

## **Representation of Women in the Film Marlina the Murderer in Four Acts: A Case Study Through Critical Discourse Analysis**

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**ABSTRACT:** This study discusses critical discourse analysis which aims to analyze the forms of gender discrimination and how women are represented in the film Marlina the murderer in four acts this study uses the Sara Mills model of discourse analysis by looking at the position of the subject-object and the position of the reader in the text. The research method uses descriptive qualitative, data collection with documentation studies with media content analysis. The results showed that the position of the subject was Marlina and Novi who described the position of men as objects. And the position of the object is Marlina and Novi. As objects, they are the result of the identification of the subject who describes them in their interpretation.

**Keywords:** Representation, women, gender discrimination, critical discourse analysis

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## INTRODUCTION

Women are often underestimated by being seen as weak, emotional, working in the kitchen, and taking care of the house, even women are seen and considered as objects of sexuality in a relationship. This reason causes women to be seen as second-class humans under men, causing women to have no right to make choices for their own lives (Subhan, 2004:39). Likewise, women in the mass media are often depicted as male victims and as passive, gentle, submissive, patient, and loyal. The mass media in practice participates in preserving, strengthening, and even exacerbating gender inequality against women in society. Media coverage presents an idea or ideas about patriarchal values and an understanding of persistently erroneous gender perspectives. Women in the media are positioned in a position that stands out visually but is marginalized in meaning. In the end, the function of the media is an agent of gender socialization that perpetuates the practices of gender injustice. Gender inequality in the mass media is not only reflected in advertisements or films, but also in the news that the media continues to construct.

One form of communication technology that is currently rife and much favored by the public is film. Films build various stereotypes about women, where the stereotype that develops in today's society is that women are physically weaker than men. This stereotype causes the position of women in the media to be exploited negatively. Women are seen as weak and powerless. Society's view of the stereotype is that men occupy the area on the left with an active, civilized, rational, and intelligent identity while women are on the right with a passive, emotional, close to nature, and less intelligent image. This is what causes women to be easily exploited by the media (Mills, 2001). Meanwhile, patriarchy is created by men in the form of a system of structures and institutions to maintain and re-create the subordination of women and men's power.

The prevailing culture in society in terms of gender roles, attributes, and behavior often causes gender injustice or gender discrimination in which one of the sexes (male or female) becomes the victim. This happens because of the beliefs and justifications that have been instilled throughout human civilization in various forms and ways that befell both parties, usually more experienced by people. womanThe forms of gender discrimination that often occur in families and communities include (1) Stereotypes, namely the labeling of one gender which is often negative, (2) Subordination, namely the assumption that one gender is considered inferior or its position is subordinated to the gender. another gender, (3) Marginalization, namely the condition or process of marginalizing one gender from the mainstream or main job that can lead to poverty, (4) Double burden, namely the treatment of one gender in which they work far more than the other gender. others, (5) Violence is an attack on a person's physical or psychological. The violence does not only involve physical (rape, beating) but also non-physical (sexual harassment, threats, coercion) that can occur in the household, workplace, and public places (Sasongko, 2009).

This research is based on a phenomenon in the area of Sumba (NTT), about igniting the spirit of a woman's gender struggle where women struggle to realize equality and justice for their rights. One culture that still has a high level of the

patriarchal system is the culture found in East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) which we can see in the film *Marlina Si Killer in Four Acts*. One of the Indonesian films that carry the theme of feminism is *Marlina the Murderer in Four Acts*. This film gave birth to a new genre in the Indonesian film industry called *satay western*. *Marlina the Murderer in Four Acts* is a film that shows something different where this film can break the film in Indonesia and is considered controversial. Women in this film are depicted as sadistic and tough women, as shown in one scene where the female character in this film beheads and carries the head of a man who raped her. Women in carrying out their roles in society depend on the culture of the society in which they live, in this film *Marlina* plays a Sumba widow who lives alone in the middle of a savanna. *Marlina* is described as different from Sumba's widows in general, namely, Sumba women are described as creatures whose position is below men, whereas patriarchal culture still applies to the people of Sumba.

