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Language and Gender: A Case Study of Poetry Fragments

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Abstract - Language and gender are two interrelated aspects in linguistic and literary studies. This study aims to analyze the relationship between language and gender in modern Arabic literature, specifically through Nizar Qabbani's verse pieces. Using a Descriptive Qualitative Approach, this study explores how Arabic language represents gender and how cultural norms influence the use of language in literature. The results show that the Arabic language has a gender bias that is reflected in the use of metaphors and sentence structures in Qabbani's verses. The study reveals that Qabbani often uses language to reflect traditional gender views, but also to champion women's rights. This analysis provides insight into the complex relationship between language, culture and gender representation in the context of Arabic literature. From this research, it was found that Nizar Qabbani represented gender with positive things and that he strongly supported the enforcement of gender equality.

Keywords – Gender, Language, Nizar Qabbani.

INTRODUCTION

Language and culture are two inseparable things. Linguistic experts agree that language and culture are closely linked. A very famous study on this subject is the Sapir-Whorf theory which states that the way of thinking or culture of a group of people is determined or influenced by its language structure. Arabic like other languages, has linguistic features that affect gender representation (Jalil & Aminah, 2018).

Language and gender are two interrelated aspects in the study of modern Arabic literature (Rusydi et al., 2023). Language not only functions as a means of communication, but also as a means to represent social reality, including gender reality. In modern Arabic literature, there is a tendency to pay attention to the role and representation of gender in the use of language (Wulandari, 2019). Language ideology in Arabic grammar is a manipulation that contains gender bias. Gender is a perspective that looks at the impact of a person's gender attributes on that person's likelihood of building opportunities, social roles and interactions with opposite gender

attributes. In the use of Arabic, it provides for the difference in the use of words for men and women. From the differences between Arabic and non-Arabic in linguistic structure and meaning, another distinction emerges between muzakkar (masculine) and Mu'annas (feminine) in Arabic nouns (Ahmad, 2021). A differentiator that makes a feminine Arabic noun the same as a non-Arabic noun ('ajam) in terms of its classification value. Language and gender studies focus on how they affect language use.

In the midst of the rapid development of modern linguistics today, Arabic linguists generally still maintain the traditional analysis that has existed, considering that Arabic is the language of the holy book of the Qur'an, persistently maintaining the existing classical rules, so that there are no deviations in the meaning of the language. Therefore, the Arabic language since the beginning of its development still exists today.

There is a very strong link between gender issues (al Ta'nis and al Tazkir) in Arabic and the social life of Arabs. From this we find that the Arabs have great respect for the idea of muzakkar and mu'annas in

detail. Women occupy a great position in their social life. Worrying about the disgrace and fear that befalls women in their family becomes terror in the continuity of the honor of a family. This idea triggered the idea of burying pre-Islamic girls alive among Arabs. In addition to the poverty factor as narrated in QS al-Nahl/16:58.

وَإِذَا بُشِّرَ أَحَدُهُم بِالْأُنثَىٰ ظَلَّ وَجْهُهُ مُسْوَدًّا وَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ

Meaning: *And when one of them is given news of a daughter, his face is black, and he is very angry.*

The position of women is an honor for Arab society. None of them could ignite their anger that made them exert all their abilities except the question of the position of their women. If this is touched, then a great disgrace will tarnish their faces. To wash away this disgrace is to bury the woman's child alive (Januario et al., 2022). In Arabic literary works such as poetry, where poetry is a medium of communication and expression of all aspects of their lives, women are used as an opening and the topic in the opening of their rules becomes a symbol of women's position in Arab society. Likewise, in the legendary stories of Arab heroism, women became a heroic symbol alongside men. They inscribed it in literary works that became evidence. Women also colored their lives and then developed a language culture known in Arabic linguistics, muzzakkar and mu'annas (Qasim, 2015).

Gender is a condition constructed by sociocultural that affects the image of men and women (Ilmiyah, 2019), because that is why it then enters and affects the language as well, but this condition in Arabic itself is a condition that has been inherited from their ancestors of the previous Arab nations, which because of the maximum effort to minimize the existence of gender bias all the propaganda that is deployed is not necessarily possible, whether later it will be accepted by the public or not. Because language is the agreement of the previous peoples which has become their heritage and tradition which cannot be easily constructed just like that (Rizal, 2021).

