

ONE PERSON: SEVERAL PERSONALITIES (INFLUENCE OF GENDER IDENTITY CHANGE ON SPEECH BASED ON MOVIE “SPLIT” 2016)

ОДНА ЛЮДИНА: ДЕКІЛЬКА ОСОБИСТОСТЕЙ (ВПЛИВ ЗМІНИ ГЕНДЕРУ НА МОВЛЕННЯ, НА ОСНОВІ ФІЛЬМУ «СПЛІТ» 2016)

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This article explores the distinct speech patterns between male and female characters in multimedia text, based on an analysis of protagonist's speech from the movie “Split” released in 2016. The main character, Kevin, has dissociative identity disorder (DID), resulting in him having 23 different identities, many of which are female. The article aims to investigate whether the character's speech patterns are affected by identity change. We conducted research by analyzing the speech of three of his identities: Patricia, who acts as a mother figure for all identities, Dennis, a perfectionist who cannot tolerate the sight of dirt, and Barry, an artistic personality who enjoys designing clothing. As we delved deeper into the research, we discovered that it was Dennis all along who pretended to be Barry to hide from their therapist, Dr. Fletcher, that they wanted to awaken the 24th identity named “The Beast”. We used LIWC-22 (Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count) for conducting our research. We compared the results obtained and analyzed which category indexes increased or decreased by referring to the numbers provided in LIWC. The article presents the categories that underwent the most significant changes. The results were largely consistent with our expectations, but there are still some questions that require further analysis. One character's results were quite controversial, as the indexes did not align with the previous conclusions about gender speech features made by other researchers. For Patricia and Dennis, the indexes obtained mostly aligned with the expectations. However, Barry's indexes were closer to female instead of male, potentially due to his artistic personality. Also, it's essential to note that it was actually Dennis who was pretending to be Barry, and his pretense may have influenced the index shift as well.

Key words: gender differences of speech, female and male speech, dissociative identity disorder (DID), LIWC, Split.

У статті досліджуються відмінні моделі мовлення чоловіків та жінок у мультимедійному тексті на основі аналізу мовлення головного героя фільму «Спліт», який вийшов у 2016 році. Головний герой, Кевін, має дисоціативний розлад ідентичності, в результаті чого він ділить свою свідомість із 23 різними особистостями. Багато з цих особистостей є жінками. Мета статті дослідити, чи впливають на мовлення персонажа зміна особистості. Ми провели дослідження, проаналізувавши мову трьох ідентичностей Кевіна: Патриції, яка відіграє роль «матері» для всіх інших особистостей; Деніса, перфекціоніста, який не зносить бруду; Баррі, артистичної людини, що любить розробляти дизайнерський одяг. Слід зазначити, що Деніс весь час прикидався Баррі, щоб приховати від доктора Флетчер той факт, що вони намагаються пробудити 24 особистість «Звіра». Для проведення нашого дослідження ми використали програму LIWC-22. Отримані результати були порівняні та надалі було проаналізовано чи індекси різних категорій зросли, чи знизилися, посилаючись на цифри, надані програмою LIWC. У статті представлено категорії, які зазнали найбільш істотних змін. Результати в основному відповідали нашим очікуванням, але все ще є деякі питання, які потребують додаткового дослідження. Результати одного персонажа виявилися досить суперечливими, оскільки індекси не збігалися з попередніми висновками щодо гендерних особливостей мовлення, виведені іншими дослідниками. Для Патриції та Деніса отримані індекси у більшості збіглися з очікуваннями. Однак індекси Баррі були ближчими до жіночих, ніж чоловічих, можливо, через його мистецьку натуру. Також, важливо зазначити, що насправді Деніс прикидався Баррі, і це також могло вплинути на зміну показників у мовленні.

Ключові слова: гендерні особливості мовлення, мовлення чоловіків та жінок, дисоціативний розлад ідентичності, LIWC, Спліт.

Problem statement. The study of gender linguistics is a relatively new field that originated from Robin Lakoff's works. It focuses on analyzing speech differences between men and women. However, what happens when a character with dissociative identity disorder (DID) has an identity of a different gender? Would writers adjust the speech patterns or maintain consistency since it is the same person? To explore this further, we conducted an analysis speech of a character with DID and compared the results with existing research on gender-based speech characteristics.

Literature review. Since gender linguistics has been of researchers' interest for 50 years already, there are lots of works discussing the matter. The first works in the field were, as it was mentioned above, studies of Lakoff R. with her numerous articles and a book published in 1973 “Language and Woman's Place”, who was the first researcher to point out the differences between how women and men speak. Further many other researchers introduced their findings, such as Holmes J., Tannen D., etc. With the development of new technologies, it has become easier to perform

speech analysis using computing programs, that is how many other modern researches appeared in the field. As a result, we can see many new works on the topics, made by researchers who used such means to show the results obtained from a different angle: Pennebaker J. W., Newman M. L., Groom C. J., Handelman L. D., Leaper C, Ayres M., etc.

