Analysis of the Cultural Identity of Characters on Fanfiction Adaptation "*Atuy Galon*" by Cyn

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Abstract

Atuy Galon is a unique fanfiction that began as a series of short stories on social media, eventually gaining prominence and being published in a comic strip format. What sets this work apart is its distinctive use of slang language, an ever-evolving linguistic phenomenon that resonates particularly with younger audiences. The central figures in the narrative, Atuy, Anton, and Sahrul, not only use slang, but each has developed their own distinct slang lexicon, reflecting varied facets of cultural identity. As language remains paramount in shaping one's cultural self-awareness, this research meticulously examines the linguistic choices of these characters. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach alongside a rigorous discourse analysis methodology, the study aims to decode the linguistic intricacies within Atuy Galon and their broader implications for cultural identity formation. The significance of this exploration extends beyond literary analysis; it offers a window into the dynamic interplay between language, culture, and identity among today's youth. Additionally, it underscores the transformative power of technology in reshaping linguistic norms and practices,

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INTRODUCTION

Fanfiction (often abbreviated to "fanfic") is a type of writing produced by fans of a particular work of fiction, where they use the characters, settings, or other elements of the original work to create new stories. These stories can be set in the same universe as the original or can diverge significantly. Fanfiction can involve the continuation of the narrative, exploration of "what if" scenarios, filling in gaps or backstories, or reimagining characters in entirely new settings or relationships. It is a form of transformative work, typically created for non-commercial purposes, and is a way for fans to express their passion for and engagement with the original material. Fanfiction is widely accessible via social media or online reading sites. The popular fanfiction online reading sites include

fanfiction.net, Wattpad, and Ao3. Meanwhile, social media networks such as Facebook and Twitter are used by fanfiction authors to upload their works.

Fanfiction, which first made its appearance in print form in 1939, was initially associated with amateur works. (Baghdadi 2019) further elaborates that fanfiction gained significant recognition and popularity within the media fandom during the rise of "Star Trek" in the 1960s. Enthusiasts of "Star Trek" played a pivotal role in elevating the status of fanfiction. By 1998, the landscape of fanfiction had diversified considerably, culminating in the creation of the non-profit platform fanfiction.net. The growth and popularity of online fanfiction repositories soared during this period. Today, myriad online platforms prominently feature fanfiction, underscoring its widespread appeal. Consequently, while fanfiction is not a novel concept for enthusiasts, its dissemination has become more expansive and accessible than ever, thanks to the internet's facilitation. (Howell 2018) adds a comprehensive perspective, stating that fanfiction can draw inspiration from virtually any textual source and be adapted to a vast array of formats.

In April 2021, fanfiction on Twitter began capturing widespread attention within Indonesia. Introduced by the user @tq3illl, this slice-of-life narrative quickly resonated with Indonesian K-pop enthusiasts on the platform. Due to its burgeoning local popularity, the fanfiction was subsequently adapted into a comic strip book. At the heart of the tale is Nakamoto Yuta, popularly known as Yuta from the acclaimed SM Entertainment boy group NCT. Within this imaginative setting, Yuta is portrayed as Atuy, the proprietor of a "depo/depot" – a shop primarily selling mineral water. The narrative delves into Atuy's engagements with his clientele, and the use of online chat applications gives a contemporary, genuine feel to the depicted interactions.

Cyn, the author behind this captivating narrative, brings to life the unique experiences of a gallon trader and the idiosyncrasies of each customer. To create an immersive experience, the fanfiction is framed within an online chat application format, allowing readers to feel as if they're directly observing the conversations between Atuy and his customers. In the book versions, these simulated online chats transition into comic strips, though the original linguistic flair remains consistent. Adopting the comic strip format not only differentiates the work and helps avoid potential copyright complications but also offers readers a vivid visualization of the characters and their expressions. Nonetheless, this article's main spotlight is on characters who embody their community's cultural identity: Atuy, Anton, and Sahru.

In "Atuy Galon," the three primary characters each adopt distinct slang languages, setting them apart from one another. Their choice of slang for communication is particularly intriguing, which this article seeks to explore in depth. Interestingly, despite its prominent use in the narrative, such slang is not commonly spoken in their local community, leading them to resort to more conventional conversations in daily life. While most characters in "Atuy Galon" lean towards the informal Indonesian language, the usage of slang by these three characters stands out. The specific slang they employ potentially mirrors the social milieu and cultural influences they have assimilated over time.

