RELIGIOUS EXPRESSIONS AS A MINORITY OF THE MAIN CHARACTER IN *THE RELUCTANT FUNDAMENTALIST* (2012)

A GRADUATING PAPER

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MOTTO

وَعَسَىٰ أَن تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۖ وَعَسَىٰ أَن تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَّكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّـهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

But perhaps you hate a thing and it's good for you. And perhaps you love a thing

and it's bad for you. But Allah knows, and you do not know.

-Al-Baqarah (2:216)-

"I can do this all day"

-Captain America: The First Avengers-

"Looks can be deceiving"

-Changez Khan, The Reluctant Fundamentalist (2012)-

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this graduation paper to:

My beloved father, Rudi Haryanto, S.E.

My beloved mother, Wina Ningsih

My beloved little sisters: Nayla Noviana Latifah, Aqila Hasna Fajriyah, Mikayla

Maira Husna

My partner throughout my life

All of my friends

All the readers

and Myself

VALIDATION

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Atas perhatiannya, kami mengucapkan terima kasih.

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A FINAL PROJECT STATEMENT

I certify that this graduate paper is definitely my own work. I am completely responsible for the content of this graduating paper. Other researcher's opinion or finding included in this research is quoted or cited in accordance with ethical standards.

Yogyakarta, August 15th 2024

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The Researcher,

Hafiz Khoerus Syifa

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ABSTRACT

This research shows how language reveals a person's religious identity by paying attention to the language construction used. This study analyzes through the use of language in the formation of religious identity by taking the problem through the main character Changez Khan in the *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* movie by Mira Nair. Changez Khan uses language to show his religious identity and defend himself from discrimination as a result of the 9/11 tragedy in America. Data in the form of Changez's speech utterances are analyzed by applying Thornborrow's theory of linguistic identity (2004) and Yule's theory of reference (1996). This research uses qualitative descriptive method. This research shows that there is a construction of Changez's religious identity which is shown through personal identity, group identity, and linguistic variation. In the construction of personal identity, the name and naming practices and greeting system show Changez as a Muslim. Group identity construction consists of identity and representation as well as in-group and out-group. For identity and representation, the theory of reference by George Yule (1996) is explained. The in-group and out-group analyze Changez's code-switching and behavior that shows that he is a Muslim. For linguistic variation, there is an explanation of stylistic changes that construct Changez's religious identity through code switching.

Keywords: *Language, Identity, Religious Identity, The Reluctant Fundamentalist (2012)*

**RELIGIOUS EXPRESSIONS AS A MINORITY OF THE MAIN
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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini menunjukkan cara bahasa mengungkap identitas keagamaan seseorang dengan memperhatikan konstruksi bahasa yang digunakan. Penelitian ini menganalisis melalui penggunaan bahasa dalam pembentukan identitas keagamaan dengan mengambil permasalahan melalui tokoh utama Changez Khan dalam film *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* karya Mira Nair. Changez Khan menggunakan bahasa untuk menunjukkan identitas agamanya serta mempertahankan diri dari tindakan diskriminasi dampak tragedi 9/11 di Amerika. Data berupa ujaran ujaran Changez dianalisis dengan menerapkan teori identitas linguistik Thornborrow (2004) dan teori referensi Yule (1996). Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif. Penelitian ini menunjukkan hasil bahwa terdapat konstruksi identitas keagamaan Changez yang ditunjukkan melalui identitas personal, identitas kelompok, dan variasi kebahasaan. Dalam konstruksi identitas personal, nama dan praktik penamaan serta sistem sapaan menunjukan Changez sebagai seorang muslim. Konstruksi identitas kelompok terdiri dari identitas dan representasi serta kelompok dalam dan kelompok luar. Untuk identitas dan representasi dijelaskan dengan teori reference oleh George Yule (1996). Dalam kelompok dalam dan kelompok luar menganalisis alih kode dan perilaku Changez yang menunjukan bahwa di adalah seorang muslim. Untuk variasi kebahasaan, terdapat penjelasan tentang perubahan gaya bahasa yang mengkonstruksi identitas keagamaan Changez melalui alih kode.

