an equal partner to her husband, a Mrs. Cheong to Mr. Cheong. Her first life, Life with a capital L, was for Yeong-hye, not worth living. After

the controversial family dinner, she realizes that her body is not hers and that she has no authority over any decisions. She decides to make one last decision, and she attempts to commit suicide. She realized that her life cannot be based only on surviving, on performing an assigned role she does not intend to. Her attempt, in Yeong-hye's eyes, to regain sovereignty of her body and life puts her in a mental hospital. If Yeong-hye had been allowed to live her second life fully as a "life," without the family pressure, objectification, and sexual exploitation, she would not have ended up in a hospital. However, according to scholars, "it is not surprising to find that the "angel in the house" of literature frequently suffered not just from fear and trembling but from literal and figurative sicknesses unto death." (Gilbert and Gubar, 2020, p.55). It seems like, in the case of Yeong-hye, the influence of the past on her presence was too strong and rendered her ability to embrace a new life.

When analyzing Yeong-hye's fight with the patriarchal system, one needs to focus on the "anxiety of authorship" by Gilbert and Gubar. The concept is contrary to "anxiety of influence" by Harold Bloom. Yeong-hye's job is described to the readers in the first chapter, written from the point of view of Mr Cheong. Due to this literary decision, the readers are able to familiarize themselves not only with Yeong-hye's job but also with Mr.Cheong's opinion concerning his wife's job. He mentions her part-time job as a comic writer only once throughout the chapter and diminishes it merely to writing the words for the speech bubbles (Kang, 2015, p.12). He does not seem interested in any aspects of her job. The most important thing for Mr. Cheong is that his wife works from home, meaning her job as a comic writer does not affect her job as a wife. Mr. Cheong discourages her interest in reading, believing that literature is a waste of time. He claims that she reads books "that looked so dull I couldn't even bring myself to so much as take a look inside the covers" (Kang, 2015, p.13). In the context of the whole novel and the patriarchal nature of the relationship between Mr. Cheong and Yeong-hye, it is visible that in the eyes of Mr. Cheong, Yeong-hye is just an ordinary woman who is unable to create work that can ever equal the work created by a man. Her interests, like her opinions, are perceived as irrelevant and dull. Mr. Cheong is afraid that, just as Gilbert and Gubar claim, freeing female creativity equals becoming free from male domination (2020, p.82).

The "anxiety of authorship" is also visible in the way Han Kang, the author of *The Vegetarian*, constructed the novel. Although Yeong-hye is the central character of the novel, she does not narrate the chapters. The intentional narrating strategy highlights Yeong-hye's lack of voice in her marriage and family and the represented of Korean society. Her words are rarely heard, so she expresses herself through actions. Yeong-hye, just like female writers, needs to revise and redefine herself to create her true self (Gilbert, Gubar, 2020, p.49). Even though her transformation will most certainly end in her death, her bravery cannot be ignored. By standing up for herself, she gave an example to others. In the last chapter, when Yeong-hye is already in the hospital, In-hye admits that her sister was able to escape the prison of reality. She claims, "Before Yeong-hye had broken those[prison] bars, she'd never even known they were there" (Kang, 2015, p.148). Similarly, Han Kang escaped from the prison of reality by defeating her own "anxiety of authorship." Her book talks about notions, that are rarely described in the books written by men. She is not afraid to write about male dominance, gender violence, or rape, even though she is aware of criticism for her portrayal of men. That is why the "anxiety of authorship"

in *The Vegetarian* is a multilayered concept, which could be analyzed even more, however, only with a prior knowledge of the Korean version of the text not altered by the creative approach of the translator.