This study will use the method of Critical Discourse Analysis, namely the Sara Mills Model Discourse Analysis. The researcher uses Mills' discourse analysis method to try to show how women are depicted and represented about how a certain person, group, idea, or opinion is presented in a text (Mills, 1997). The Sara Mills model of discourse analysis is an approach in discourse analysis in the field of language research that provides an explanation of the appearance of a text and criticizes the characters that will be displayed, whether they are in the position of the subject of storytelling, namely telling themselves and having the possibility of depicting the world according to their perceptions and opinions, objects storytelling is that it is not only unable to present itself, but also their presence and representation are presented and displayed by other actors, or readers in the novel. As a result, some parties position themselves as subjects, telling themselves, but some parties only act as objects (Eriyanto, 2001:200).

Research on women's representation has been carried out by several other studies, namely research conducted by Adriani, Muttalib, and Irmayani (2020). Salafia Putri Al Huda Islamic Boarding School along with his mother and wife. The women depicted in this film are positioned as intelligent, beautiful, and independent human beings, regardless of all forms of oppression in the name of gender, and able to show their dignity as women. In this film, *Berkalung Turban* proves that women are not weak but men and women are created with the same potential abilities or usually gender equality which is shown in the cut scenes and dialogues in the film.

In addition, there is research conducted by Lestari, and Suprpto (2020). The results of this study indicate that the value of feminism in this film is more about women who have fought for gender equality in the economic field, such as the women in this character who work to finance their families. Such as working as a textile worker to meet household needs and maternity costs, as a prostitute to treat cervical cancer she suffered, and *ningsih* who works in an office to support her family.

Based on previous research, the difference between this research and previous research is that this research focuses more on subject position, object position, and reader position on gender discrimination through Sara Mills'

discourse analysis model, while previous research only looks at how women are represented. The thing that they have in common is that they both study women. Meanwhile, the problem discussed in this research is what are the forms of gender discrimination that represent women depicted in the film *Marlina The Murderer in Four Acts*.

## **THEORETICAL REVIEW**

### **Discourse Analysis**

Discourse analysis is the study of the structure of communication messages or the study of the various functions of language (pragmatics). The term discourse is used by various groups, including those with an interest in language, communication, and literature. Discourse analysis is a relatively new field of study that emerged in the 1970s. Brown and Yule (2014, p. 13) argue that sociolinguistics defines discourse by emphasizing the structure of social interaction that will be discussed. Their descriptions, which emphasize the characteristics of the social context, can be classified sociologically. According to Brown and Yule (2014, p. 9), the following are the characteristics and characteristics of discourse: 1) discourse can take the form of a series of spoken and written words or a series of speech acts; 2) discourse expresses something (subject); 3) the presentation is orderly, systematic, coherent, and complete with all supporting situations; 4) discourse has a unified mission, and 5) discourse consists of segmental and non-segmental elements.

Discourse analysis focuses on the “how” of a text or message of communication. We can determine how a message is communicated through discourse analysis. Syamsuddin (2008, p. 50) asserts that discourse analysis has the following characteristics: 1) Discourse analysis discusses the rules of language use in society (Rule of use), 2) discourse analysis is an effort to understand the meaning of speech in its context. , texts and situations, 3) discourse analysis is an attempt to understand a series of utterances through semantic interpretation, 4) discourse analysis is related to understanding language in language acts (what is said from what is done), and 5) discourse analysis related to understanding language in language action (what is said from what is done).

### **Elements of Discourse**

Discourse as general speech consists of various components. Tarigan (in Nadliroh 2010, p. 15) separates discourse into the following components:

- 1) The theme is the subject of an essay, both oral and written. This theme is developed with coherent sentences so that it will give birth to a coherent and coherent discourse.
- 2) Linguistic elements include words, clauses, phrases, and sentences,

- 3) Discourse context is formed by various elements: situation, speaker, listener, time, place, scene, topic, event, message form, code, and channel. Discourse context includes:
- 4) The physical context that describes the place where the use of language occurs in a community, the objects that are presented in the communication event, and the actions or behavior of the roles in the communication.
- 5) Epithemic context or background knowledge that is equally known by speakers and listeners.
- 6) The linguistic context consists of sentences or utterances that precede certain sentences or utterances in a communication event.
- 7) Social context, namely relationships and social settings that complement the relationship between the speaker (speaker) and the listener (speech partner).
- 8) Meaning and intent. Something that exists in an utterance or language is called meaning. The intention is something that is outside the speech seen from the point of view of the speaker, the person speaking
- 9) Cohesion and coherence are harmonious relationships between one element and another in the discourse to create a good (coherent) understanding. Sentences or words used are interrelated and support each other to eat. One meaning connects the other meanings sequentially. Thus, there is a discourse that is cohesive, coherent, and there is a discourse that is not cohesive and coherent (Djajasudarma 2006, p.47).