Kata Kunci: *Bahasa, Identitas, Identitas Keagamaan, The Reluctant Fundamentalist (2012)*

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background of Study

Language plays a crucial role in distinguishing social groups and shaping their unique identities. According to Alek (2018) language emerges as a key characteristic that distinguishes social groups, allowing each group to understand its unique identity. Particularly in certain social circles, individuals prioritize language as an important aspect of their social identity, not just as a linguistic structure. Language can bring us closer to people who share the same language and culture, while highlighting our differences with those who are different.

The relevance of research on the relationship between language and identity plays a very crucial role, as language not only functions as a means of communication but also as a marker of identity that reflects a person's ethnicity, nationality, social class, gender, and profession. According to Bulan (2019), besides functioning as a means of communication between communities, language can also be used as a tool to identify one's identity. This research is important to understand how the language we use can influence the way we represent ourselves and how others perceive us. For many people, their mother tongue is an important part of their identity, reflecting their connection to their cultural heritage and community.

In Heidegger's (as cited in Reiginayossi & Sitorus, 2023) perspective, language not only conveys objective meaning, but also shapes one's worldview and self-identity. Language can represent the religious identity of a person, group, or

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society where religion is related to human association with other humans and their environment (Depdiknas as cited in Herniti, 2015). According to Herniti (2015), a language is considered to have high dignity when used in the religious realm. Religion also includes human relationships with God, humans with humans, and humans with the universe.

In the current era, interacting with language is mostly finds through exploring the meaning of a movie. Currently, there are many films that raise various themes by highlighting the use of various languages that play an important role in answering problems regarding the character's identity. One of them is a political thriller movie that raises the theme of identity is The Reluctant Fundamentalist. The movie is based on the 2007 novel of the same name by Moshin Hamid. The movie tells the story of life in America after the 9/11 tragedy about the impact of a terrorist attack on a Pakistani man and the treatment he received in the form of discrimination from the local police in reaction to the attack.

As cited in IMDb website (*The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, 2012) *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* movie was released in 2012. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* movie is particularly interesting to study because it shows how language affects the way people perceive the religious identity of the main character, Changez Khan. In this movie, the language used by Changez Khan to talk about his faith not only reflects his own views, but also affects the way others understand and judge him. This happens because their language creates an incomplete or unfair picture of Changez's religion, often leading the audience to believe that the religion is a source of problems or threats. In other words, the way

others describe Changez and his religion can lead viewers to have a false or inaccurate view of what Changez actually understands or believes. The movie shows how language can clarify or even change the way a person is perceived based on their beliefs.

The main character, Changez, who grew up in Pakistan, was confronted with stereotypes and prejudices about Islam in the United States. As a minority, Changez is required to live with and maintain her personal identity (Nair, 2012). In daily conversations, he prefers to show his identity as a Pakistani Muslim when interacting and discussing matters related to religion with others. This is deliberately done by Changez to construct his religious identity in a foreign country.

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Fig 1.1 Changez explains about Iddat

Changez: "People back home have things called *Iddat*. That a woman is allowed to mourn her husband for four months and ten days."

The data above illustrates the use of language that represents the main character, Changez. As a Muslim, Changez explains about the *Iddat* period in Islam,

which is the mourning period required for a Muslim woman after the death of her husband for four months and ten days. This context shows how Changez is trying to utilize Islamic teachings to bridge cultural and emotional differences.

The impact of Changez Khan revealing and constructing his religious identity with other characters through the language used daily makes the protagonist experience discrimination because he is quite open that he adheres to Islam. However, despite the attitude of the American police who detained him several times, Changez Khan still admits that he loves America as a place where he studies and works. Even at the end of the movie, he confesses his love for America in front of the journalist, Lincoln.

The researcher is oriented towards Thornborrow's (2004) theory that reveals the importance of language use in shaping individual and social identity is not only related to the use of a particular dialect or code to express one's identity. It also includes the way we use language to communicate and interact with each other (Thornborrow in Thomas et al., 2004: 159). The theory focusses on the use of language to construct the identity of main character, Changez Kham, in the movie *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*.

This research is important to uncover how the dynamics of language use affect the construction of individual and group identities in various social contexts. This deeper understanding can make important contributions to the fields of linguistics, sociolinguistics and cultural studies, and can be used to develop policies that are more inclusive and sensitive to language and identity diversity. In addition, this study's focus on sociolinguistics and qualitative research approach adds depth

to the analysis of language and identity, thus making a significant contribution to the field of linguistics.

