

## FRIENDSHIP IN 3 IDIOTS REVIEWED FROM A PSYCHOLINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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### ABSTRACT

*This study examines the representation of friendship in the film 3 Idiots from a psycholinguistic perspective through the Systematic Literature Review (SLR). Friendship is a fundamental aspect of human social interaction, and language plays an important role in shaping cognitive, emotional, and social relationships. Despite the popularity of 3 Idiots as an object of interdisciplinary analysis, studies that specifically explore friendship in film using a psycholinguistic framework have remained limited. This research aims to synthesize the existing literature to identify how the use of language in friendship interactions reflects psycholinguistic processes such as cognition, emotion regulation, and social bonding. The study uses a qualitative SLR approach by systematically searching academic databases, applying inclusion and exclusion criteria, and analyzing thematically selected studies. These findings reveal three dominant themes in psycholinguistic representations of friendship: cognitive processes in language interactions, emotional expression and affective support, and the social function of language in building solidarity and group identity. The dialogue in 3 Idiots shows how language mediates thoughts, regulates emotions, and strengthens interpersonal bonds between characters. The results also show that there is a significant research gap in integrating psycholinguistic theory with film analysis, particularly in the context of friendship. This study contributes theoretically by extending psycholinguistic investigations to audiovisual media and relational contexts. Methodologically, it highlights the value of SLR in synthesizing research that is fragmented across disciplines. Overall, this research provides a comprehensive understanding of how friendships are linguistically and psychologically constructed in film, offering insights for future psycholinguistic and media-based studies.*

**Keywords:** *Psycholinguistics; Friendship, 3 Idiots; Film Analysis; Systematic Literature Review*

Movies serve not only as a medium of entertainment, but also as social representations that reflect the realities of human life, including the dynamics of interpersonal relationships such as friendship. One of the films that remains relevant and widely studied across disciplines is *3 Idiots* (2009) by Rajkumar Hirani. The film depicts the friendship journey of three engineering students Rancho, Farhan, and Raju in the face of academic pressure, social expectations, and psychological conflicts during higher education (Styowati, Ambarwati, and Kristiasih 2022). The film's popularity is not only limited to the Indian film industry, but it also has global resonance as the

issues raised are universal, such as academic stress, identity search, and the importance of social support.

The phenomenon of friendship in movies *3 Idiots* It is interesting to learn from a psycholinguistic perspective, considering that the interaction between characters in it is full of the use of language that reflects the cognitive, emotional, and social processes of the characters. The dialogue in the film not only functions as a medium of conveying information, but also an instrument to build meaning, express emotions, and influence the way the characters understand themselves and their environment (Alnes 2022). In this context, language serves as a key tool in building and maintaining friendship relationships. More broadly, this phenomenon is also in line with the increasing academic interest in language studies in audiovisual media. Film as a multimodal text presents a complex combination of spoken language, facial expressions, intonation, and social context(Carey, *et al.* 2025). Film is therefore a rich source of data to examine how language is processed, produced, and understood in dynamic social situations, especially in friendship relationships involving empathy, solidarity, and emotional support(Berezhna 2024).

Although the movie *3 Idiots* Having been widely analyzed from various perspectives such as education, sociology, psychology, and cultural studies, research that specifically examines aspects of friendship from a psycholinguistic perspective is still relatively limited (Shimkhar) *et al.* 2025). Most previous research has tended to focus on the moral message of the film, criticism of the educational system, or character analysis in general, without delving deeply into how language is used and processed in friendly interactions between characters. The main problem that arises is the lack of integration between the study of friendship, language, and the underlying mental processes (until, 2024). In fact, psycholinguistics as a branch of linguistics that studies the relationship between language and mind has great potential to explain how verbal interactions in friendship affect a person's understanding, emotions, and behavior. For example, how is the choice of words, sentence structure, or speaking style in a dialogue *3 Idiot* Reflect the cognitive processes of images? How is language used to express emotional support, reduce anxiety, or build solidarity?