In literary works, it is often used to dramatize the mistakes of women both in the domestic social environment and in the public world (Nursida, 2015). This can affect the development of an opinion or impression in the minds of the public, one of which is about gender bias and its socialization. The gender bias in question is a deviation that tends to defend one particular party and in this case is a man

by harming other parties, namely women (Rahmawati, 2023). Thus, the occurrence of injustice or inequality in society (Nursida, 2015). In the novel "Sitt Marie Rose" by Etel Adnan, this novel highlights the role of gender in the Lebanese conflict and explores how language is used to construct gender identity. Adnan uses language creatively to hack gender stereotypes and expose the complexity of the relationship between language, power and gender (Cohen-Mor, 2022). As for another novel, the novel "The Yacoubian Building" by Alaa Al Aswany which presents various characters that reflect the diversity of gender experiences in contemporary Egyptian society. Al Aswany uses language carefully to capture the dynamics of gender relations and conflicts in complex urban societies (Halimatusadiah, 2021).

The constructive relationship that is built between Arabic literature and women's issues is an undeniable relationship (Bakar, 2022). The existence of recordings of women's issues in various forms of Arabic literature such as poetry, novels and the like shows that women are an object of Arabic literature that inspires writers to perpetuate them in various works of Arabic literature. From the author's perspective, at least, there are two reasons why women's issues are widely discussed in Arabic literature, in this case there is an effort to seat women as objects of exploitation of Arabic literature where various biological identities in their bodies are used as reinforcements of literary aesthetic values such as a tall body, shoulder-length black hair, the beauty of two sharp eyeballs that shine, and others, as well as efforts to construct women's roles in social life, both constructive and destructive (Barokah, 2023). Those who do this in the locus of Arabic literary works that seek to have a constructive effect can be found, for example, in the works of Nawal el-Saadawi which provide many constructive-critical messages regarding how women rise from their slump in the vortex of patriarchal culture that shackles their basic rights (Bakar, 2022).

Confronting gender stereotypes in learning Arabic involves a number of complex challenges, but it also provides opportunities to create a more inclusive and diverse learning environment. Here are some challenges to consider, (1) Stereotypes in Learning Materials, many traditional Arabic learning materials reflect gender stereotypes found in Arab societies (Kholiza & Fadhilah, 2021). For example, women's roles are often associated with household responsibilities and passive roles, while men's roles are often idealized as leaders and livelihood bearers.

(2) Role of Teachers and Teachers, depending on their personal background and beliefs, Arabic teachers and teachers may unconsciously reinforce gender stereotypes in learning. This can happen through the language used, the examples chosen and the way of teaching practiced. (3) Community Response, changing the way Arabic is learned to overcome gender stereotypes may lead to resistance from some members of society who maintain traditional gender-related norms (Murtado et al., 2024).

This study refers to the theory of literary feminism. This theory examines how women are portrayed in literary works and how images are reflected regarding gender. This theory is also one of the studies in literary theory where the focus of research is women. Through the theory of literary feminism, we can carefully understand how women's reputation is painted in a wor (Muyassaroh et al., 2022). Feminism is a movement and awareness that arises from the assumption that women are oppressed and exploited beings. The demand of feminism is gender equality, which means that women have the ability to participate in all public, economic, social, cultural and educational activities (Afiah & Muslim, 2021). Therefore, researchers want to analyze from a literary figure who states through his literature about gender equality.

Based on the challenges faced above related to gender stereotypes in literature and Arabic language learning. Researchers found an interesting piece of poetry by Nizar Qabbani, where Nizar Qobani is one of the writers who is famous for his poetry and is often used as a reference for the community when they want to convey something. Likewise, there have been many social media accounts that share fragments of verses that might motivate people from Nizar Qobbani's works. That is one of the reasons researchers analyzed pieces of poetry by Nizar Qobbani because researchers considered that his poems could have an influence on people's lives. Thus, researchers analyzed how gender is often portrayed by Nizar Qabbani in his poems. The purpose of this research is to provide information related to Nizar Qobani's views on gender, especially through his works.