This research discusses how language can construct religious identity in the movie *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* with several objectives. The integration-interconnection approach through two scientific fields used to study this research, where in studying religion, another science is needed, namely the sociolinguistics to understand it, because science and religion are interrelated and complementary. So, looking at dualistic things holistically or thinking thoroughly by considering several aspects is very important so that it can be flexible (Saftri & Sa'dudin, 2019).

The purpose of this research is to analyses two aspects of language and religious identity of the main character in the film *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. First, this research study how language can be used to construct the expression of religious identity especially by the main character in the movie. This is an interesting topic to research because language plays an important role in expressing one's religious identity in movies.

Second, this research focus on the language use of the main character in the movie *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* who experiences discrimination because of his religious identity due the 9/11 tragedy and makes him have to defend himself by convincing the American police. This is interesting to study because it can provide insight into the influence of culture and social context on the use of language and religious identity of main character in films. Therefore, this research broad the reader's understanding of how language and religious identity are intertwined and influence each other in the context of movies.

1.2   Research Question

Building upon the explanation provided in the background of the study, this research aims to address the following questions:

a.   In what ways does the language used in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* shape the construction of religious identity?

b.   . In what manner does the protagonist employ language to resist discrimination as a member of a minority group?

1.3   Objectives of Study

Based on the research question above, there are the objectives of the study of this research. The first is how can language construct the expression of religious identity in the main character of *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* movie. The second is to find out the main character's use of language to defend himself from discrimination in America.

1.4   Scope of Study

Linguistic identification, namely language and religious identity is the focus of this research which is seen in the movie *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, where religion becomes one aspect of social identity included in sociolinguistics research. Religious identity that refers to Muslim identity in this study. An individual is encouraged to use language that reflects his identity in seeing situations and relationships (LaBelle as cited in Mooney & Peccei, 2011). in this study, location (place) and relationships (contact with others) to show the use of language in constructing religion. In addition, this study also explores how the use of language

can construct the main character's identity to defend himself from discrimination as a minority due to the 9/11 tragedy he received in this film.

1.5 Significance of Study

The purpose of this study is to increase readers' knowledge about linguistics, especially sociolinguistics studies. This research can reveal how language can construct religious identity by using Thornborrow's identity theory (2004) taken through data in the movie *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. This research also reveals the use of language by the main character who constructs his religious identity as an effort to defend himself when he is discriminated against in America.

By employing the theory of linguistic identity, this research contributes to the researcher's comprehension of how language is employed to convey social identity. The researcher expects that this research can be used as a reference for researchers who want to examine the same topic on the next occasion. In addition, it is also expected that this research can make a significant contribution to the advancement of linguistic science, as well as society's awareness of linguistic phenomena.

1.6 Literature Review

The research topic centers on analyzing the characters' speech expressions in the film *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2012). It seems that there are previous studies that discuss the movie *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* as an object and its dialog as a study. Some previous studies discussing language and identity were also finds by the researcher. These studies, which discussed in the following paragraphs, focus on the relationship between language and identity.

The first previous research is the Graduating Paper of one of the English literature students of UIN Sunan kalijaga entitled "Religious Identity in TV Series Ramy Season One" by Ahmad Rifat Fikri (Fikri, 2022). This research explores how the main character, Ramy, constructs his religious identity through Joanna Thornborrow's theory of language and identity. It also examines the use of English in referring to religious terms that represent Ramy as a Muslim using George Yule's theory of reference. In addition, this study also analyzes the factors that influence Ramy's preference for English over religious terms, using Dell Hymes' ethnographic theory of communication, with Joanna Thornborrow's theory of language and identity as the main theoretical framework. This previous research is more or less be a reference for advice and suggestion by using the same theory and the object used is also a movie. This research finds differences where the research on the film *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* focuses more on the dialect of the main character, namely in constructing his religion through expressions of identity from the language used implicitly with the help of Thornborrow's identity theory.

The second previous research is "The Use of Language in Constructing Religious Identity Found in Abu Dhabi Romance Webtoon" written by Lia Jumana (Jumana, 2019). This study analyzes the Abu Dhabi Romance webtoon through the construction of language used to present religious identity through how language is used in the minority sphere in South Korea, the majority of which are non-Muslims. The theory used in this research is the theory of linguistic identity by Thornborrow (2004), which is the theory that the author later use in this research. The difference between this previous research is that the object used now is a movie, and the

research on the film *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* is more on the linguistic side where a case of discrimination is presented which makes the character's dialect more implicit to study the expression of identity and makes the use of Thornborrow's identity and language theory more emphasized.