CONCLUSION

Yeong-hye's story presented in the English translation of *The Vegetarian* is a story of a woman's fight with patriarchal society. It is the story of a woman who, regardless of various constrictions, could never act and live her life the way she wanted to. She started life as an obedient daughter and continued it as an obedient wife. She was first manipulated and beaten by her father, only to end up marrying a tormentor who acted the same way. Her transformation starts as a protest against control but continues as a protest against pain, suffering, and cruelty. During her journey, she is the one accused of being a monster, while her aggressors pretend to be the victims. Thus, her passiveness becomes a silent protest against violence in the cruel world. However, if we take into consideration the phrase, "Before we women can write, we must 'kill' the 'angel in the house'" (Gilbert and Gubar, 2020, p.17), it becomes clear that only by her rebellion she was able to create her own identity on her terms.

The findings of this paper pertain not only to the novel *The Vegetarian* but can also be applied to a broader discussion of gender roles within a family as well as the impact of the notion of patriarchy on an individual. Analysis of Yeong-hye's fight with patriarchy gives readers insight into the relation between societal expectations and constraints of personal autonomy. The study can be, therefore, used to analyze similar literary works containing the themes of power dynamics within a relationship or female oppression. Moreover, the implications of this study can be further used in societal discussions regarding women's lives in the contemporary world.

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Investigating Students' Difficulties in Translating English Academic Texts into Indonesian Using Photovoice

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Abstract. Translation is the process of transferring the meaning of a text from the source language (SL) to the target language (TL). However, many students experience difficulties in the translation process. This study aimed to reveal the difficulties faced by students in translating English academic texts especially English journal articles into Indonesian and the strategies they use to overcome their difficulties. It investigated students' experiences using qualitative approach with photovoice as the research design. The data collection was carried out by using photographs as well as semi-structured interviews. The gathered data were then analyzed by following steps of thematic analysis. This type of analysis helped the researcher identify students' difficulties and the translation strategies they use through their photos and descriptions. The results showed that the students have difficulties in pragmatics, cultural, and textual. In solving these difficulties, the students used some strategies including transference, naturalization, cultural equivalent, descriptive equivalent, synonymy, through translation, shift or transposition, reduction, paraphrase, couplets, and addition. The result of this research can be used by educators as a reference to identify the difficulties faced by their students early in translating academic texts. Therefore, they can guide their students to find the right strategies by using different types of difficulties.

Keywords: *Students' difficulties, students' strategies, translating, academic text*

INTRODUCTION

Translation is one of the skills that students must have. In addition, the ability of students, especially those in the English Department, is often measured by how well they can understand texts presented in English. According to Noviyanti et al. (2020), the degree of students' proficiency in English is frequently a sign of the quality of the English Education Department. They must also be proficient in translation in addition to the other four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This was felt by students at one of the universities in Pekalongan who majored in English education. They realized how important this skill is in the learning process.

Translation helps students understand key points in the information they receive. It is explained by Newmark (1988) that translation is conveying a message from a text to another language in the same way as intended by the author. In addition, Darissurayya (2015) also defines translation as an important process of replacing and reproducing text from the source language into the target language. Through translation, we can share the meaning of a text with readers without changing the idea and true idea of the source text. In this case, students can also understand and share information, knowledge, ideas, and other information contained in an English text.

However, there are still many students who experience difficulties in translating texts. This is also experienced by students who even get translation courses in the English department. Loan, Nhi, Quy, & Trinh (2022), in their research, found that the biggest difficulty experienced by students was the problem of cultural variations and customs. Students find it difficult to find appropriate word equivalents for certain terms. Another study conducted by Hasibun (2022) found that students experienced several difficulties in the translation process. These difficulties include understanding the meaning of lexical, grammatical, contextual, textual, and socio-cultural. The difficulty that most students have is understanding the meaning of lexical. This is due to a lack of vocabulary and their Indonesian language as the target language.

Some English education students learning in one of universities in Pekalongan have the opportunity to study translation in the sixth semester. They learned about some translation theories and also practiced the translation of different types of texts from English to Indonesian or vice versa. In this course, they are provided with the necessary knowledge to become competent translators. However, as beginners, there are still many students who experience difficulties in doing translation. Those difficulties arise because students not only have to determine the meaning of words, but they also have to understand the context of the text, which creates some difficulties for them. The difficulties often experienced by students are determining the equivalence of source language words in the target language and the grammatical differences between them.