## METHODOLOGY

This type of research is a qualitative descriptive study with the collection of document study data with media content analysis. The object of this research is the film *Marlina Si Killer in Four Acts* which was produced at the end of 2014 and aired in theaters on November 16, 2017, with a duration of 93 minutes.

The data obtained in this study is the dialogue text in the film *Marlina The Killer in Four Acts*. The analyzed text is a text that contains representations of women. The source of this research data was obtained through online media, namely the HOOQ streaming application by watching the film *Marlina The Killer in Four Acts*.

The data collection technique was carried out using researchers watching, understanding, recording, and identifying gender discrimination in the character in the film *Marlina The Murderer in Four Acts* by using a discourse analysis of the Sara Mills model which includes, the position of the subject on the character against gender discrimination, the position of the object on the character against gender discrimination, and the position of the reader on the character against gender discrimination.

The data analysis technique used by the researcher is according to the theory of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014), which is to analyze the data with the following steps: (1) Classifying the data that has been identified regarding gender discrimination in the character in the film *Marlina Si Killer in Four Acts* using analysis discourse model of Sara Mills. (2) Analyzing gender

discrimination data on characters in the film *Marlina The Murderer in Four Acts* by using the Sara Mills model of discourse analysis whether they are in the position of the subject, object, and reader. (3) Interpreting the results of the analysis of gender discrimination in the characters in the film *Marlina The Murderer in Four Acts* by using the Sara Mills model of discourse analysis. (4) Concluding the research results. The technique of testing the validity of the data can also be done by using the triangulation technique.

## **RESULTS**

The results of this study are divided into several parts, namely the analysis of the position of the subject, the analysis of the position of the object, and the analysis of the position of the reader. Then the researcher will also describe the forms of gender discrimination that represent women in the film.

The feminist view can be seen from the main character played by a woman named Marlina and also a supporting character named Novi. The film provides a separate picture for a woman. How women are shown in a series of pictures (scenes) and texts is the main research in the film *Marlina The Murderer in Four Acts*.





## **DISCUSSION**

### **3.1 Subject Position**

The position of the subject in the film *Marlina The Murderer in Four Acts* can be seen in several cut scenes and player dialogues. The position of the subject who has a high position can present himself and others. This is what determines how the structure of the text, as well as how these meanings are treated in the text as a whole.

The following is a snippet of the scene that describes the position of the subject in the film *Marlina The Murderer in Four Acts*.

Table 1. Subject Position Data Finding Framework

No	Scene	Dialogue text
1	 <p>Scene 1 Marlina points a machete at the driver</p>	<p>Truck driver: <i>"Turun! Kau tidak bisa naik!"</i>  Marlina: <i>"Antarkan aku ke kantor polisi"</i></p>
2	 <p>Scene 2 Marlina and Novi are urinating</p>	<p>Novi: <i>"Padahal kau tau sendiri nafsu perempuan hamil itu bagaimana. Mama mertua saya bilang kalau bayi itu sungsang, berarti kau tukang selingkuh. Kau ini perempuan jangan kau terlalu bernafsu."</i></p>
3	 <p>Scene 3 Novi tells Marlina to admit her mistake</p>	<p>Novi: <i>"Kau bisa ikut saya saja kau bisa ke gereja mengakui kau berdosa."</i>  Marlina: <i>"Saya tidak merasa berdosa."</i></p>
4	 <p>Scene 4 Marlina talking to Topan</p>	<p>Marlina: <i>"Sama dengan anak mama, tetapi anak mama laki-laki."</i>  Servant boy: <i>"Mama saya kasih nama saya Topan supaya saya kuat seperti laki-laki."</i></p>

In the scene above, women are the subjects who tell the position of men. The female subjects were Marlina and Novi. However, in some scenes, they also tell themselves, especially how women can fight, be brave, and be tough in fighting for justice for themselves.

In scene 1 Marlina points a machete at the truck driver to take him to the police station. Marlina gets gender discrimination in the form of marginalization and is positioned as a subject. In the dialogue text, it is clear how the treatment Marlina received was because she was carrying a human head. Seeing Marlina carrying Mark's head, the truck driver forbade Marlina to ride his truck because it was considered disturbing. However, Marlina was not afraid, instead of pointing a machete at the truck driver and threatening to take her to the police station. In the text "Take me to the police station" the sentence indicates Marlina can be positioned as a subject determined by the use of the pronoun "I".