The third research is "Religious Expression of The Main Character in No Sex in The City Novel by Randa Abdel Fattah" by Sita Dian Pratiwi (Pratiwi, 2021). In this study, the researcher examines how the main character, Esma, constructs her religious identity through the language she uses in the novel *No Sex in the City* by Randa Abdel Fattah. The novel addresses the issue that Esma does not present her Muslim identity through religious language. To describe aspects of her religious identity, the researcher uses Thornborrow's identity theory and Yule's reference theory. This study seeks to demonstrate that Esma's religious identity can be discerned through his language, despite the fact that she does not use religious language. There is again a difference between this previous research and the research on the film *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, namely the issue presented is more controversial, which makes the character's dialect more implied to be studied for identity expressions.

The last previous research is from a journal article entitled "*The Reluctant Fundamentalist*: A Quest for Identity" by Dr. Mohammad Ayub Jajja (2013). Within the context of interactions between Americans and Pakistanis, this article explores the topics of mimicry and identity, using a Postcolonial critical approach to analyze the novel. In his book, Mohsin Hamid explores the concept of mimicry and the search for identity among individuals from what is referred a new culture.

The difference with this research is the object and theory used, namely the research of *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* film emphasizes Thornborrow's theory of language and identity. Then in this previous study the data was taken from a novel, while this study the data was taken based on a movie as an object adapted from a novel. In addition, previous research discussed the literary side more than linguistics.

Based on the four literatures that are relevant to this research, there are some differences from this research. From the four literature reviews, the issue raised is not a political issue or a tragedy that makes this research more in need of language comprehension techniques using Thornborrow's theory of language and identity more emphasized, because the main character uses language transplantation as a minority with the main purpose of avoiding and defending himself from a treatment that cornered him, namely discrimination. It is hoped that with the difference between previous research and current research, this can be a material that supports further research to make it better.

1.7   Theoretical Approach

In order to find out the meaning of using language to reveal one's identity, which in this study is the religious identity of the main character. Joanna Thornborrow's theory (2004) is used by researchers to discuss language and identity, also known as linguistic identity, and references Yule's theory (1996).

According to this theory, language use is important for constructing individual or social identity. According to Thornborrow's identity theory (2004), Language plays a crucial role in the construction of religious Identity. through: 1)

The use of names: Naming systems and the use of names to build identity. 2) Use of in-group and out-group: Use of language to mark "in" and "out" groups, building group identity. 3) Linguistic variation: Convergence, maintenance and divergence of language to reinforce identity (Thornborrow as cited in Thomas et al., 2004: 159-168). This research focuses on points one to three, then sets aside the aspects of power and language imperialism, because the focus of researchers is only on the construction of religious identity through the use of language.

The second theory used is Yule's (1996) reference theory. This theory is used to show how language can represent Changez's religious identity. According to Yule (1996: 19), this version of reference includes "intention-to-identify" and "intention-recognition" cooperation. As a result, the researcher determines the representation of Changez's religious identity through the application of these theories. With the application of using these theories, the researcher hopes to explain the language used by the main character, which can help them develop their religious identity. In the next chapter, the two theories present in more detail.

1.8   Methods of Research

1.8.1   Type of Research

In this research, researchers used descriptive qualitative methods as a research method. According to Sugiyono (2013) descriptive qualitative research provides an overview based on the philosophy of post positivism which examine objects with natural conditions factually. Through this descriptive qualitative method, it analyzes the meaning of the language presented by the main character in the film *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. According to Creswell (2018), investigation

and understanding of the importance of individuals or groups is involved in qualitative research in social or human problems. In researching language identity in the *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, this research method is the right method to use in this study. This is because the data collected is based on an understanding of the social problems in the movie and facts that are in accordance with the film documents that have been circulating in the year of its release and on the media platform.

1.8.2 Data Source

Utterances that contain religious identity are collected by researchers in this study in the movie *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2012). directed by Mira Nair, based on the novel story by Mohsin Hamid. The movie was obtained from movie streaming platform Prime Video.