Christiane Nord (1991) classified translation difficulties into several types, including pragmatic, cultural, linguistic, and textual. The pragmatic translation difficulties are created because of "the differences between the original text and the production situation of the translation situation". The cultural arises due to the differences between two different cultures. In addition, linguistic difficulties are a result of the structural differences between two languages, particularly in lexis and sentence structure. Moreover, textual difficulties are due to the understanding of the

source text, compared to intra-textual characteristics and extra-textual references, including the coherence and cohesion textual elements.

To overcome the difficulties that arise during the translation process, students need to find the right strategy. It is employed for sentences as well as smaller constituents, including clauses, phrases, words, and morphemes (Baihaqi, 2017; Baihaqi, 2018). This shows that the use of translation strategies is a fundamental step in examining and solving translation problems involving smaller linguistic units. According to Newmark (1988), there are strategies in translation, including transference, naturalization, synonymy, through translation, shift or transposition, modulation, recognized translation, translation label, compensation, componential analysis, reduction and expansion, paraphrases, couplets, notes, addition, and glosses.

Although the topic of difficulties in translating text has been conducted by some researchers in the previous studies, it is scarcely implemented by using photovoice as the research design. As the data were taken through photographs as well as interviews, this study showcases clearer data elaboration data related to the difficulties of students faced in the translation process of English academic texts into Indonesian and the strategies used to overcome their difficulties in the translation process of English academic text into Indonesian.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study was conducted in one of universities in Pekalongan, Central Java. The participants were female and male and were around 20 to 25 years old. The researcher decided to choose them because they were sixth-semester students from the English department and still experienced difficulties in the translation process of English academic texts into Indonesian. Before collecting the data, the researcher provided consent forms for the participants to participate in the study, and their personal information was kept confidential.

This research used a qualitative approach with a photovoice as the research design. Photovoice is a procedure that enables individuals to recognize, communicate, and strengthen their own communities using the relevant photographic technique (Wang & Burris, 1997). Sometimes there are feelings that are difficult to achieve verbally. Photos are their alternatives in conveying their feelings. It was chosen as the research design of this study because the combination of photographs and interview in its process can help the researchers to accurately catch the real meaning of each participant.

In collecting the data, the researcher used photograph as well as interviews in it. In this case, photo was used to express their feelings especially their difficulties in translating the academic text into Indonesian. Each student has their own perspective regarding the type of difficulties they face. Whereas interview was used to explore detail information related to the connection between the photographs captured by students with the difficulties faced by students in translating academic text as well as their strategies in overcoming them. Based on the SHOWeD method, the researchers asked participants five questions regarding their reasons for choosing photos, the feelings and emotions they wanted to show (Ebrahimpour, Varaei, & Esmaeili, 2018). It includes 1) What do you see in this photo? 2) What is happening in this photo? 3) How does this relate to your difficulties faced as well as

translation strategies used in translating academic texts? 4) Why do these difficulties and translation strategies exist? 5) What can we do about it?. The researcher conducted interviews with the participants. Then, the participants described their photos based on the questions in Indonesian to avoid misunderstandings.

The gathered data were then analyzed by following the steps of thematic analysis by Braun & Clarke (2006). The first step is familiarizing with the data. In this step, the researchers collected data and reread the transcripts. Here, the researchers noted the initial ideas from the students' descriptions. The second step is generating initial codes. In this step, the researchers identified meaningful codes or data features. The third step is searching for themes. In this step, the researchers extracted relevant data by combining or separating it according to the overall theme. After that, the researchers reviewed the themes and ensured that the themes fit into the data set. In addition, the data were checked to make sure that there were no codes had been missed in the previous process. In the next step, the researchers defined and named themes. The researchers provided theme names and worked definitions by capturing the essence of each theme in a concise and clear manner. The last step is producing the report. In this step, the researchers wrote down the results of the analysis by presenting clear statements. Then, to check the data validity, the researchers used theoretical triangulation. Theoretical triangulation involves the use of two or more theories to be pitted or combined. This research conducted a complete data analysis by combining the two theories used in the research, namely Christiane Nord's and Newmark's theories.