From the aforementioned discussions, the distinct identities of the three characters become compelling subjects of analysis, particularly in how they interact and communicate. Their pronounced identities can be influenced by the societal environment in which they were nurtured or the social media platforms they frequently engage with. As noted by

Mardani and Laura (2019), identity is rooted in an individual's self-perception and the ways they are perceived by others, both of which play pivotal roles in shaping their identity from multiple angles. Echoing this,   argue that identity formation is influenced by various factors, including an individual's core beliefs and historical context. Extending this notion, identity encapsulates how individuals perceive and are perceived by others across various facets like physical attributes, character, way of life, norms, values, and more. It is through this multifaceted identity that individuals carve their space within societal constructs.

There are various studies about cultural identity in the prior study. Damayanti and Tjahjandari (2020) analyse cultural identity and dislocation in Jean Kwok's novel *Searching for Sylvie Lee*. In the film *Green Book,* Hidayat, Juliandina, and Yusuf (2022) also explore cultural identity and symbolic housewife representation in Karma Brown's novel *Recipe for A Perfect Wife*. Meanwhile, in Jujur Prananto's short story *Tamu dari Jakarta*, Mardani and Laura (2019) discuss the development of cultural identity. According to the previous study's discussion, there is still little discussion about cultural identity in Indonesian literary work. So, this article focuses on the cultural studies of slang language used in the fanfiction adaptation *Atuy Galon*. The purpose of this essay is to provide information regarding cultural identity (Harlem, 2022) through the language used by Atuy, Anton, and Sahrul. This article aims to give information about the slang language as one of the factors in shaping someone's cultural identity.

METHOD

This study adopted a descriptive-qualitative approach, centering on discourse analysis as its primary investigative tool. Discourse analysis delved into the exploration of language beyond just the sentence level. Its aimed to understand the application of language within daily contexts. Specifically, this research utilized interactional sociolinguistic discourse analysis—a multidisciplinary method that melded linguistic, sociological, and anthropological insights on language usage. This approach aligned seamlessly with the study's objective, emphasizing the slang vernacular employed by the three principal characters in their interactions.

The focus of the paper was on the cultural norms and communicative conventions depicted in the fanfiction adaptation of "Atuy Galon". Data for the study were derived from specific conversations between Atuy and his customer, between Anton and Atuy, and between Atuy and Sahrul. These dialogues were sourced from the published works "Atuy Galon" and "Atuy Galon isi ulang", authored by Cyn, a Jakarta-based writer. In addition to providing a descriptive account, this research also offered comparative insights, highlighting the distinctions in the slang utilized by the characters. Through this lens, the study aimed to underscore the pivotal role language plays in molding and reflecting cultural identity (Susanto, 2020).

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The main character of this fanfiction is Atuy, a character with a nonchalant demeanor that often vexes those who converse with him. Yet, Atuy possesses a unique approach to catering to his customers, who purchase liters of water from him, fostering a positive rapport with them. Atuy's communication style is characterized by his use of slang, a modified version of the "Alay" language.

Alay, as elucidated by Kusumawati (2019), is a distinctive linguistic phenomenon with a dedicated user base. It emerged in 2010, rapidly gaining traction among the youth. Originally, Alay was prevalent in short text messages and Facebook status updates, given that Facebook was a dominant social media platform for adolescents during that period. Sinaga (2017) points out that the vibrant language employed in written communications encompassed Alay. As its evolution continued, the Alay language became synonymous with the term "Jamet language". Both linguistic styles, as Anggadhithiya (2023) notes, are marked by exaggerated or abbreviated expressions. Interestingly, Rifda (2023) highlights that the Jamet or Alay language experienced a resurgence in popularity, credited largely to its presence on TikTok.

Drawing from the earlier delineation of the two linguistic styles, Alay and Jamet, both are manifested in the fanfiction through the characters Atuy and Anton. Atuy, in particular, innovatively harnesses the Alay language, crafting his own unique dialect from it. This dialect often features abbreviated terms and a lively, chipper tone. Presented below is a sample of the language Atuy employs in his interactions:

Hendra   : *Pesen dong kak 1 ke kos putra cat krem. Atas nama Hendra*
                   (Order one gallon send to man dormitory. In the name of Hendra)
Atuy   : *Sma semua x catnya.*
                   (All the paint is the same)

Drawing from the provided instance, Atuy condenses the term "sama" to "sma" and the word "kali" is represented simply by the letter "x". This adaptation stems from the mathematical use of "x" as a symbol for multiplication, which is pronounced "kali" in Bahasa Indonesia. Thus, Atuy cleverly employs "x" as a linguistic shorthand in his interactions:

