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## Introduction

My work was primarily on analysis of movies, and reading through multiple research papers to develop insights.

## Movie Analysis

Besides entertainment, Bollywood films reflect society and culture to make them relatable to the audience, hence successful at the box office. The stereotypical and biased representation of genders is shown in a number of ways including male gaze, less screen time and representation, and fewer dialogues of one gender under the other. A film mired on extreme controversy and having such a divisive effect on feminism in India was important to look at, and to use our previous understanding gained in this project to make inferences on. The language and tone used in the movie is not too unfamiliar, since it's a generic Delhi urban dialect with a Punjabi flavour. However, the movie functions as a very interesting take on the current state of feminism in India, with the movie being a generic buddy comedy with an obvious feminist theme. The language used by the protagonists (who have most of the screen time) uses vulgarity for this motive, intended to be shocking and new, compared to an existing ideology of how language should be spoken by women in Indian cinema. The sexual theme prevalent in the movie is the interesting place where the choice of language works as an effective window into the movie's goal. The fact remains that while the sexual theme is interspersed throughout the entire movie, we see that the use of innuendos to relay such information is extremely common. The idea of using jokes to mask the absurdity or the shock of the situation is used by the filmmakers to downplay the fact that the movie is attempting to cross social boundaries. Apart from this, the other linguistic features seen in the movie are the frequent use of code mixing and code switching between both English, Hindi as well as Punjabi. This is because of the influence of a stereotypical South Delhi accent in the protagonists of the film. A major theme of the movie is cultural confusion for the inherent sort of limbo that the Indian youth supposedly undergoing today because of a generation shift. Therefore the plot of the film revolves around marriage and between the millennials and the interactions they have between the parents, built around the mix of Western and Traditional cultures. On looking closely at the script, some of these things become more obvious. There is one character who is currently in the US, and she deals with struggling with extreme Westernization, while a divorcee in India struggles with the stigma against her. The contrast in their settings isn't very well dealt with

in the movie, as they tend to have the same linguistic features, perhaps intentionally to portray the cultural homogeneity in Urban Indian Youth.

Another theme in the movie which was under much discussion is the use of vulgarity, which goes back to the concept of the modern feminist, someone open about sexuality (but still using innuendo to express it) and embracing Western concepts. While this stereotype, like all others, is based on reality, from a Sociolinguist's perspective it has interesting tones.

Vulgarity is akin to a "sign" of aggression or shock, which is why it activates the same centers in our brain which get activated when exposed to sexual content (the amygdala) (Sapolsky, 2017), which is why this behaviour works in movies as choice of language.

Linguistically, it relates to Tannen's work on how vulgarity is a more masculine feature and is thus a subversion of the stereotype.

Apart from feminism, the movie also has a homosexual character (albeit not a protagonist), who however does not use exaggerated homosexual linguistic features. However the use of urban features to show modernization in contrast to the other more "traditional" older people is obvious.

To sum it up, this movie is a feminist portrayal of the cultural shift between generations, and this is achieved through use of non-traditional features such as vulgarity or innuendos, while also signalling the fact that overt and a serious discussion of sexuality was not the motivation of the movie, but rather it raised important questions, which are relatable to a large part of the Indian youth today.

## Paper Reading

**Whose Feminism is it anyway? - Menon:** Mainstream Bollywood has historically represented women within a few static categories be it as a signifier of national identity or as a caricature in the virgin/whore trope. The repurposing of these in contemporary women-centric cinema has arguably resulted in similar narrative messaging: the Westernized woman requires to be tamed and the traditional Indian woman deserves to be rewarded. These female-led films masquerading as tales of women's empowerment are often discussed in popular media discourses as feminist must-watch cinema. Observing that a majority of these are created and directed by male filmmaker, the thesis details the ways in which a particular postfeminist politics is refracted through a patriarchal lens when representing contemporary Indian women. The analysis finds that while woman-centric cinema is typically understood as bypassing Bollywood genre conventions, the physical (and caste ideal) of whose stories are considered worthy of representation is not too different from the standard potboiler. Additionally, the invisibility of class privilege and the homogenization of the middle-class, that seem to restrict Minal's

narrative representation (Pink) within negative discourses, while allowing Rani (Queen) positive outcomes and a humanizing portrayal with place for complexities.

**The Formation of the Hijra Subject: A Critical Inquiry into the Linguistic Method and Preliminary Postulates for a Political Linguistics - A Kanjilal:**

Hijras are officially recognized as third gender in the Indian subcontinent being considered neither completely male nor female. They are a marginalized community in India, and have developed a distinct language of their own (Hijra Farsi). The language has a sentence structure loosely based on Hindustani and a unique vocabulary of at least a thousand words

**Feminism and the mastery of nature - Val Plumwood:** The concept of dualism is central to the thesis. Unlike a simple dichotomy, a dualism is a construction that sharply demarcates 'one' from 'other' and sets a higher value to the one. A dualism, according to Plumwood, results from a certain kind of denied dependency on a subordinated other. For example, 'culture' and 'nature' have been separated in Western thought, with (white) men being associated with the more valued identity of culture, and women and nonwhite men being more commonly associated with the less valued identity of nature.

**The meaning of difference: Gender theory, postmodernism, and psychology -**

**Hare-Mustin, R. T., & Marecek, J:** Two recent postmodern movements, constructivism and deconstruction, challenge the idea of a single meaning of reality and suggest that meanings result from social experience. We show how these postmodern approaches can be applied to the psychology of gender. Examining gender theories from a constructivist stand-point, we note that the primary meaning of gender in psychology has been difference. The exaggeration of differences, which we call alpha bias, can be seen in approaches that focus on the contrasting experiences of men and women. The minimizing of differences, beta bias, can be seen in approaches that stress the similarity or equality of men and women. From a deconstructivist position, we examine previously hidden meanings in the discourse of therapy that reveal cultural assumptions about gender relations. Paradoxes in contemporary constructions of gender impel us to go beyond these constructions.

## LGBTQ Linguistics

An important theme explored in this project was the features in LGBTQ communities. Specialized dictionaries that record gay and lesbian slang tend to revolve heavily around sexual matters, which may reflect the publications' methodological assumptions about the hyper-sexuality of conversations among LGBT people. People often are members of

multiple communities, and which community they want to be most closely associated with may vary. For some gay men, the primary self-categorization is their identity as gay men. To achieve recognition as such, gay men may recognize and imitate forms of language that reflect the social identity of gay men, or which are stereotypically considered to be characteristic to gay men. For example, the use of female pronouns dissociates gay men from heterosexual norms and designates them in opposition to heterosexual masculinity. Shared ways of speaking can be used to create a single, cohesive identity that in turn helps organize political struggle. Sexuality is one form of social identity, discursively constructed and represented. This shared identity can in some cases be strengthened through shared forms of language use and used for political organizing. The development of gay identity may differ for men and women. For many women, regardless of orientation, female identity is more important than sexual identity. Where gay men feel a need to assert themselves against male heterosexual norms, lesbians may be more concerned about sexism than about lesbian identity. Language can be used to negotiate relations and contradictions of gender and sexual identities, and can index identity in various ways, even if there is no specific gay or lesbian code of speaking.

## Conclusion:

I learnt a lot from this project, and gained insight on fields that I would not have explored without the project. Developing and testing hypotheses made me learn a lot about the field of Sociolinguistics.