This research was conducted in several steps. Before conducting the research, the researchers explored the phenomenon of translation at one of the universities in Pekalongan. The next step was navigating sources to find the theoretical framework. In this step, the researchers found theories introduced by Christiane Nord (1991) and Newmark (1988) regarding students' difficulties and translation strategies. After that, the researchers explained the purpose of the research and decided to investigate about students' difficulties and students' strategies in translating English academic texts. In the next step, the researchers explored students' experiences through a photovoice research design by using photographs and interview in collecting the data. With the photos that students shared, students were able to describe the difficulties faced and strategies used during the translation process. After collecting the data, the researchers analyzed the data by following the steps of thematic analysis. The researcher analyzed the data based on the transcription of the photovoice data including photographs and interviews result. Finally, the researchers reported the results of the research.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results showed that there were several difficulties experienced by students when translating academic texts. Some of the difficulties they experienced included pragmatic, cultural, and textual. In solving these difficulties, the students chose to use the translation strategies developed by Peter Newmark that they had learned in translation class. The strategies they used include transference, naturalization, cultural equivalent, descriptive equivalent, synonymy, through translation, shift or transposition, reduction, paraphrase, couplets, and addition.

After gathering some photographs, the researchers then elaborated the meaning of those photographs and connected them with some questions of SHOWeD method. At last, the data related to difficulties faced in translating academic texts were analyzed by using Chistine Nord's theory (1991), while the data related to strategies used in translating academic texts were analyzed by using Newmark's theory (1988).

Students' Difficulties in Translating English Academic Texts into Indonesian

After collecting the data, it was found that there were three difficulties experienced by students. These difficulties included pragmatic, cultural, and textual. Here, the researcher presented the details of the discussion.

Pragmatic

One of the photovoices from a respondent with the initials L showed pragmatic difficulties. This is demonstrated by the selection of photo and caption which can be seen below:



Figure 1. Online Oxford Dictionary

L used a screenshot from an online dictionary website which was given a caption that reads "This is an online Oxford dictionary. I use it to find words in English that I don't understand the translation of correctly. Sometimes I get confused by the use of vocabulary in SL that doesn't fit the context in TL. Adjusting the context of the sentence in SL is what often makes it difficult for me to continue the translation process. For example, when I found the word "face" in the sentence, "We have discussed that Brown and Levinson's (1987) face-saving politeness theory has been undermined by its inability to be universally applied.""

In the case above, L had difficulty determining the original meaning of the word "face" in the sentence, "We have discussed that Brown and Levinson's (1987) face-saving politeness theory has been undermined by its inability to be universally applied." This word itself, if interpreted literally, means *wajah*. However, when looked at in the context of the sentence, it is not talking about parts of the body or things related to the face. This is what made L have difficulty connecting the meaning of the word with the context of the sentence.

The difficulty that arose affected L's understanding of the SL text. This is also in line with Alan Duff's theory (1989) in Husain, Badu, & Umar (2022), which states that pragmatic difficulty arises when students fail to understand the contexts of the

text. This is what L experienced, where she had difficulty determining the actual meaning of the word "face." Therefore, her translation process was also blocked.

Cultural

Cultural differences may cause difficulties during the translation process. It was evident in the photovoice from a respondent with the initials S who admitted to using Google Translate.

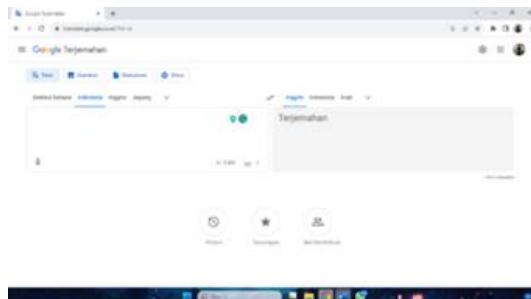


Figure 2. Google Translate to know the meaning of the word

The caption of the photo reads "This is Google Translate. I use it occasionally to help me in the process of translation. It is because I often come across cultural terms that I find difficult to translate. For example, when I came across the word "early education." I had to look up the meaning and find the appropriate equivalent word in TL."