Cewek Nggak Jelas : *Mino yang rambutnya putih tuy*
                   (Mino, who has white hair tuy)
Atuy   : *Parah u itu mh bapakny x*
                   (Too bad, that is his father)

In his interactions with other characters, Atuy consistently excludes the letter "a" from various words. As illustrated in the initial example, Atuy opts for "sma" as a shorthand for "sama". This pattern is also evident in another instance where he writes "mh" to convey "mah", a term signifying agreement or affirmation. Similarly, Atuy's preference for truncating the letter "a" is showcased when he writes "y" in place of "ya", which translates to "yes".

Additionally, in slang language, the letter "y" can represent "ya", "iya", or "yes". Often, this abbreviated "y" is employed to expedite responses to messages or to convey certain emotional states. Such states might reflect the responder's mood, signaling feelings of annoyance or indifference. In this fanfiction, Atuy often opts for "y" as an abbreviation of "ya", streamlining his replies to various messages. Given the voluminous orders of gallons that Atuy is tasked with delivering, his concise responses ensure efficiency and minimal time expenditure. This brevity in communication is further emphasized when the boarding house owner, too, uses the abbreviated "y" instead of the full "ya".

Pak Benny   : *Bisa anter gallon ke kos putra pak benny?*
              (Can I order one gallon to Mr. Benny's Man dormitory?)

Atuy	: *bsa ajj sie tpi ntr y abies lohor*
	(I can, but please wait after dzuhur)
Pak Benny	: *lagi banyak orderan ya?*
	(Are there lots of orders?)
Atuy	: *Y om bhs enggres-nya oferlot*
	(Yes sir, in English it is overload)

In the aforementioned conversation, Atuy was not expressing irritability or a bad mood. Instead, he clearly communicated to Mr. Benny that he could not deliver the gallon promptly due to a surge in orders at that particular moment.

Moreover, a distinctive feature of Atuy's communication style is his phonetic transcription of English words. As observed in the dialogue with Mr. Benny, Atuy transcribes "overloaded" as "oferlot" and simplifies "cheesecake" to "ciskek". This suggests that while Atuy possesses foundational English skills, he tends to write English terms as he perceives them audibly, capturing the essence of the word based on its sound rather than its conventional spelling.

On the other hand, Anton distinguishes himself as a standout character, primarily due to his unique qualities that set him apart from the rest. He is Atuy's younger sibling, and before relocating to Jakarta to reside with Atuy, he was enrolled in a boarding school in Purwokerto. Anton's character exudes a mischievous charm; his antics, while occasionally irksome, also evoke humor. Similar to Atuy, Anton has a distinctive communication style in written form. He often employs the Alay or Jamet linguistic style, akin to Atuy, but with nuanced variations.

Within the narrative of this fanfiction, Anton exhibits a preference for blending letters with numerals and frequently incorporates emojis, a trait more pronounced in his communications than in Atuy's. While Atuy leans more towards abbreviations and amplifying words, Anton's method of expression can sometimes lead to confusion for the recipient. This is exemplified in the following conversation between Anton and Cewek Nggak Jelas:

Anton	: *btw mbaq w bleh nginep kgk, (emoji gedung) Atuy lg galau mbaq w ksiand lyat dy urink2an*
	(Btw sis, can I stay overnight (building emoji) Atuy bad mood.
Cewek Nggak Jelas	: *hah gedung apaan nton?*
	(Hah? What kind of building?)
Anton	: *tu bank mksny mbaq*
	(That means bank sis)
Cewek Nggak Jelas	: *oalah pantesan kata Iyan kalo chat sama Anton otaknya bercabang*
	(No wonder, Iyan said if I converse with Anton, it makes my brain split)

In Anton's lexicon, the term "abang," translating to "older brother," is substituted with an icon of a building. This unconventional replacement leaves Cewek Nggak Jelas, the recipient, bewildered, grappling to decipher Anton's intended message. When interacting with others, Anton often intersperses multiple emoji images throughout his text, further muddling the clarity of his messages. Such complexity in communication is further showcased in the subsequent exchange between Anton and Iyan:

