

Description of Emotion Through Dialog in Webtoon ‘It’s Mine’

Ochy Caramoy¹, Otong Djuharie²

State Islamic University of Sunan Gunung Djati, Indonesia, Bandung ^{1,2}

Author’s Email:

ochycaramoy24@gmail.com, otongsetiawandjuharie@uinsgd.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze how Emotions are displayed through language choices and speech styles in the Webtoon 'It's Mine'. As a visual narrative media that is widely favored by young people, 'It's Mine' features characters with complex psychological dynamics that are reflected not only in the illustrations, but also in the use of distinctive and expressive language. Using a critical discourse analysis approach as well as a basic psycholinguistic framework, this study will identify forms of language expression related to the characters' emotional states, such as sentence structure, diction, tone, and conversational context in dialog. The data is taken from a number of core episodes that feature conversations containing emotions that refer to mental character issues. The expected result is an understanding of the role of language as a medium for depicting psychological conditions in modern digital narratives, as well as how readers interpret characters' emotional communication indirectly through language choices. This research is expected to contribute to the study of language in popular media and the representation of character psychology through digital texts.

Keywords: language, webtoon, mental issues, character, expersion

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INTRODUCTION

In the digital era like today, media that provides visual entertainment, one of which is electric comics such as Webtoon, has become a popular place to convey complex narratives that are not only entertaining but also convey messages and also reflect the psychological dynamics of the characters. Webtoon serves as a visual narrative platform because Kusumaningtyas and Setiawan (2018) explain that it features stories while allowing social and psychological analysis between characters through their dialogue discourse. One of the Webtoon series that stands out in its psychological dynamics is the Webtoon titled *It's Mine* by LuckS, a writer and comic artist from South Korea, where this work raises the obsessive and manipulative theme in the relationship between the characters. Through dialoh and character language selection, readers can capture emotional tension that includes anxiety, obsession, and forms of psychological manipulation through words.

Anxiety in a communication can affect the way an individual speaks through the choice of language and intonation conveyed, which can express feelings and can even manipulate conversations to achieve certain goals as conveyed by Rood and de Jong (2003) through their research. In this case, it can also be an indication that the language in a work, especially here Webtoon is not an obstacle in mere communication, but can be a depiction of a pattern of complex psychological conditions (Buansari et al., 2023).

Research in the field of linguistics shows that the use of language in Webtoon is able to describe the mental and social condition of characters. Diyanti (2020), in his study of Webtoon titled *Just Friend* explained that the choice of words and language style in a work not only strengthens the identity of a character, but can also contain social functions such as satirizing, disguising emotions to building closeness or dominance and intimidation in conversations between characters.

According to Qosiana (2020) the Webtoon translation depends on selecting accurate diction since poor words choices can damage emotional communication between characters. Avoiding inappropriate vocabulary can prevent meaning distortions which would otherwise conceal essential psychological character traits in translated work. The proper delivery of cultural meaning in a performing work is essential because poor choice of vocabulary might result in misunderstanding of cultural differences between the original and translated work.

Furthermore, Yulianto (2024) through the analysis of the satirical language style in Webtoon *Serba Salah* revealed that the elements in language can be used in a structured and strategic way to convey meaning and emotions subtly or implicitly sharply. Language styles such as irony, sarcasm, satire or even a metaphor can be used as an expression of social tension as well as hidden feelings and emotions.

Although several previous studies have examined linguistic and psychological aspects in Webtoons—such as satirical language style (Yulianto, 2024) and diction choices in translation (Qosiana, 2020)—research that specifically investigates the relationship between language use and the representation of psychological conditions such as mental issues within a single Webtoon work remains limited. Therefore, this study aims to analyze how language in the Webtoon *It's Mine* is used to represent the psychological aspects of its characters. To achieve this objective, the study focuses on two main research questions: (1) how do the characters in *It's Mine* use language to express psychological conditions such as anxiety, obsession, and manipulation? and (2) what linguistic features reflect the psychological dynamics between characters in the Webtoon?