S had difficulty determining the TL equivalent for the word "early education." If translated literally, the word means early education. It was difficult for S to determine which level of education the term corresponds to in the TL. Alan Duff (1989) also states that cultural problems arise because of students' lack of knowledge of the cultural elements described in the source text, making it difficult for them in the target language. Therefore, the difficulty experienced by S was due to the cultural differences in SL and TL and the lack of knowledge about the differences between the two.

Textual

Another difficulty experienced by respondents was that they were too fixated on the text. This can be seen from one example of photovoices by a respondent with the initials I. I described the predicament with the parable of water and oil in a glass.



Figure 3. A glass filled with water and oil symbol as incoherence

The photo was come with the caption, "This is a picture of a glass with water and oil in it. Water and oil do not mix. This is the difficulty I face when translating academic texts, such as journals, articles, e-books, and so on. I find it difficult to make the translation in TL cohesive and coherent. For example, when I translated the sentence "The classroom is shown at the center of the complex of force, time, and space-bound," into *Ruang kelas ditampilkan di pusat kompleks kekuatan, terikat ruang dan waktu*. The translated text I made seemed stiff, and I felt strange when I read it. This made me afraid that it would be difficult for readers to understand the meaning of the text."

From the description above, "I had difficulty making a cohesive and coherent translation. The translation result in TL still seemed stiff". The sentence did not have a logical harmony as expressed by Nord (1991), so the meaning of the sentence was difficult to accept. This difficulty was caused by the fact that many students still translated the text literally.

Students' Strategies in translating English Academic Texts into Indonesian

To help students deal with difficulties during the translation process, they used the translation strategies popularized by Peter Newmark (1988). Based on that strategy, the researcher found several strategies that they used. More information is presented in the discussion below.

Transference

In the transference strategy, a respondent with the initial S displayed the photovoice which is shown below:



Figure 4. The wide street symbol of an open mind

There's a caption attached that says, "This is a photo of a wide street. The photo is a representation of my feelings and broader perspective after learning the translation strategy by Peter Newmark. I seemed to have found a way out of the difficulties I faced in the translation process. I use the transference translation strategy when I encounter the name of a person, such as Peter Newmark, or the name of an institution, such as Universitas Negeri Makassar. After I understand this strategy, I don't have to struggle when I find people's names and institution names in academic texts because I don't need to look for the meaning or equivalent of the word."

Other than Newmark (1988), this case is also in line with the theory of Vinay and Darbelnet (1958) in (Venuti, 2004). In their theory, this strategy is known as

borrowing. According to them, "borrowing is a translation strategy without translating." This means that this strategy only retains words or phrases in the SL. This is in accordance with what S did, where the name "Universitas Negeri Makassar" in the SL is maintained in spelling in the TL. However, S still pays attention to the grammar and pronunciation of the word in the TL.

Naturalization

Naturalization strategy was evident in one of the photovoices from a respondent, I. It demonstrates in the following photovoice:



Figure 5. Sunset symbol of happiness

It is accompanied by a caption that says, "This is a photo I took at sunset. The scene is more beautiful because of the sunlight. It represents my happy feeling of being enlightened in translating English texts. After learning the translation strategies by Peter Newmark, I can apply them to help me during the translation process. I use the naturalization strategy to retain words or expressions used in the source language into the target language by adjusting the spelling and rules of the target language. For example, when I found the word "information" in the journal I read, I simply translated it into *informasi*. This is in accordance with the spelling and rules of Indonesian."

This strategy was applied by I when translating the word "information" in the SL into the word *informasi* in the TL. In accordance with Newmark's theory, I adjusted the word to the normal pronunciation of the word, then to the normal morphology or word form in the TL.

