

DISCRIMINATION TOWARDS DR. DON SHIRLEY AND TONY LIP AS THE MAIN CHARACTERS AS PORTRAYED IN *GREEN BOOK* FILM

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ABSTRACT

In this research, the researcher analyzed the discrimination based on a true story. The researcher only analyzed and discussed the discrimination that happened to the main characters. They are Dr. Don Shirley (African-American) and Tony Lip (Italian-American). The purposes of this research are to identify and describe the types of discrimination that happened to Dr. Don Shirley and Tony Lip and to understand their responses against it. The researcher used theories types of discrimination and types of responses against discrimination declared by Feagin. To analyze this research, the researcher used qualitative research and mimetic approach in this research. Based on the analysis, the researcher found out that all the types of discrimination happened in this film. It also appeared that all the types of responses against discrimination were found in this film. The discrimination in this film was done by both white and black people against Dr. Don Shirley. Hence, at the end of the film, the analysis showed that Tony Lip also discriminated Dr. Don Shirley.

Keywords: discrimination, race, African-American, Italian-American

ABSTRAK

Dalam penelitian ini, peneliti menganalisis diskriminasi berdasarkan kisah nyata. Peneliti hanya menganalisis dan mendiskusikan diskriminasi yang terjadi pada karakter utama. Mereka adalah Dr. Don Shirley (Afrika-Amerika) dan Tony Lip (Italia-Amerika). Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi dan menggambarkan tipe diskriminasi yang terjadi pada Dr. Don Shirley dan Tony Lip dan untuk memahami tanggapan mereka terhadapnya. Peneliti menggunakan teori-teori tipe diskriminasi dan tipe tanggapan terhadap diskriminasi yang dinyatakan oleh Feagin. Untuk menganalisis penelitian ini, peneliti menggunakan penelitian kualitatif dan pendekatan mimetik dalam penelitian ini. Berdasarkan analisis, peneliti menemukan bahwa semua tipe diskriminasi terjadi dalam film ini. Tampaknya semua tipe tanggapan terhadap diskriminasi juga ditemukan dalam film ini. Diskriminasi dalam film ini

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dilakukan oleh orang kulit putih dan kulit hitam terhadap Dr. Don Shirley (Afrika-Amerika) dan juga dilakukan oleh orang kulit putih terhadap Tony Lip (Italia-Amerika). Pada analisis juga menunjukkan bahwa pada awalnya, Tony Lip juga mendiskriminasi Dr. Don Shirley. Namun, di akhir film, pada analisis menunjukkan bahwa Tony Lip telah berubah. Dia menjadi lebih toleran terhadap Dr. Don Shirley dan berhenti mendiskriminasinya.

Kata kunci: diskriminasi, ras, Afrika-Amerika, Italia-Amerika

A. INTRODUCTION

Literary works are divided into many branches and one of them is film. Film as a semitextual genre has evolved the photographic images surpasses the portrayal in the theatre (Klarer 56). A film can be interpreted and analyzed like other literary works because film presents the same purpose as novels or short stories, which are they tell a story. In this case, literary work is the tool to give the readers, the listeners, or the watchers a representation of the social issues. It is also a tool for the writer and director to express their thoughts and feelings through the film.

One of the films that portrayed the reality of the people, places, and events is *Green Book* film directed by Peter Farrelly. *Green Book* is a story about Dr. Don Shirley who is an African-American pianist who had a concert tour in the Deep South, the United States in 1962. Therefore, setting will be used in this research because the set of time in this film is 1962 and the set of places played an important role. At that time in the 1960s, segregation in the United States happened for using facilities and getting services. The goals were mainly to separate the African-Americans from Whites.

Dr. Don Shirley is the main character in *Green Book* film, an African-American concert pianist who is polite, high and mighty, and mild-mannered. He is a noticeably talented musician, but he got racist attitudes from many of his audiences throughout his concert tour. During his performance, people appreciate and admire what he can do as a pianist. In contrast, they disrespect him when he is not playing. He faces many unequal treatments not only from the white people but also from his own kind, the African-American people.