Scene 2 Marlina and Novi are urinating. Novi gets gender discrimination in the form of stereotypes and is positioned as a subject. The dialogue text shows how Novi gets gender discrimination from her in-laws. Novi is accused of having an affair and causing the child in Novi's womb to be breech. His mother-in-law also accused him of being too passionate while he had never had an affair.

In scene 3 Marlina tells all that happened to Novi that she was raped and that she had also killed all the robbers. However, Novi suggested that Marlina not report it to the police and instead pray at the church to admit that she was sorry for her sins. But Marlina felt innocent

In the text above, Marlina gets gender discrimination in the form of stereotypes and is positioned as a subject. Why does Novi, who is a fellow woman, even ask Marlina to admit her mistake? Why didn't Novi defend Marlina, who was murdered in self-defense? Why doesn't Novi help Marlina get justice for the robbery and rape that Marlina experienced? In the sentence "I don't feel guilty." Marlina tried to defend herself for what she did just because she wanted to defend herself. The sentence indicates that Marlina can be positioned as a subject determined by the use of the pronoun "I".

Scene 4 Marlina is talking to a girl named Topan who is writing the food order. In the scene above there is the sentence "so that I am strong like a man" there is gender discrimination in the form of stereotypes. The sentence illustrates that even a woman must be strong just like a man because strength is not only possessed by men. Indirectly, the sentence made Marlina strengthen her heart and mentality to get justice for her stolen property and honor. And the sentence also explains that women must be just as strong as men.




### 3.2 Object Position

The position of objects in the film *Marlina the Murderer in Four Acts* can be seen from several cut scenes and dialogues of the players. The actor whose existence is told by another actor (subject) makes him unable to display and tell himself in real terms. The position of this object is the result of the definition of the subject who describes it from his perspective or point of view. Thus, the actors who become objects who are marginalized in their position when shown in a film are brave.

Table 2. Object Position Data Finding Framework

No	Scene	Dialogue text
1	 <p>Scene 1 Mark is seducing Marlina</p>	Markus: <i>"Kasihan sekali kau. Janda tidak boleh galak, sudah baik kalau ada laki-laki yang masih mau. Jangan terlalu pilih-pilih"</i> .
2	 <p>Scene 2 Mark knows Marlina's debt</p>	Markus: <i>"Kau bilang bapak sedang keluar. Dari tadi sudah duduk manis disitu. Hutang penguburan yang lalu belum selesai sudah tambah lagi."</i>
3	 <p>Scene 3 Marlina prepares dinner</p>	Markus: <i>"Sebentar lagi tamu-tamu akan datang. Kau masak makan malam untuk tamu."</i>
4	 <p>Scene 3 Marlina serves the robbers</p>	Robber: <i>"Nona ini lebih enak dari masakan istriku tapi sama ibuku kau kalah sedikit. Tapi tetap kau juaranya."</i>
5		

	Scene 5 Markus forces Marlina to undress	Markus: "Kau duduk! Kau buka!" Marlina: "Jangan saya sudah lama tidak (berhubungan). Tidak jangan!"
6	 Scene 6 Novi gets beaten by Umbu	Umbu: "Kenapa tidak lahir juga? Anak kau sungsang makanya tidak mau lahir! Betul sudah omongan mereka. Saya capek cari uang, tapi kau tidak tahan kau punya nafsu. Ingin tidur dengan orang lain."  Umbu: "Kau berani yah!" Kalau begitu kau kasih lahir anak itu sekarang!"

Some of the pictures and dialogues above show that the objects of the story are Marlina and Novi. As objects, they are the result of the identification of the subject who describes them in their interpretation. The subject is Mark, the robbers, and also Umbu.

In scene 1, Markus is seen seducing Marlina. As a widow, Marlina gets unfavorable views and treatment from a man. Marlina received gender discrimination in the form of stereotypes and was positioned as an object. This can be seen in the following dialogue text:

In the dialogue text, there is the sentence "I'm so sorry. Widows can't be fierce" showing how Marlina gets negative labeling against her because she is a Widow. The sentence indicates that Marlina can be positioned as an object determined by the use of the pronoun "you".