Cultural Equivalent

The respondent with the initials I also demonstrated a cultural equivalent strategy. The following photovoice demonstrates it:



Figure 6. Sunset symbol of happiness

It has a caption with the following words: "This is a photo I took at sunset. The scene is more beautiful because of the sunlight. It represents my happy feeling of being enlightened in translating English texts. After learning the translation strategies by Peter Newmark, I can apply them to help me during the translation process. When I come across a culturally related term or a term commonly used in SL, I will look for the appropriate word equivalent in the TL. For example, when I translated one of the teaching materials shared by my lecturer in class, There was the word "soap operas" in the sentence, "Much of this work, interestingly, has focused on audience involvement with television dramas, commonly referred to as soap operas." I translated the word "soap operas" with the word *sinetron*."

Based on the translation above, in accordance with Newmark's theory (1988), the cultural equivalent strategy was found. The bold word "soap operas" in SL was translated into *sinetron* in TL. Besides Newmark, this is also in accordance with Vinay and Darbelnet's theory (1958). In their theory, this is known as the adaptation strategy. According to them, this strategy replaces a cultural element in SL with one of the cultures in TL. It showed that I was looking for a word equivalent to the term "soap operas" that is appropriate to the daily culture in TL.

Descriptive Equivalent

A respondent who had the initials D presented descriptive equivalent strategy when D came across a word that do not has an equivalent term in the TL. It is shown in the photovoice below:

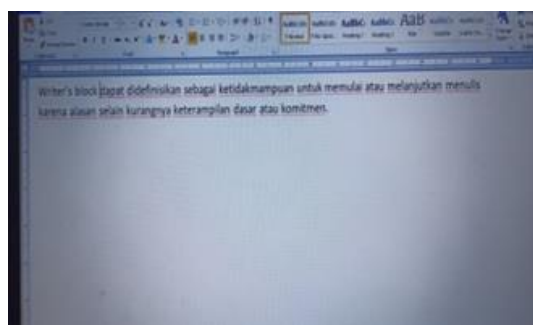


Figure 7. Translating activity with description

The photo's caption says, "I took this photo while trying to translate an English word into Indonesian. The photo above shows a description of the word writer's block. It shows a way out when the correct meaning is not found when using tools. This is

known as the descriptive equivalent, a translation strategy popularized by Peter Newmark. This strategy is used by adding a description of a word when translating. For example, when translating the word "writer's block" into Indonesian, I gave a description of what writer's block means. This is quite helpful in deciphering vocabulary that is rarely known to Indonesians. By adding a description, the reader will more easily understand what the writer means."

The translation strategy used in the translation above was descriptive equivalence, as stated by Newmark (1988). This is also in line with the theory of Molina and Albir (2000), known as description. According to them, the description strategy replaces certain terms in the language with descriptions of form or function. This was in accordance with the translation data by D, which showed the word "writer's block" translated into writer's block, *ketidakmampuan untuk memulai atau melanjutkan menulis karena alasan kurangnya keterampilan dasar atau komitmen*. It showed that D explained what was meant by the word "writer's block." This strategy was done to avoid misunderstandings when reading the text.

Synonym

A respondent with the initials L had a photovoice that revealed synonym strategy.



Figure 8. Blossoming flower symbol of an open mind

The photo's caption states "This is a photo of a blossoming flower in my yard. The flower represents my understanding that has opened up after learning the translation strategies by Peter Nemark. It's as if my mind opened up because I found a strategy to help me in the translation process. When I found the word "face" in the sentence, "we have discussed that Brown and Levinson's (1987) face-saving politeness theory has been undermined for its inability to be applied universally". I looked for a word that was more appropriate to the context of the sentence, which is "self-image." Then I translated it into *citra diri* in Indonesian."