The aim of the paper is to understand whether the change in gender identity influences the way the character speaks and in what way. To reach the goal quantitative research method was used. The analysis was conducted using LIWC-22 (Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count) [1]. To compare the results obtained and to realize which category indexes increased or decreased we refer to numbers about each of the measures provided by LIWC. The dataset was constructed from randomly selected subsets of text from across 15 different types of English language sets [2, p. 8]. For the research, indexes related to movies were used from the presented table.

Main findings. The article is based on the movie "Split" [3]. It tells a story of a man called Kevin who shares his body with 23 different identities with one more new "collective" personality coming on the way. For the analysis, only three of them were taken, namely: Patricia, a "mother" of all personalities, who keeps order among them; Dennis, a perverted guy who likes to watch young girls dance and who is obsessed with cleanliness; Barry, a designer of clothes who is allowed to use the physical body only to speak to their psychologist (Dr. Fletcher) to assure her that they are doing fine and do not need any interference from her side. As we further find out, Dennis pretended to be Barry, to not let Dr. Fletcher find out about their trying to bring "The Beast" to the world.

Despite being fiction where many features shown have been exaggerated, directors followed "Diagnostic And Statistical Manual Of Mental Disorders" [4] to make the diagnosis of the character look closer to reality, which is why we can see some features of dissociative disorder (DD) that are consistent with what is written in the manual. The authors state that the individuals might report feeling their bodies differently, for example feeling like a small child or the opposite gender [4, p. 293]. That is the case for Kevin, as many of his personalities are female.

Individuals with DID, as explained by the authors, may display sudden changes in their preferences for food, clothing, and activities [4, p. 293]. This is evident in the distinct way that Patricia favors dresses, Dennis prefers glasses and neatly buttoned shirts, and Barry always wears gloves, hoodies, and

a ski hat. Their behavior also varies greatly; Dennis shows indications of OCPD (Obsessive-compulsive personality disorder), making him an extreme perfectionist, Patricia acts as an overcontrolling woman who experiences sudden outbursts of frustration when things do not go according to her plan, and Barry behaves like a kind, cheerful, and smiling young man who is always happy to share his new artistic designs with Dr. Fletcher.

In the article "Chronic complex dissociative disorders and borderline personality disorder: disorders of emotion dysregulation?", the authors also agree that psychological tests showed that DD patients were most likely to have "a range of psychological difficulties that likely developed as a result of severe childhood abuse and disturbances in attachment" [5]. As a child, Kevin was severely punished if he did not keep things neat and clean, this aspect was portrayed in Denis, since he feels extremely traumatized when sees dirt or spots anywhere around him. This can be also seen in the category "Memory" since Dennis is the only personality out of the three who has an index higher than 0 and slightly higher than the mean, which is 0.29. It refers to the situation when he tells Dr. Fletcher his memories about Kevin's abusive mother and that it was the reason why he appeared as an alter identity to protect him.

We shall refer now to the usage of pronouns. Patricia's index of first-person plural pronouns is greatly higher than the mean, which is 5.39 compared to 3.17 index retrieved from Dennis' speech which is also considered higher than the mean. In Barry's case, the index is within the norm. When it comes to the usage of second-person plural pronouns only Dennis has a higher number, Patricia's index is within the norm, while Barry underuses them. These findings mostly confirm the statement made by Xia, who in her research "Gender Differences in Using Language", states that: "Women prefer to use first person plural pronouns when they suggest something, even when she suggests the other person, while men tend to use the first person singular pronoun, and when he is suggesting the other person, he will directly use the second person pronoun" [6, p. 1486]. Dennis frequently uses the pronoun "we" in his speech, which may be attributed to his tendency to refer to all identities rather than just himself. This could also appear from his and Patricia's shared fixation on their perceived extraordinary nature and their belief that they can unleash "The Beast", the 24th identity, who is believed to possess superior strength and speed compared to an average individual.

If we refer to the third and first-person singular pronouns, Newman, Groom, Handelman, and

Pennebaker in their work “Gender Differences in Language Use: An Analysis of 14,000 Text Samples” found out that women in their speech used more first- and third-person singular pronouns [7, p. 220]. When it comes to the usage of the third person pronouns, we can see that both Dennis and Patricia have higher indexes from the mean: 3,17 and 4,17 accordingly. It is possible to explain this by noting that both individuals frequently mention “The Beast”, which they are attempting to awaken to demonstrate their true potential to the world. However, Barry tends to use these pronouns less frequently, as we can see from the index of 0.37, as he does not acknowledge the existence of the 24th identity and therefore does not refer to it.

Upon analysis of the usage of first-person pronouns, a notable difference is observed. While Dennis and Patricia display average indexes of 4.61 and 4.66, respectively, Barry’s index is significantly higher at 10.68, surpassing the standard deviation. This finding aligns with previous research by Rude S., Gortner E. M., and Pennebaker J., who discovered that individuals with depression tend to use more negative emotion and first-person singular words [8, p. 1121]. As we uncover later, Barry is actually Dennis who assumes his identity due to his fear of Dr. Fletcher discovering his true self and preventing the manifestation of “The Beast”.