1.8.3 Data Collection Technique

In the research, data serves as an important requirement for obtaining information. According to Creswell (2018), included in the four basic types for collecting qualitative data are the following, qualitative observations, qualitative documents, qualitative interviews, qualitative visuals, and audio materials.. So, in this study, researchers applied it using documentation techniques as a data collection technique. According to Sugiyono (2013), with documentation, we can obtain information by collecting and writing with someone. The document studied in this research is a political thriller movie that raises the theme of identity entitled *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, which was released in 2012.

In using the documentation technique, the researcher made observations in the form of watching and understanding the storyline in the film *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2012) to understand the context of the film to get utterances that contain expressions of religious identity from the main character in the film. After that, the researcher collected and then examined the dialogue between the main character and other characters in the film that contained expressions of identity by screenshotting film panels that could be categorized as religious identity.

1.8.4   Data Analysis Technique

The identity method is used by researchers to analyze the data. According to Zaim (2014), by using determinants from outside the language, the identity method can be used to determine the identity of a language. In analyzing the data, the researcher took the following steps:

1. The researcher identifies all utterances shown in the movie *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*.

2. The researcher categorizes the utterances by using the classification described in Thornborrow's (2004) identity theory which consists of 1) The use of names: Naming systems and System of address, 2) Use of in-group and out-group: building group identity, and 3) Linguistic variation. The construction of group identity consists of identity and representation as well as in-group and out-group. For identity and representation, it is explained by George Yule's (1996) reference theory which involves the depiction of the main character's religious identity.

3. The researcher provides a detailed explanation in the discussion chapter about the development of the main character's religious identity.

4. The researcher concludes the findings and discussion.

1.9   Paper Organization

The researcher describes this research into four parts and contain different topics in each chapter. In the first chapter there is the introduction that offers readers a brief overview of the research. This part consists of nine parts: 1) the background of study, 2) the scope of study, 3) the research question, 4) the objectives of study, 5) significance of study, 6) literature review, 7) the theoretical approach, 8) the research method, and the last 9) paper organization. An explanation of the theoretical framework that discusses Thornborrow's identity theory (2004) and Yule's reference theory (1996) explain in the second chapter. The third chapter is presenting the findings and discussions. Conclusions and suggestions outline in the fourth chapter.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

4.1   Conclusion

Based on the results of the findings and discussion in the research in chapter three, the findings can answer the research questions that have been formulated in chapter one by using the theory of linguistic identity from Joana Thornborrow. To construct religious identity, the role of language takes an important role to show that an individual can be recognized as an individual and part of a group through his utterances. In this context, namely identity as a Muslim.

In analyzing the construction of religious identity on the main character in the film *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2012), the researcher uses Thornborrow's theory of language identity as the main theory to construct language in religious identity and combines it with Yule's theory of reference to show the use of language as a reference to religious language that represents his religious identity. From the research in the previous chapter, the researcher finds 22 utterances as data and focused on analyzing Changez Khan as the main character in this movie, how he constructs his religious identity with personal identity, group identity, and language variation.

The appearance of religious identity began to appear through a Pakistani minority who made religious utterances in America. The director's point of view is also used by researchers in describing the character of a Pakistani Muslim to collect data. Through these conditions, utterances that produce religious identity are

produced. The problem that arises in this research is the use of language by Changez to defend himself from the discrimination he received as a minority due to the 9/11 tragedy which made him cornered, so he gave rise to utterances containing defense by constructing his love for America.

4.2   Suggestion

A branch of linguistics, sociolinguistics, discusses the language used by society. Sociolinguistics also studies language and identity to build identity. This complex branch of science can look at certain societies to find out the use of language. Language and identity are part of sociolinguistics, where identity is a phenomenon in society that has been discussed in a case study by previous researchers.

This research has limitations in its focus on the main character's religious identity in the movie *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2012), while other aspects of identity and language may not be explored in depth. Criticisms of this paper include the lack of exploration of how other theories in sociolinguistics can be applied to the context of this movie and its relevance to real social phenomena. For future research, it is suggested that researchers consider using more comprehensive linguistic theories and explore more interesting topics such as the role of multi-cultural identities in film or other media, as well as how linguistic identities interact with more complex social dynamics. Future research is expected to broaden the scope by exploring broader contexts and utilizing additional theories to enrich the understanding of the dynamics of language and identity.

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