Tony Lip is another main character in *Green Book* film, an Italian-American bouncer. Tony Lip is known for his ability to "bullshit" it is a talent that he never stops talking is the reason behind his nickname "Lip". He is an outspoken and humble person who takes great pride in the Italian-American working class. He also has a bad temper or personality that can come out when he is provoked. He also got discriminated from his own kind, the white person, because of his Italian heritage.

The purposes of this research were to identify the types of discrimination portrayed by Dr. Don Shirley and Tony Lip in the *Green Book* film and to describe how Dr. Don Shirley and Tony Lip responded to the discrimination in the *Green Book* film. The researcher hopes that this research gives a clear and deep understanding of discrimination itself. The findings of this research are expected to inspire future researchers and provide a depth resource of the same analysis.



B. RELATED LITERATURE

1. Film

Film is one of the literary works that serve a new version of imaginative and creative thinking about literature. Film is a motion and a shifting scene. It contains and serves feelings as well as emotions (Bennet and Royle 201). In a film, a character is a major point. Character plays an important role in any actions to create interactions which then sustain the interconnection of the storyline. The characters in the film have problems or conflicts that they have to face and solve.

2. Character and Characterization

Characters are the people that appear in a dramatic or narrative work and are interpreted by the reader as having specific moral, intellectual, and emotional attributes based on inferences drawn from what they say and how they say it (dialogue) and what they do (action). Each character has a motivation, which is the foundation for a character's speech and actions, that is based on their temperament, desires, and moral nature (Abrams 32-33). According to Boggs and Petrie, characterization is a process in which the author created characters that can influence people's responses (60). There are the classifications of characterization, as follow:

- **a.** Characterization Through Appearance. One of the most important aspects of film characterization is presented visually and instantly.
- **b.** Characterization Through External Action. What characters say in a fictional film usually reveals a lot about themselves.
- **c.** Characterization Through External Action. A person's actions are perhaps the best reflections of character.
- **d.** Characterization Through Internal Action. Even the most observant observer or listener can not see or hear what is going on in the inner world of action.
- e. Characterization Through Reactions of Other Characters. Characterization is usually increased by how other characters view a person.
- **f.** Characterization Through Contrast: Dramatic Foils. The use of foils—contrasting characters whose behavior, attitudes, opinions, lifestyle, physical appearance, and so on are like a polar opposite of the main characters—is one of the most effective characterization methods.
- **g.** Characterization Through Caricature and Leitmotif. Actors frequently exaggerate or distort one or more dominant features or personality traits to imprint a character quickly and deeply in our minds and memories.
- **h.** Characterization Through Choice of Name. The use of names with specific attributes of sound, meaning, or connotation is an essential form of characterization.

3. Setting



Wellek and Warren explain that "concerned setting with the places where story takes a place. Setting refers to geographical location of the story, time period, daily lifestyle of the characters and climate of the story" (131).

Rohrberger and Woods explain, "setting aids in establishing credibility; it can help to explain both characters and situation; it can give contribution to the atmosphere, or predominated mood; it can be active in foreshadowing; it can be symbolic" (22).

According to the explanations above it can be said, choosing the setting is very crucial in film. From the visual, the director needs to consider deeply to support the film. If the director makes a mistake in choosing the setting, it can reduce the interest of people to watch the film. The director has to know the best setting to suit the story. Setting also has a deep connection to build the soul and emotion of the people who watch it.

4. Discrimination

The term discrimination is defined as any preference based on race, color, descent, or national or ethnic origin. Discrimination contradicts a basic principle of human rights: that all people are equal in dignity and entitled to the same fundamental rights. Those rights are affected in the political, economic, social, and cultural of public life (Willmore 2).

Meanwhile, according to *Cambridge Dictionary*, "discrimination is treating a person or particular group of people differently, especially in a worse way from the way in which you treat other people, because of their skin color, sex, sexuality, etc".

The researcher defines discrimination as an individual, or a group of people, being treated differently and less favorably than another. Many aspects that consider being the cause of discrimination rather than because of skin color. These aspects such as social status, sex, and sexuality.