This case, if seen based on Newmark's theory (1988), was included in the synonym strategy. From the example given by L, the word "face" means *wajah*. However, if it was maintained, it would potentially create a misunderstanding for the reader. It is because the context of the sentence does not refer to parts of the body or things related to the face. Therefore, L looked for the equivalent word first in the SL, whose translation would be acceptable in the TL. She changed the word "face" to the word "self-image," which means *citra diri* in TL. The translation was

more in line with the context of the sentence and could be more easily understood in the TL.

Through Translation

Apart from using the synonym strategy, a respondents with the initial L also illustrated the use of the through translation strategy. The photovoice below tells it:



Figure 9. Blossoming flower symbol of an open mind

The caption for the photo says, "This is a photo of a blossoming flower in my yard. The flower represents my understanding that has opened up after learning the translation strategies by Peter Nermark. It's as if my mind opened up because I found a strategy to help me in the translation process. When I find the names of a particular organization or terms in SL, I will use the through translation strategy. For example, when I find the term "Pre-service teachers" in one of the teaching materials shared by my lecturer, I will translate it into *guru pra jabatan* in TL."

Looking back at Newmark's theory (1988), they used the through translation strategy. This strategy was also popularized by Vinay and Darbelnet (1958) under the name calque. According to them, this strategy is a kind of borrowing from SL, but still with the structure of the TL. This is in accordance with what L and S did. They translated the terms word by word but adjusted the structure to the TL. It was based on how the terms were known in the TL.

Shift or Transposition

Shift or transposition strategy was disclosed in a photovoice belonging to a respondent with the initial R.



Figure 10. Similar drink but have different tastes

The caption of the photo says, "These are pictures of drinks that are similar, but not the same. If I didn't choose the lemon one, then I chose the orange one. I photographed this with an eye-level perspective, although it is actually an unattractive angel. I think this is the right image to represent myself in solving the difficulty of translating. Besides using synonyms, I also use shift translation when I feel that the translation becomes difficult to understand. For example, when I translated the sentence "The participants were asked to take more photos" in the journal shared by my lecturer. I changed the plural word in the sentence to singular because, if I translated it literally, the sentence would seem strange. Therefore, I translated it into *Peserta diminta untuk mengambil lebih banyak foto.*"

Based on Newmark's theory, it can be concluded that R changed the type of word in the sentence. This was in line with Vinay and Darbelnet's (1958) theory, which argued that transposition involves moving from one grammatical category to another without changing the meaning of the text or message. It was in line with what R did. R translated the words "the participants" and "photos" in SL, which are plural, into *peserta* and *foto* in TL, which are singular. It changed the language rules in SL.

Reduction

The respondent with the initial I exhibited a reduction strategy by eliminating a word in the TL to make the translation results more comprehensible. The photovoice below displays it:



Figure 11. Sunset symbol of happiness

The photo's caption reads, "This is a photo I took at sunset. The scene is more beautiful because of the sunlight. It represents my happy feeling of being enlightened in translating English texts. After learning the translation strategies by Peter Newmark, I can apply them to help me during the translation process. I use the reduction strategy by deleting some words without losing their original meaning. For example, when I read one of the journals shared by my lecturer in class. There was a sentence "They have not yet exposed the issue in much detail, especially in an emergency situation" and then I translated it into *Mereka belum memberitakn persoalan ini secara rinci, terutama dalam situasi darurat.*"

Based on Newmark's theory, the sentence already applied the reduction strategy. This is also in line with Molina and Albir's (2002) theory, which said that this strategy hides SL information items in the TL. This is in line with the example given by I, when I removed the word "much" from the sentence. It was because the

word "detail" was enough to provide an understanding of the meaning of the sentence in the TL. The word was removed in the TL to make the sentence more efficient. However, the removal of the word did not lose its original meaning in the SL.