Iyan	: *Nton lu pengusaha gallon emang bener?*

> *(Nton, are you a gallon entrepeneur?)*
> Anton : *Bkn w sie yan, abank w, u tw drmn sie?*
> *(it's not me yan, it is my brother. Where you know about it?)*
> Iyan : *tebak dong*
> *(Guess)*
> Anton : *kgk ush t(bak mandi)k2an w lg mlez (mie) kir (kera)s*
> *(do not have t(bathup emoji)k2n I'm to lazy to think about it)*
> Iyan : *Nton yg ada jg otak gw yang bercabang tiap chat sama lu....*
> *(Nton, my brain hurts read your message)*

The dialogue presented underscores Iyan's challenge in comprehending Anton's unconventional language style. Anton frequently manipulates words, either by modifying existing letters or by introducing new ones. Wijayanti et al. (2022) describe this linguistic maneuvering as 'word play', which involves altering words or phrases through a mix of techniques: blending letters with numbers, segmenting letters, elongating them, adding or substituting letters, and employing abbreviations. For instance, as illustrated earlier, Anton tweaks the word "mbak" to "mbaq", replacing the letter "k" with "q". In another instance, he transfigures "Bang" – a colloquial term for "Abang" – into "Bank" by substituting "g" with "k". This play on words can lead to ambiguity, especially since "bang" and "bank" in Bahasa Indonesia hold distinct meanings: the former is an informal term for an older brother, while the latter denotes a financial institution. Such linguistic nuances necessitate a more discerning reading approach to grasp Anton's intended message.

The final character discussed in this essay is Sahrul. Though Sahrul does not frequently feature in this fanfiction, his appearances are notably impactful. This distinction arises from Sahrul's unique purchasing patterns as one of Atuy's customers; he consistently orders gallons of water in substantial quantities for rather unconventional uses. Notably, Sahrul earned the moniker "the top spending gallon" after procuring 70 and 50 gallons for bathing and an additional 35 gallons specifically for his fish. What further sets Sahrul apart is his linguistic style. Hailing from an affluent background, Sahrul often intermingles Bahasa Indonesia and English in his conversations. This blend of languages is commonly referred to as "Bahasa Jaksel".

Yudhistira (2018) define Bahasa Jaksel as a dialect prevalent among the youth of South Jakarta, especially favored by students. This mode of communication involves an amalgamation of Bahasa Indonesia and English. Though its roots can be traced back to the young populace of South Jakarta, Bahasa Jaksel's reach has, over time, expanded across Indonesia (Hikam, 2022). Distinct features of this dialect include a penchant for abbreviating words and the use of inversions (Yhudistira, 2018). Complementing this, Balqis et al. (2023) highlight certain terms frequently employed in the South Jakarta lexicon, such as "literally", "which is", "because", "by the way", "anyway", "healing", "party", and "basically".

Based on the discussion above, Sahrul, in this fanfiction uses a word that is commonly used in Bahasa Jaksel. The phrase, anyway can be found in the following conversation between Sahrul and Atuy as follows:

> Atuy : *paan rul? U bkanny lgi d jerman?*
> *(What is it Rul? It's not like you are in Germany)*

Sahrul : *dih paansi orang udah balik. Anyway, back to the topic. Besok I pesen 70 galon biasa buat mandi.*
(I am already back. Anyway, back to the topic. Tomorrow, I order 70 gallons for take a bath)

As illustrated in the provided example, Sahrul incorporates the term "anyway", a word frequently associated with Bahasa Jaksel. Moreover, Sahrul's blending of Bahasa Indonesia and English aptly represents the linguistic tendencies of contemporary South Jakarta teenagers, mirroring current trends in their communication.

Cultural identity in the use of language by Atuy, Anton, and Sahrul.

Culture plays a pivotal role in shaping an individual's identity. As delineated in "Cultural Communications" (I.C, 2014), culture provides a collective identity to a group, fostering a sense of belonging and ensuring survival. Building on this, emphasize the integral part culture plays in nurturing an individual's ability to forge their identity. This study suggests a profound link between identity and culture, emphasizing the importance of association, be it through nationality, ethnicity, religion, social standing, generational ties, regional affiliation, or any other distinct cultural group.

Various elements, including religion, heritage, skin color, language, education level, profession, skills, familial ties, and political inclinations, collectively constitute cultural identities. Each factor intricately weaves into the tapestry that defines an individual's self-concept. Hall's perspective on cultural identity is twofold: it can emerge from a community bound by shared culture and history, or it can be discerned through a spectrum of differences and commonalities (Damayanti & Tjahjandari, 2021). Given these insights, cultural identity not only influences but also acts as a foundational pillar for an individual's unique identity formation (Alisa, 2021;Widyastuti, 2022).