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Webtoon as a Platform of Expressing Mental Health Problems

The webtoon as a type of digital visual narrative media has evolved into a successful platform in the way it portrays the intricacy of emotions and thinking well-being to character. Various works indicate that Webtoon can present a better sense of the psychological experience of the character based on visualization and intense dialogue (Kusumaningtyas & Setiawan, 2018). In the research of other authors (Haliem, P. O., Farid, & Utami, B. (2018) studied the impact of the media Line Webtoon on the opinion of the reader about the topic of mental health, stories of a webtoon can lift the psychological situation of main characters afflicted with severe traumas, including self-mutilation and thoughts about suicide, where the entertainment media can deliver some significant message on the issue of mental health and in that regard, Webtoon is not solely as entertainment but also as an informative hallucinatory instrument concerning the matter.

2. Psychological Manifestation of Characters in Webtoon through Dialogue

Webtoon dialogue plays the triple role of not only communication between characters, but also indicating mental states of inner pressure, trauma or emotional instability.

a. Selection of diction and expression of emotion.

According to Handayani, N. and Usiono. (2025), selection of diction (word choice) has immense influence on delivery of ideas and emotions presented in literary work. The appropriate diction is able not only to transform the presentation of ideas into a beautiful manner but also to make it easier to realize the emotional background the author would like to send to the readers. And later by the testimony of Diyanti (2020), who says that the mental state through which the character is going can also be observed by diction (selection of words) and style of speech in dialogue, e.g. by anxiety, guilt, alienation. Emotional and symbolic diction may be a sign of disturbance or inner pressure.

b. Psychological Relationships in the Reflection of Verbal Interaction

Relationship patterns in language are also present in interaction between characters which include dependence, domination or rejection as elements. This is a significant test with regard to characters who either have inner conflict or some disorder in relationships.

3. Usage of Language in the Explanation of Psychic Tension

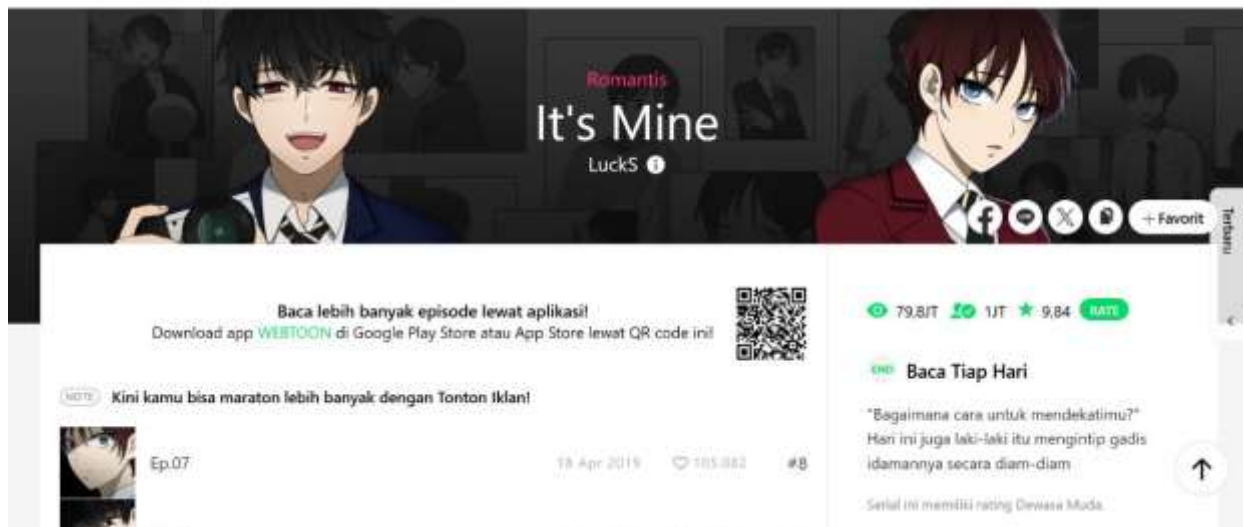
Examples of language style to use is metaphors, repetitions or irony as a form of conveying emotional messages in an indirect way. Surprisingly, Yulianto (2024) found out that the language strategy can produce a multidimensional psychological ambiance, in addition, to expressing the tension or trauma within the character without the character appearing to say or do it. That is why this enhances the use of language as an unintended statement of the character outwardly.