Paraphrase

The paraphrase strategy came to light through the use of a respondent identified as I. It's shown in the photovoice that follows:



Figure 12. Sunset symbol of happiness

In the photo's caption, it says "This is a photo I took at sunset. The scene is more beautiful because of the sunlight. It represents my happy feeling of being enlightened in translating English texts. After learning the translation strategies by Peter Newmark, I can apply them to help me during the translation process. When I feel that my translated text is stiff and uncomfortable to read, I will use the paraphrase strategy. When using this strategy, I don't just transfer the meaning word by word but really understand the core message in the SL. The translation results with this strategy will be more natural, easy to understand, and in keeping with the original message. For example, when I translated the sentence "The classroom is shown at the center of the complex of force, time, and space-bound", I paraphrased it into "Classrooms have high complexity. The activities carried out are tied to a certain time and space". Then, I wrote it down in Indonesian to be *Ruang kelas mempunyai kompleksitas yang tinggi. Kegiatan yang dilakukan terikat pada ruang dan waktu tertentu.*"

Looking back at Newmark's (1988) theory, I had applied the paraphrase strategy. It is also popularized by Molina and Albir (2002) under the name amplification. According to them, amplification is the translation strategy when the translator adds details and information that are not formulated in the ST. It can be information or explicative paraphrasing. This is what I did in the translation process. The sentence was changed into an active sentence. I also divided the sentence into two sentences. This shows that I added information with I's own sentence based on the meaning contained in the SL.

Couplets

Aside from employing the previously discussed strategies, respondents with the initials I also used a couplets strategy by combining two different procedures. It is illustrated by the photovoice that follows:



Figure 13. Sunset symbol of happiness

There is a caption next to it that reads, "This is a photo I took at sunset. The scene is more beautiful because of the sunlight. It represents my happy feeling of being enlightened in translating English texts. After learning the translation strategies by Peter Newmark, I can apply them to help me during the translation process. When I encounter a word that has the same spelling in SL and TL but has a different pronunciation, I will use two strategies to translate the word. For example, when I translate the words "data" and "semi" in the sentence "Using narrative inquiry, the data were collected through semi-structured interviews and observations". I used transference and naturalization strategies. The sentence became *Dengan menggunakan metode narrative inquiry, data penelitian diambil melalui wawancara semi struktur dan observasi.*"

The case was in line with Newmark's (1988) theory. I used a combination of two strategies, namely transference and naturalization, in the words "data" and "semi." The words maintained the morphology in SL but adapted the pronunciation of the word in TL.

Addition

The respondent I also used addition strategy which involves adding information to the target text that wasn't explicitly present in the source text. The photovoice that follows served as examples of it:



Figure 14. Sunset symbol of happiness

It follows with a caption that reads, "This is a photo I took at sunset. The scene is more beautiful because of the sunlight. It represents my happy feeling of being enlightened in translating English texts. After learning the translation strategies by Peter Newmark, I can

apply them to help me during the translation process. When I translate, I often add some words to SL sentences. For example, when I translated the sentence "Using narrative inquiry, the data were collected through semi-structured interviews and observations" into *Dengan menggunakan metode narrative inquiry, data penelitian diambil melalui wawancara semi struktur dan observasi* in TL. I added the word *penelitian* after the word *data* to clarify the information."

Based on Newmark's theory (1988), I has used the strategy of addition. The words *dengan* and *penelitian* were added to the TL. These words were added to the sentence to get a better understanding of the reader. However, this addition did not change the original meaning of the SL.

CONCLUSION

In looking ahead, translators will have an important role to play in a globalized society that is increasingly dependent on technology. However, despite the growing technological advancements, human skills will always be needed. It is because translation is not just about transforming one language into another. A deep understanding of the situation and context of the language is also necessary. Therefore, this research can be used by educators as a reference to identify the difficulties faced by their students in translating academic texts. Therefore, they can guide their students to find the right strategies by using different types of difficulties and prevent such difficulties happened to their students. Through the use of photovoice study, the students enjoyed engaging with the photovoice process in this research. Therefore, the researchers were able to obtain more in-depth information about the types of difficulties faced and the translation strategies used by the students in translating academic text. However, it could not see directly the process of the translation process. Therefore, future researchers would need more supportive methods to get information. In conducting their research, future researchers can utilize the case study as a research design by directly observing the learning activities of translation courses.

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