5. Types of Discrimination

According to Feagin in his journal, discrimination against middle-class blacks still ranges across this continuum (102):

- **a.** Avoidance action is the act of keeping away or avoiding someone.
- b. Rejection action is the act of refusing or rejecting someone.
- c. Verbal attack is the act of expressing emotion with spoken words.
- **d.** Police threats and harassment is the act of accusing or charging and offending or harassing someone, such as the unequal treatments are often being done by white police officers.
- e. Others threat and harassment is the act of threatening, attacking, offending or harassing someone.

6. Types of Responses Against Discrimination

Feagin in his journal postulated five distinct types of responses against discrimination (104):



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- **a.** Withdrawal or exit is an act as a response of a victim to stop being involved in an activity or conversation, simply just ignore or out of the conversation (exit).
- **b.** Resigned acceptance is an act as a response of a victim to ignore the discrimination but still interact in an activity or conversation, just simply accept being discriminated.
- **c.** Verbal response is an act as a response of a victim to speak up for the victim's rights without using physical response, simply just replying the perpetrators using words.
- d. Response unclearis an act as a response of a victim to give an ambiguous or not obvious or not easy to see, hear, or understand.

C. RESEARCH METHOD

1. Research Design

Bogdan and Biklen also add, "qualitative research is descriptive data, the data collected is in the form of words or pictures rather than numbers" (27). The researcher used qualitative research because in this research the data were described and explained in the form of words and pictures. After all, this research did not contain numbers and statistics. The data form in this research is the film script (words) as well as the screenshots (pictures) from the *Green Book* film.

The mimetic approach is used in this research in order to identify the core consistencies and meaning of discrimination. The researcher analyzed racism based on the experience of the main characters through film. As in *Green Book* film the action is purely mimetic. The mimetic approach is used in this research to describe the discrimination that happens in *Green Book* film as a reality issue or imitation of life.

2. Data and Data Sources

The data of this research are some conversations, dialogues, and some scenes with explanation of actions that portrayed the types of discrimination and the responses against discrimination from Dr. Don Shirley and Tony Lip's characters in *Green Book* film by Peter Farrelly throughout 130 minutes.

3. Data Collection

The data collection which is used is the observation method. The first step in observation is done by, watching *Green Book* film, listening carefully to the conversation, and reading the script of the film repeatedly to get a better understanding of every scene and content of the story, and taking notes of all the important information. To answer the types of responses against discrimination, the researcher must pay attention to watch the action of the characters to find one of the responses which is the response unclear. The second step is choosing and selecting the data which have relation to the research problems in this research and make it become a narrative story.



4. Data Anaysis

After the data have been collected, the next step is analyzing the data. There are several ways in analyzing discrimination, which are summarized into the next few steps according to Taylor-Powell and Renner, as follows:

- **a.** Get to know your data. Good analysis depends on understanding the data. It means that the researcher needs to watch the film, read, and re-read the script to get better understanding.
- **b.** The researcher focuses on analyzing and reviewing the key questions which are the types of discrimination towards Dr. Don Shirley and Tony Lip's characters and their respond to the discrimination.
- **c.** After watching, reading, and re-reading until get better understanding, this is the step to categorize the dialogue, and screenshots of the scenes from the film that related to the types of discrimination towards Dr. Don Shirley and Tony Lip's characters and their respond to the discrimination.
- **d.** After categorizing the dialogue, and screenshots of the scenes from the film the researcher takes a note and highlight every single data that related to the types of discrimination towards Dr. Don Shirley and Tony Lip's characters and their respond to the discrimination.
- e. The last step is connecting every single data that related to the theory, and using the theories concept that used on this research to find the answers for the types of discrimination towards Dr. Don Shirley and Tony Lip's characters and their respond to the discrimination (2-5).

D. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

- 1. Types of Discrimination
- a. Avoidance Action

(Data 1)





Fig.1. Tony Lip and Dr. Don Shirley's car stopped at a light 01:23:52, Discrimination (Green Book, Peter Farrelly.)