4. Psychological Dimension in Dialogue translation Process

Translation helps in the preservation of the depth of the emotional connotation of the original dialogue. Qosiana (2020) draws attention to the fact that errors in the translation of the conveyed meaning of the appearance of emotions can lead to the introduction of biases or the loss of psychological meaning of the character. Accordingly, sensitiveness to the reproduction of emotional tones is a significant issue in ensuring continuity between characters and cognitive signals in cross languages webtoons.

METHOD

This research uses qualitative research with content analysis methods to analyze the emotions experienced by the characters in the dialogue of a webtoon work by using data collection documentation, which is to collect and record all dialogues that contain emotional elements in each chapter through observation of diction patterns or word selection used in conveying emotions and see how a person's emotional condition can be described through the use of language and diction used. This research data is in the form of dialogue transcripts in a psychological thriller Webtoon Chapters 127-129 titled 'It's Mine' by LuckS published on Line Webtoon. The story revolves around Yohan, a high school student with obsessive behavior and distorted emotional reasoning.



The plot focuses on unhealthy attachment and manipulation of others, which is reflected in the dialogue and emotional shifts throughout the chapters. In this study, what is meant by chapter refers to episodes in webtoon. The research analyzed 3 episodes that were felt to have a strong emotional element as a unit of analysis. The total data analyzed is 27 data, including dialogues that contain emotional expressions. The collected data was analyzed with content analysis with basic emotional categories according to Robert Plutchik (1960, 1961, 1980). Plutchik categorizes the eight main human emotions, namely:

1. Joy/Happiness
2. Trust
3. Fear
4. Surprise
5. Sadness
6. Disgust
7. Anger
8. Anticipation

Each dialogue is encoded about the category of emotions. Even so, discussing much deeper emotions will be too complex, because emotions themselves have a lot of derivatives, therefore in this study only 8 basic emotions will be shown and maybe only a little derivative emotions are displayed. Each dialogue is classified into that emotional category and its derived sub-emotions.



The following picture shows the categories of emotions used in the analysis process:

(Picture 1. Emotional wheel visualization based on Robert Plutchik's theory (1980). Graphic adaptation by third parties.). Then the coding results are analyzed to get the frequency of each emotion and the expression of emotions in the dialogue.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section discusses the results of the content analysis of the dialogues in the three chapters or episodes of LuckS's Webtoon It's Mine, namely chapters 127 to 129. The dialogues that were analyzed were chosen because it was found that there were significant emotions in accordance with the eight basic emotions according to Robert Plutchik (1980), namely: Joy/Happiness, Trust, Fear, Surprise, Sadness, Disgust, Anger and Anticipation

The analysis process is carried out by finding and converting each dialogue into an emotional situation that is in accordance with the purpose of the choice of terms or statement notes in the story. Until here the coding process is completed, the frequency of each type of emotion is then calculated to see what emotions are contained.

| Chapters | Total Dialogue | Emotions | Dialogue |
|----------|----------------|--|---|
| 127 | ±107 | Anticipation (Curiosity) (Dialogue 28, 29,30) Surprise (Dialogue 28) | Will you be surprised (28), frustrated (29), or show a reaction that i don't know(30? |

| | | | |
|-----|-----|--|---|
| 128 | ±56 | <p>Anticipation (Curiosity, Suspicion) (Dialogue 1-9, 11-12, 35)</p> <p>Trust/Doubt (Trust) (Dialogue 11-12)</p> <p>Desire (Anticipation) (Dialogue 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)</p> <p>Fear (Dialogue 26)</p> <p>Anger (Dialogue 41, 42)</p> <p>Guilty (Sadness) (Dialogue 31-34)</p> <p>Disgust (Dialogue 31-34)</p> | <p>That day.. all i want to know was how you'd react.. (1)</p> <p>It wasn't because you betrayed me. (2)</p> <p>Or becausee i still had feelings for you either. (3)</p> <p>I wanted to see.. the face you would make when you're desperate.. (4,5)</p> <p>An emotion you've never shown me before. (6)</p> <p>So i want to see it.. once more (7,8)</p> <p>The miserable look on your face covered in despair.(8)</p> <p>What is the reason you're showing me this? (11-12)</p> <p>What should i give you this when you're not even cooperating with us? (26)</p> <p>But i'm not as nice as you guys think, i just want to atone for my sins by helping you two out. If i put things back to their place, i'll feel less guilty about it, in other words, i'm doing this for myself (31-34)</p> <p>Which also means if there's nothing in it for me, i'll cut you two off! (35)</p> <p>Fuck!! (41) You're the one who offered to help (42)</p> |
| 129 | ±92 | <p>Anticipation (Curiosity) (Dialogue 38, 42)</p> <p>Surprise (Dialogue 38, 42, 46)</p> | <p>Are you really helping Yohan and Yudas out solely for your own purpose? or you want to lead them to the right path as their teacher, no? (38, 42)</p> <p>You're mistaken Dajeong,</p> |