The linguistic choices of Atuy, Anton, and Sahrul are deeply intertwined with the cultural, historical, and contextual backdrop they inhabit. As previously mentioned, slang, having its roots in Jakarta, blossomed and gained prominence among the Indonesian youth. This evolution is inextricably linked to the advances in technology and the proliferation of the internet. Given that the narrative unfolds in Jakarta, where all three characters reside, the surrounding society inevitably molds their experiences and expressions. Whether overtly or subtly, the community plays a pivotal role in their developmental journey. Language, in this context, becomes instrumental in shaping an individual's cultural identity. This daily vernacular, integral to their lives, underscores its significance in their identity formation.

In "Atuy Galon," the three central characters employ a slang language that mirrors the linguistic tendencies of contemporary youth. Dubravac (2020) characterizes slang as an informal mode of communication, crafted and predominantly used by young individuals to interact with their peer group. In Indonesia, the emergence of slang can be traced back to around 1980 with the advent of Bahasa Prokem. With the exponential growth of technology, this youthful vernacular, initially popular among Jakarta's adolescents, was disseminated widely through social media platforms. Despite the temporal gap and the shifting nature of popular jargon across generations, slang persists in its evolution and remains a preferred medium for teenagers' communication. The prominence of slang has surged among the youth, especially those actively engaged in social media platforms.

Atuy and Anton employ slang that, on the surface, appears similar. Within the fanfiction, both characters engage with others predominantly using the Alay or Jamet linguistic styles. However, a closer examination reveals nuanced distinctions in their vernacular. Atuy, being a few years Anton's senior, leans more towards the traditional form of Alay — mainly characterized by abbreviations and playful alterations of words through letter omissions or substitutions. Anton, hailing from a slightly younger generation, adopts both Alay and Jamet, but with a twist. He not only indulges in wordplay but also punctuates his sentences with emojis. This juxtaposition is deliberate, highlighting how two characters from proximate but distinct generations can adopt the same slang lexicon but with varied nuances. Atuy embodies the cultural identity of the earlier generation's slang, while Anton exemplifies the evolution of slang in the younger cohort, reflecting the dynamic nature of the Alay and Jamet languages as they transform over time.

Anton and Sahrul, though contemporaries showcase distinct linguistic preferences in slang. While Anton leans toward Alay or Jamet, Sahrul adopts Bahasa Jaksel. Their respective upbringings play a role in these choices, Anton's earlier years in a Purwokerto boarding school before settling in Jakarta with Atuy contrast with Sahrul's urban upbringing in Jakarta amidst affluence. In their use of English, Atuy, and Sahrul further differentiate. Atuy's grasp of English is basic and lacking depth. Conversely, Sahrul, likely influenced by overseas family connections, demonstrates proficiency in both English and Bahasa Indonesia. This distinction underscores the influence of environment and background on their linguistic choices and competencies.

Language is one of the most important aspects of communicating with one another. According to Vizuette (2022), language is crucial to one's identity and is required in all aspects. Furthermore, according to Lombard (2020) influences that can shape someone's identity can also influence someone's language use. Language has an unbreakable connection to human social and cultural practices. Suryani et al. (2018) state that language is not a fixed product. It evolves in response to the dynamics of socio-cultural orientation and movement. It means that language may develop in response to societal socio-cultural changes. Cultural and class localities shape language practices. Furthermore, Dennison (2019) states that because of the language practices of local culture and class, places convey the availability and social meaning of specific practices.

CONCLUSION

In this fanfiction, the three characters each showcase distinct slang languages, reflecting their generational gaps and cultural identities. Atuy, hailing from an older generation, employs a slang style focused on abbreviations and sporadically integrates symbols or emojis. In contrast, Anton embodies the younger generation's 'alay' slang, punctuating his text with emojis to set it apart from his older sibling. Despite being of the same age bracket as Anton, Sahrul adopts a unique slang dialect, emblematic of South Jakarta's youth, which fuses Bahasa Indonesia with English. These linguistic variances not only highlight their individual cultural backgrounds but also become defining markers of their distinct cultural identities.

This article, while comprehensive, has its limitations that pave the way for further research. Delving deeper into the slang language usage within "Atuy Galon" fanfiction can yield richer insights, given the myriad of intriguing aspects embedded within it. There is

potential to explore various linguistic elements through sociolinguistic lenses to comprehend how characters' language choices intertwine with their environments. For educators, understanding these nuances can not only enhance their knowledge but also present "Atuy Galon" as a valuable resource for teaching linguistic analysis from diverse viewpoints.

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