METHOD

This study uses a Descriptive Qualitative Method with a case study approach, namely researching snippets of Nizar Qabbani's poems that discuss

gender and its relationship with Arabic language and culture. Because this study uses a descriptive qualitative method, which is one of the research procedures that will explain a subject and research object based on the collected data. Thus, the researcher explained the study by describing the results of the analysis.

The data sources collected are through literature in the form of books, articles and images of snippets of Nizar Qobbani's poems using literature study data accumulation techniques. This research focuses on analyzing pieces of poetry by Nizar Qobani. Where researchers chose pieces of Nizar Qobbani's poems that were shared by several social media accounts and had a big influence because social media accounts were chosen to share. Then after selecting the poem, the researcher analyzed it with the theory of literary feminism. Where researchers focus on poetry, namely on words that describe feminism.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Nizar Qabbani Biography

Nizar Qabbani was born in Damascus, Syria, on March 21, 1923, with the full name Nizar Tawfiq Qabbani, he grew up in the traditional environment of Ancient Damascus (A'yuni, 2022). Since childhood, Nizar has shown a talent for writing romantic poetry, inheriting the skills from his father, Taufiq Qabbani. His early works, such as the poetry book "Al-Rasm Bi Al-Kalimat" (Painting with Words), illustrate his love of love poetry. He grew up in a wealthy family in a poor environment. His father, Tawfiq Qabbani, was a chocolate businessman and active in the resistance to the French Mandate. Nizar inherited his literary talent from his grandfather who was famous as a versatile artist.

Nizar Qabbani has been married twice, the first to his cousin Zahra Aqbiq and the second to Balqis al-Rawi, an Iraqi diplomat. Both of his marriages had a great influence on his life and literary works. Balqis died in a bomb blast in 1981 in Beirut, which greatly affected Nizar emotionally. After Balqis' death, Nizar lived in London, continuing to write controversial poems, including "When Will They Announce The Death of Arabs and Runners". (A'yuni, 2022).

In the 1970s, Nizar began to write poems that were more critical of the Arab political situation, mainly influenced by the Arab-Israeli War of 1967. This

change made it a critical voice against the inability of the Arabs to face oppression. In his works, he describes the transformation from a love poet to someone who uses poetry as a knife to channel anger against the rulers of the Middle East (A'yuni, 2022).

In addition, Nizar Qabbani is also known as a supporter of women's rights and often criticizes the injustices they face in contemporary society. As a diplomat who has worked in various countries, her work not only reflects her sensitivity to social issues, but also depicts the suffering of women.

Nizar Qabbani, nicknamed the "President of the Poetry Republic" by literary critic Husayn bin Hamzah, became one of the most important icons in modern Arabic literature, changing the paradigm of love poetry and eroticism like Umar bin Abi Rabi'ah in the context of modern times.

The famous poet Nizar Qabbani died in London, England on April 30, 1998. Before he died, he had made a will to be buried in Damascus, Syria in the family cemetery. His wish was fulfilled four days later, with his funeral in Bab as-Saghir. The world, especially the Arab world, mourns his passing. His famous works in the field of literature have been highlighted in various media.

Analysis of Nizar Qabbani's Work

The pieces of Nizar Qabbani's work that will be studied are as follows:

يقول نزار قباني: لا يمكن أن تكون أكرم من المرأة حين
تحب، فإن أعطيتها الأمان كانت لك وطنا

When viewed from the perspective of language, because Arabic is synonymous with its own beauty in expressing poetry and prose (Ummah, 2021), the choice of words used by Nizar Qabbani in the verse shows his proficiency in playing with words when he wants to convey a deep message. For example in the word أكرم which means more noble, الأمان which means security and وطنا with the meaning of a place to live. The meaning contained in these words has a strong emotional meaning and shows the respect and love that is generated so deeply.