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| | | Trust and Doubt (Trust) (Dialogue 38, 42) | i'm doing this for myself. (44) |
| | | Sadness/Acceptance (Dialogue 44) | Dajeong, when'd you come? It's pretty warm today, right? (46-47) |
| | | Joy/Happiness (Dialogue 46-47, 48- 48) | Did you eat yet? if you haven't, let's go grab a bite together, whatever you feel like, hehe. (48-49) |

The findings show that the most dominant emotions that appear in the three chapters are Anticipation, Anger, and Guilt, which indicate strong psychological pressure and narrative tension in the storyline. Like Anticipation with its derivatives such as Curiosity, Doubt/Trust, Suspicion and also Desire can more or less show the emotions emitted by the character during dialogue and also the psychological conditions experienced by the character, where emotions such as suspicion, curiosity, doubt and desire are one of the dominant emotions in humans who have experienced various bad events and experiences, even so, a number of sub-emotions that enrich the interpretation, are not really the main focus in this study because they are too complex to research.

In the following section, it will be explained how each emotion arises, through dialogue quotes and the narrative context. Each subchapter will outline one main emotion, its frequency, and concrete examples of the analyzed text.

Based on the analysis of the dialogue in three chapters (127–129), the eight basic emotions according to Robert Plutchik's (1980) theory can be identified quite clearly through representative quotations. Joy's emotions are reflected in light and warm dialogues such as "Did you eat yet? If you haven't, let's go grab a bite together, whatever you feel like, hehe" 129: 48–49), which shows comfort and social happiness. Trust emotions arise through interpersonal questions that test someone's intentions, for example "Are you really helping Yohan and Yudas out solely for your own purpose? Or you want to lead them to the right path as their teacher, no?" (129:38). Meanwhile, although Fear does not explicitly appear, it can be interpreted through a defensive tone in statements such as "What should I give you this when you're not even cooperating with us?" (128: 26) which shows concern and distrust.

Surprise emotion is present directly in the dialogue "Will you be surprised, frustrated, or show a reaction that I don't know?" (127: 28), while Sadness is expressed through guilt and regret as in "I just want to atone for my sins... I'll feel less guilty about it" (128: 31–34). For Disgust, the indication can be seen from cynical sentences such as "The miserable look on your face covered in despair" 128: 8), which shows disgust or dislike towards someone's emotional situation. Anger emotions are shown explicitly in emotional outbursts such as "Fuck!!" (128:41). Lastly, Anticipation or anticipation is very dominant, seen from statements such as "That day... all I want to know was how you'd react" (128: 1), which shows curiosity about the outcome of an action.

Thus, every basic emotion from Plutchik's theory has been represented in the dialogue, confirming the complexity of the emotional dynamics of the characters in the story.

CONCLUSION

The result of this research study is that the language in Webtoon It's Mine is not only intended to deliver messages but also as a tool to express complex psychological conditions using dialogue. Using Plutchik's theory of basic emotions as an analytical framework, this novel is able to find all eight basic emotions such as Joy, Trust, Fear, Surprise, Sadness, Disgust, Anger and Anticipation, carefully selected parts of the dialogue. From all of this, Anticipation stands out as the most dominant emotion, reflected in sub-emotional forms such as curiosity, suspicion, desire, which is in accordance with the main personal obsessive and manipulative nature.

In the analysis of the content of chapter 127 to chapter 129, it was obtained that the demonstration of emotions from the form is also closely related to the form in the figure of diction, tone and speech structure in the character's conversation. This shows that emotional language in readers' digital narratives such as Webtoon can provide great power in understanding psychology for readers about emotions and psychology experienced by characters.

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