Scene 2 Mark finds out that Marlina's husband is dead by seeing her husband's corpse sitting comfortably with only layers of cloth wrapped around it. In the text above, Marlina gets discrimination in the form of marginalization. The crush of poverty made Marlina unable to pay for her husband's funeral. The husband was forced to become a mummy wrapped in cloth in the corner of his house. The sentence that was conveyed by Markus made Marlina marginalized in terms of the economy. Marlina can be positioned as an object determined by the use of the pronoun "you".

Scene 3 Markus tells Marlina to prepare dinner for him and seven of his friends who will come to Marlina's house. In the text above, Marlina gets gender discrimination in the form of a double burden and is positioned as an object. Markus treats Marlina as he pleases, making Marlina work not only to serve her lust but also to prepare dinner for Markus and his friends. Marlina can be positioned as an object determined by the use of the pronoun "you".

In scene 4 Marlina is serving the robbers dinner. His homemade chicken soup earned praise from one of the robbers. In the text above, Marlina gets gender discrimination in the form of subordination and is positioned as an object. Marlina's cooking is considered to be tastier than the wife's and the robber's mother's cooking. Positioning and comparisons like that make Marlina and other women not get equality and can make women's positions lower.

In scene 5 Markus forces Marlina to take off her clothes. Markus forces Marlina to follow his orders while Marlina keeps begging not to do that because they haven't been in touch for a long time. In the sentence "You sit down! You open!" it is clear how Marlina gets gender discrimination in the form of violence and is positioned as an object. Marlina is forced to carry out orders she does not want. Marlina can be positioned as an object determined by the use of the pronoun "you".

In scene 6 Novi meets her husband Umbu. Umbu instead beats and accuses Novi of having an affair with someone else, causing the child to be conceived in a breech position and Novi not giving birth either. In the sentence above there is gender discrimination in the form of physical and non-physical violence, namely physical and psychological attacks on Novi who is pregnant but must be slandered and accused of having an affair with someone else. Novi can be positioned as an object determined by the use of the pronoun "you".

### **3.3 Reader Position**

In Sara Mills' discourse analysis, the text is considered as the result of negotiation between the writer and the reader. Readers are placed not only as parties who receive the text but also as parties who participate in transactions as will be seen in the text.

In the film *Marlina the Murderer in Four Acts*, the director places Marlina as the main character. Therefore, the reader or audience identifies himself with Marlina who is the main character in the text.

Although Marlina's character gets a lot of discriminatory treatment, with her determination and courage, she can fight back by killing like beheading and poisoning the robbers to protect her honor. The audience is invited to feel how the fear of a woman whose property and honor are threatened by the arrival of the robbers. The audience is also invited to explore the sorrows that he experienced when he tried to fight the patriarchal system inherent in his environment. He fought the patriarchal culture through legal sensibility and tried to find justice.

Through Marlina's character, it is also clear how women are trapped by the system that shackles them. When men hold power over the prevailing social system. When the system has violated their rights, then there is no other word but to rebel. When rebellion is physically impossible, poison is the way out.

Through the character of Novi, the audience is invited to experience how to be a Sumba woman who is pregnant but never gives birth. The myth that developed in the Sumbanese community is that if a woman is already pregnant but does not give birth, it means that her child is in a breech position, this is because the woman has an affair with someone else.

At the end of the film, there is a scene where Novi gives birth with the help of Marlina normally, it seems to refute the myth. It was proven by Novi being able to give birth to her child normally and the breech position mentioned was not proven. In this scene, the audience is invited to think critically so that they do not easily believe in myths that develop in the community that has not been proven true.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the research above, it can be concluded that 10 scenes and dialogue texts represent women in 5 forms of gender discrimination, namely stereotyping 3 data, subordination 1 data, marginalization 2 data, double burden 2 data, and violence 2 data. Women are represented as beings who are trying to get out of the patriarchal system that shackles them. For the robbers, Marlina is a poor widow, weak and helpless without a man to protect her so they arbitrarily take her property and honor. Even though in a state of not being able to fight back, Marlina has great courage and strength so that she can make plans to defend her honor.

Likewise with Novi, although her parents-in-law and husband accused her of having an affair because she was already pregnant but had not yet given birth, she was able to prove that the myth was not true by giving birth to her child normally. Novi is also able to help Marlina who is being raped by Frans by beheading her.

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