As seen in figure 1, through external action, the white couple is irritated seeing a white man is chauffeuring a black man. Dr. Don Shirley supposed to be behind the wheels, while Tony Lip is sitting in the back seat. This scene took place in traffic light stop line, it is a common place where people come across new and different people. From that place discrimination may be happening by people seeing and reacting to each other. Someimes when people saw something unusual they would conciously or unconciously paying attention to that.

b. Rejection Action

(Data 3)	
Morgan Anderson	: Uh, are you looking for the commode? Here, let me help
you.	
Dr. Don Shirley	: Yes, I
Morgan Anderson	: Yeah here. Let me help you. It's right out there 'fore the
	pines.
	(Min. 01:04:57 – 01:05:04)

Through dialogue and external action, Morgan Anderson was rejecting to give Dr. Don Shirley a proper service. This is proof that earning acceptance from white people is hardly possible. Dr. Don Shirley is not permitted to use the same bathroom as the white people used. Hence, as seen in figure 3, Morgan Anderson pointed at an old outhouse at the edge of the woods. An outhouse is a small building containing a seat over a hole that is used as a toilet (Dictionary.com). An outhouse serves as a symbolic for the lower class and black people. The segregation in the United State is the cause for this to happen to Dr. Don Shirley.

c. Verbal Attack

(Data 11)

Man #1 : **Hey, fancy-pants, you wanna play?** (Min. 00:55:35 – 00:55:37)

Through dialogue and appearance it was a verbal attack from the first black man to Dr. Don Shirley. It was at Motel for colored only which was the safe place for Dr. Don Shirley to avoid any interaction with the white. He got discriminated from his people who were black people. The first black man called Dr. Don Shirley "Fancy-pants". The way he dressed, it indicates that he was not from a lower class, because he dressed fancy. The word fancy means sophisticated or expensive person (Urban Dictionary).



d. Police Threats and Harassment

(Data 24)

Policeman #2	: Well you should call one. We're taking your auntie in.
Tony Lip	: For what?
Policeman #1	: Manager caught him and the other guy
	(Min. 01:13:54–01:14:00)

Through dialogue it was a conversation between two Policemen and Tony Lip. This showed a police threat and harassment toward Dr. Don Shirley. The Policeman was threatening to take Dr. Don Shirley to jail. Dr. Don Shirley is accused of his action with a white man who was doing a homosexual thing. He even called Dr. Don Shirley "auntie", is a slang word that means "a middle-aged or older male homosexual" (The Online Slang Dictionary). In 1962, there were still a lot of states in the United States criminalized same-sex or to be precise, a homosexual activity. Only Illinois becomes first state to repeal Sodomy Law to decriminalize homosexual contact between consenting adults (Gsafewi). Based on the law at that time, the people who done same-sex activity usually ended up in jail, because he was doing something illegal or against the law.

e. Others Threat and Harassment

(Data 25)



Fig.4. Mickey Charon takes a swing at Tony Lip 00:03:43, Discrimination (Green Book, Peter Farrelly.)

Through external action from Mickey Charon, he was harassing or attacking Tony Lip. Previously Mickey Charon is triggered by Tony Lip's suggestion. Tony Lip said that Mickey Charon needed to go home because he caused trouble in the Copacabana. He chose to use violence by taking a swing at Tony Lip. This scene took place at a nightclub at the Copacabana.



It is a common thing that there is a fight at a nightclub. Sometimes a small problem could cause a fight just because of the ego to one another.

- 2. Responses Against Discrimination
- a. Withdrawal or Exit

(Data 30)



Fig.7. The furious Graham Kindell follows them out the front door 01:44:32, Discrimination (Green Book, Peter Farrelly.)

Dr. Don Shirley and Tony Lip's responses right after they were verbally attacked by Graham Kindell. Through external action it reflected their characters, it showed that their personalities are strong-willed. Both Dr. Don Shirley and Tony Lip gave the same responses, they were agreed just walked out of the performance in Birmingham Hotel. Even though Dr. Don Shirley was the main event there. This was the proof for Dr. Don Shirley that in 1962 the segregation in the United State had an effect on him being unable to dine in a restaurant. Then after Graham Kindell talked to Tony Lip they decided to abandon the last place of their concert in Birmingham Hotel.

b. Resigned Acceptance

(Data 36)





Fig.12. Dr. Don Shirley enters the dressing room 01:38:15, Discrimination (Green Book, Peter Farrelly.)