The language style used in the poem uses a poetic and metaphorical language style, namely by likening women to a place of residence that provides comfort and a sense of security. And in the verse fragment it also shows that there is nothing more noble than a woman when it comes to love. Because when women love the feelings they convey by providing a

sense of security and comfort. Then if discussed in terms of gender, through this piece of poem, Nizar Qabbani gives a positive perspective to women, which is always associated with loyalty and sacrifice in the context of love. However, in the poem fragment, it can also be interpreted that the role of women is as a guardian of the household, namely through its likening as a place to live. This is in line with the reflection of the traditional gender view that occurs in many Arab societies (Afni et al., 2022).

Thus, through the verse fragment by Nizar Qabbani above which describes the beauty of love and the role of women in providing a sense of security and comfort in a relationship. And if you look at some of the aspects outlined above, gender and language in Arabic culture are interrelated (Kalsum & Sari, 2021). When a poet wants to compose a work about gender, the thing that needs to be considered is also the role of gender in Arab culture. So that the message that the poet wants to convey can reach and be more profound if it adjusts to the Arab culture that occurs. The other Nizar's Shi'ir are as follows:

أيتها اللامحة الشفافة
العادلة الجميلة
أيتها الشهية البهية
الدائمة الطفولة
أشهد أن لا امرأة
تحررت من حكم أهل الكهف إلا أنت
وكسرت أصنامهم
وهددت أوهمهم
وأسقطت سلطة أهل الكهف إلا أنت
أشهد أن لا امرأة
استقبلت بصدرها خناجر القبيلة
واعتبرت حبي لها
خلاصة الفضيلة

Based on the theory of literary feminism, which is about the portrayal of a woman, this poem represents gender, namely the woman Nizar Qabbani is addressing with the characteristics of لامحة which means intelligent, شفافة which means transparent, عادلة which means fair, جميلة which means beautiful, شهية which means seductive, بهية which means graceful, and الدائمة الطفولة which means youthful. Through this writing, Nizar Qabbani describes women with positive traits. The poem also mentions كسرت أصنامهم و أسقطت سلطة أهل الكهف which shows that this is a sharp criticism of the patriarchal cruelty that befalls women, and with this writing shows that women or women have the strength and ability to fight and change the oppressive system.

In this poem, it provides an ideology and an interpretation of women's equality and the privileges it has. The inherent trait of women who are socially and culturally constructed, that women are synonymous with their gentle nature, have a high emotional soul, and have a beautiful face (Yulita, 2021). Behind the nature of women and the nature inherent in women she has value, meaning, urgency and cannot be underestimated. To prove empirical data that the poem "*Ashhadu An La Imra'ata Illa 'Anti*" by Nizar Qabbani is full of symbolism to formulate women in the events that build the poem. (Rohmah, 2021).

In addition to the above verses, the poem is full of symbols in formulating about the beauty and courage of the woman. The poem has also met the criteria of beautiful, sublime, sublime, aesthetic and extra-aesthetic with the breadth of the image with literary value packaged into words. The poem "*Ashhadu An La Imra'ata Illa 'Anti*" talks about testimony to women, her love for women, recognition of women's advantages and patriarchal biases that are still attached.

CONCLUSION

Language and gender have a significant relationship in culture. Language can influence people's behaviour and opinions. Gender affects language use in culture. Language and gender differences can cause conflicts and difficulties in communication. More inclusive language development can help reduce gender differences. This paper also discusses how the language in Nizar Qabbani's poetry reflects and represents gender in the context of Arabic culture. The author highlights the use of Arabic filled with metaphors to describe love and the role of women in Qabbani's work.

The findings reveal the existence of gender bias in Arabic that is passed down from generation to generation, reflecting how culture influences and is reinforced through language. The study provides insight into the complexity of the relationship between language, culture and gender representation in the context of Arabic literature, as well as the importance of considering cultural aspects in the analysis of literature and language. It was found that the Arabic language has an inherited gender bias, as seen in the use of metaphors in Nizar Qabbani's verses that depict women's roles with language that reinforces cultural norms. Through this research, it was found that Nizar Qabbani strongly supports

gender equality. This is because the pieces of poetry by Nizar Qabbani are described with positive traits and traits that dare to challenge patriarchy.

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