Another thing pointed out in “Gender Differences in Language Use: An Analysis of 14,000 Text Samples” is that females in their speech have higher use of social words [7, p. 37]. Our research material partially confirms the statement regarding the index scores of Dennis and Patricia, which are above the mean at 21.04 and 20.59, respectively. However, Barry’s index is the lowest at 12.71, possibly due to his speaking to the therapist and being suppressed by Patricia and Dennis.

According to the research mentioned earlier, men tend to use more large words, articles, and prepositions. Dennis has the highest index for the category of large words, at 13.83, while Patricia and Barry have indexes within the normal range, at 10.29 and 10.68, respectively. In terms of article usage, all three identities have indexes within the norm, with Barry, Dennis, and Patricia having 5.71, 5.62, and 5.39, respectively. However, Patricia’s index is still lower than those of the male identities. As for prepositions, Dennis’ index is within the norm at 11.38, while Barry and Patricia have 9.21 and 8.82, respectively, indicating the underuse of prepositions. These discrepancies warrant further investigation.

Let us turn now to research by Leaper and Ayres. In their work, they show that women were

likely to use more affiliative language, while men had more assertive speech [9, p. 353]. Patricia has the highest index that goes far beyond the mean: 6,86. When discussing other individuals and the kidnapped girls, she uses language that falls under the category of “Affiliation”. This is likely because the girls temporarily become part of the “family”, which is necessary for the awakening of “The Beast”. Dennis has a slightly higher index: 3.46, which may be caused by his feeling like a part of the group due to the multiple personalities that live within Kevin’s body. Barry’s category index falls within the normal range.

Another category to consider is “Food”. In Patricia’s case, the category can also be associated with affiliation, as her index is well above the mean at 1.47. This is because she cares for the kidnapped girls as if they were her own children, ensuring they do not starve to death before “The Beast” is awakened, as they are needed for the ceremony. Barry’s index is slightly above the mean, but this is because he wanted to intentionally dirty his clothes with ice cream to prove to Dr. Fletcher that he was not Dennis in disguise. Dennis’ index falls within the normal range, and he only refers to the kidnapped girls as “food” for “The Beast” when speaking to them.

If we refer to the category “Certitude”, we can see that Dennis has the highest index among them all, which is 1.59. This is connected with his being confident about their greatness, that “The Beast” actually exists, and that they can awaken him. Patricia, on the other hand, shows underuse of the words connected to the category, which is 0,25, since she is not that concerned about proving the point to others that “The Beast” will come to existence. Barry’s index is within the norm.

At the same time, if we take a look at the category “Clout”, we will see that Barry has the lowest score of all of them, which is: 18.69. Such number suggests that Barry acquires more tentative, humble, and anxious speaking style [10, p. 22]. At the same time, Patricia’s and Dennis’ indexes are slightly higher than the mean: 98.75 and 98.3, respectively. This is most probably connected to the fact that both Dennis and Patricia are in control of Kevin’s physical body now. They have suppressed all other personalities, including Kevin under the pretext of protecting him from the outer world. Both of them want to show to other personalities that they were right about the existence of “The Beast” and want to prove the world that they are not the ones to be mocked of but to be feared of.

One more category to distinguish is “Emotions”. According to the findings of Parkins, women are more

likely to express happiness, sadness, and fear, while men would more likely to express anger [11, p. 53]. For Patricia positive emotions index is within the norm: 0.98, but negative emotions and anxiety go beyond the mean: 0.98 and 0.74 accordingly. As for anger, she has a 0 index. Almost the same situation we can see in Barry's case: his negative emotions and expression of anxiety are higher than the mean: 1.84 and 1.1. His anger index is also 0 as Patricia's. The only difference is that he underuses words for expressing positive emotions: 0.37. Dennis, on the other hand, has almost all indexes within the norm: positive emotions: 0.58, negative: 0.72, anger: 0.14, while his anxiety index is equal to 0. According to the numbers, Barry and Patricia are more emotional than Dennis, since their indexes are higher than the mean: 2.21 for both of them and Dennis' has 1.3 which is within the norm.

Conclusions. Based on the results, the category that showed significant change after the identity switch was "Pronouns". While most findings

matched those of other researchers, some deviations were observed, particularly in the use of first-person singular pronouns, which may have been influenced by the plot. The "Emotion" category also showed some inconsistencies, which can be attributed to the storyline. "Affiliation" and "Certitude" categories, on the other hand, aligned with the results of earlier works of other researchers. At the same time, the category "Clout" showed some dissimilarities in Patricia's case, but this can also be explained by the plot line. Other discrepancies were found in the categories "Prepositions" and "Large words". Most differences from the expected results were found in Barry's speech. Notably, he showed results similar to Patricia's, possibly due to his artistic profession. However, in this case, it is important to remember that it was actually Dennis who played the role of Barry, and his pretense may have affected the index shift. The inconsistencies found in the categories during the research performance need further investigation.

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