As seen in figure 12. Dr. Don Shirley's response after Graham Kindell showed his dressing room in Birmingham Hotel. Despite of the place, in Birmingham Hotel, Dr. Don Shirley still got rejection action from Graham Kindell. The dressing room was more like a storage room. A small table, one chair, and a mirror for Dr. Don Shirley, it was not worth it for him. It was showing that he was being calmed accepting it. The main reason was that he wanted to pursue his goal to share his music with white people. So, they would be accepted him being able to perform white's music and to be treated equally.

c. Verbal Response

(Data 46)

Tony Lip	: You? Mr. Big Shot, you live on top of a castle, travelling around the world doing concerts for rich people. I live on the streets. You sit on a throne. So yeah, my world is way more blacker than yours.
Dr. Don Shirley	r : Pull over.
Tony Lip	: What?
Dr. Don Shirley	r : Pull over.
Tony Lip	: I ain't pullin' over.
Dr. Don Shirley	': Stop the car, Tony!
Tony Lip	: What are you doing? Doc. Doc what the hell are you doing? Doc. Get
	back in the car.
Dr. Don Shirley	Y: Yes, I live in a castle, Tony! Alone! And rich white peoplepay me to play piano for them because it makes them feel cultured. But as soon as I step off that stage, I go right back to being just another nigger to them. Because that is their true culture. And I suffer that slight alone because I'm not accepted by my own people, cause I'm not like them



either. So if I'm not black enough and I'm not white enough and if I'm not man enough, then tell me, Tony, what am I? (Min. 01:32:08–01:33:11)

It was on a rainy night, it gave a certain atmosphere and mood to that situation. Firstly, through dialogue, the way Dr. Don Shirley was raising his voice represented his anger, with full of anger, Dr. Don Shirley said, "Pull over." two times. Dr. Don Shirley raised his voice again and said, "Stop the car, Tony!". Secondly, while he said, "Stop the car. Tony", it is revealed his aggressive personality. It showed through his action in the scene when he bangs the front seat inside the car. Thirdly, through dialogue, the way Dr. Don Shirley was raising his voice represented his anger, with full of anger, Dr. Don Shirley said, "Yes, I live in a castle, Tony! Alone! And rich white people pay me to play piano for them because it makes them feel cultured. But as soon as I step off that stage, I go right back to being just another nigger to them. Because that is their true culture. And I suffer that slight alone because I'm not accepted by my own people, cause I'm not like them either. So if I'm not black enough and I'm not white enough and if I'm not man enough, then tell me, Tony, what am I?". He was offended because Tony Lip seemed to speak nonsense. Tony Lip just spoke like he knew everything about Dr. Don Shirley.

The truth was, he did live in a castle, but he was lonely. The rich people who paid him to perform praised him when he was on stage, but as soon as he got off he became just like other black people. He was also not accepted by his people. Deep down he knew he was different, he does not belong in both worlds, not for the white and certainly not for the black. Furthermore, he also questions his sexual orientation, because previously he got caught naked with a man. Those three points made him questioning his identity.

d. Physical Counterattack

(Data 52)





Fig.14. Tony Lip lashes out with a brutal open-hand slap to the stage manager's ear 00:48:22, Discrimination (Green Book, Peter Farrelly.)

Tony Lip's response right after he was getting a verbal attack from the Stage Manager. Through external action it reflected Tony Lip's character, it is revealed his aggressive personality. It was showing that he could be aggressive when he is provoked. The Stage Manager verbally attacked Tony Lip by saying, "...greaseball?" As seen in figure 15, he gave his response by lashing out a brutal open-hand slap to the Stage Manager.

e. Response Unclear

(Data 56)



Fig.18. A shit-hole. Drunken Rednecks surround an even drunker Dr. Don Shirley 00:57:25, Discrimination (Green Book, Peter Farrelly.)

Dr. Don Shirley's response right after he was getting others threat and harassment by the second Redneck. As seen in figure 18, the second Redneck was punching Dr. Don Shirley's stomach. It was not clear what was Dr. Don Shirley's response. The rest of the Rednecks seemed to cover him, so it was hard to see his response.

After the analysis based on Feagin's theories, the setting of this film is in 1962, segregation played a big role in discrimination to happen towards Dr. Don Shirley. Some places also appeared to be commonplace for discrimination happened towards Dr. Don Shirley and Tony Lip. As in 1962, these happened to be a public places for the perpetrators to do the discrimination freely. Two of the characterizations are characterization through dialogue and external action. Characterization through dialogue and external action showed that Dr. Don



Shirley and Tony Lip were experiencing the discrimination in *Green Book* film. Characterization through dialogue and external action are also applied for their responses against those discriminations.

Based on Feagin's theory, the researcher found out that all the types of discrimination were found. There are avoidance action, rejection action, verbal attack, police threats and harassment, and other threats and harassment.

Verbal attack are mostly happen in the street, but it can also happen in any places. The researcher found several words that contain name-typing or labeling towards Dr. Don Shirley and Tony Lip. As for Dr. Don Shirley there are: "fancy-pants", "high and mighty", "Brillo pad", "*tootsune*", and "Mr. Big Shot". As for Tony Lip there are: "punk", "greaseball", and "nigger". In *Green Book* film, black people also use their verbal to attack Dr. Don Shirley. The black people use the words "fancy-pants" and "high and mighty". The researcher found 17 data on verbal attack. The types of responses against discrimination that given by the victims such as: withdrawal or exit, resigned acceptance, verbal response, physical counterattack, or response unclear.

Verbal attacked appeared to be the most dominant issue in types of discrimination. The reason is because this type is a common action to be done by the perpetrators. Through the dialogue between the perpetrators and the victims or only through the spoken words by the perpetrators.

By using Feagin's theory, the researcher found how Dr. Don Shirley and Tony Lip respond to the discrimination that happened to them. The stages of their response started from withdrawal, followed by resigned acceptance, verbal response, and ended up with a physical counterattack. The last response according to Feagin is response unclear. The researcher found out that all types of responses against discrimination were found.

The third stage is verbal response. Simply just replying the perpetrators using words. The peak in *Green Book* shown in verbal response from Dr. Don Shirley. He had enough of people discriminate him. Through dialogue, he was screaming pouring out his emotion to Tony Lip. His verbal response made Tony Lip's perspective about him entirely change. After Dr. Don Shirley poured out his emotion, there were no more discrimination from Tony Lip towards him. Tony Lip seemed to gain a bit of respect for Dr. Don Shirley. By the end of the film Tony Lip accepted him wholly, and he respected him just like a family. The researcher found 14 data on verbal response. The types of discrimination given by the perpetrators is verbal attack.

Verbal response also appeared to be the most dominant issue in types of responses against discrimination. The reason is because this type of response is a common action to be done by the victims to defense themselves. Through the dialogue between the perpetrators and the victims or only through the spoken words by the victims.

E. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of the types of discrimination that happened towards Dr. Don Shirley and Tony Lip in the film using the theory declared by Feagin, the researcher concluded that all types of discrimination are found which done by both race White and Black people to



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Dr. Don Shirley and White people to Tony Lip in the film. There are avoidance action, rejection action, verbal attack, police threats and harassment, and others threat and harassment.

After analyzing the discrimination that happened to Dr. Don Shirley and Tony Lip throughout the film, the researcher analyzed the types of responses that Dr. Don Shirley and Tony Lip do against the discrimination that happened to them by using the theory of Feagin about types of responses against discrimination. The researcher concluded that the responses that Dr. Don Shirley and Tony Lip do started from withdrawal, followed by resigned acceptance, verbal response, and ended up with a physical counterattack. There is also response unclear. As for physical counterattack it appeared only Tony Lip used this type of responses against discrimination. Dr. Don Shirley never used this type of response. Based on their personality, Tony Lip likes to use violence against violence. Meanwhile, Dr. Don Shirley has always prevented himself from using violence to maintain his dignity.

The researcher concluded that the discrimination issue that happened to Dr. Don Shirley and Tony Lip appeared in reason. As for Dr. Don Shirley, in this film it appeared mostly because of the segregation played a big role in discrimination to happen toward him. As for Tony Lip it appeared mostly because of his bad personality for discrimination to happen toward him.

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