In addition, there is the problem of literary fragmentation. Research on psycholinguistics often focuses on laboratory experiments or natural conversational data in educational and clinical contexts, while film studies are more in the realm of discourse analysis or cultural studies. As a result, there has not been a comprehensive synthesis linking psycholinguistic findings to film analysis as a representation of social interactions. The novelty of this research lies in the attempt to integrate psycholinguistic perspectives with film analysis *3 Idiot* through the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach. In contrast to previous research that was descriptive or a single analysis of film, this study seeks to systematically map the literature related to the study of friendship, language, and psycholinguistic processes in the context of film and audiovisual media(Ladroma *et al.* 2020).

The SLR approach allows researchers to identify existing research patterns, themes, and trends, while highlighting research gaps that have not been widely explored. Thus, this study not only provides an analysis of *3 Idiot*, but also contributed to the development of a broader conceptual framework regarding the study of psycholinguistics in film(Akhter 2023). In addition, this research offers novelty in the use of popular films as an object of psycholinguistic study. So far, psycholinguistics has often been associated with experimental research that uses artificial stimuli. Through this research, film is positioned as an authentic data source that represents the use of language in complex and emotional social contexts, especially in friendship relationships.

Based on the initial review of the literature, there are several research gaps that are the basis of this study. First, there is still a lack of research that explicitly examines friendship in film

from a psycholinguistic perspective. Most psycholinguistic studies focus on language acquisition, syntactic processing, or language disorders, while the relational and emotional aspects of language use receive less attention. Second, a review of the film that discusses *3 Idiots* generally using qualitative approaches such as critical discourse analysis, semiotics, or narrative analysis (Aleknaitė and Stundžia 2024). This approach has not fully explored how language in film reflects a character's mental processes, such as attention, memory, emotions, and motivation, which are the main focus of psycholinguistics. Third, there have not been many studies that use the SLR method to examine the relationship between psycholinguistics and film. In fact, this method is important to bring together various research findings that are scattered and provide a comprehensive picture of the development of research in this field. The absence of a systematic synthesis of literature has led to a fragmented and poorly structured understanding of this topic.

The importance of this study can be seen from several aspects. First, theoretically, this research contributes to the development of psycholinguistic studies by expanding the research object to the realm of film and audiovisual media. It is important to enrich an understanding of how language is processed and used in real and complex social contexts. Second, from a methodological perspective, the use of SLR contributes to a systematic and transparent form of literature mapping. Thus, this research can be a reference for future researchers who want to study similar topics or develop empirical research based on the findings that have been synthesized. Third, practically, the results of this research can provide new insights into the role of language in building and maintaining friendship. This understanding is relevant not only in academic contexts, but also in everyday social life, given that verbal communication is a key element in interpersonal relationships. Fourth, the urgency of this research is also related to the increasing attention to mental health and psychological well-being, especially among the younger generation. Healthy and supportive friendships, as depicted in *3 Idiots*, can be a protective factor against psychological stress and distress. Therefore, understanding the mechanisms of language that play a role in this relationship is becoming increasingly important.

Based on the background, problems, and urgency that have been described, the objectives of this study are as follows: The main objective of this literature review is to systematically map and analyze the representation of friendship in the film *3 Idiots* through a psycholinguistic perspective. Using the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach, this study seeks to identify trends in previous studies as well as analyze how verbal interactions between characters reflect the cognitive processes and emotional dynamics of the characters. In addition to revealing the deep meaning of the film's dialogue, this review strategically aims to find research gaps in the realms of psycholinguistics and film studies, so that it can be a strong foundation for future research development.

## **METHODS**

This study uses a qualitative approach with the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method to examine the representation of friendship in film *3 Idiots* from a psycholinguistic perspective. The SLR method was chosen because it allows researchers to identify, evaluate, and synthesize the results of previous research in a systematic, transparent, and structured manner, so as to provide a comprehensive overview of the development of psycholinguistic studies relevant to film analysis and friendship interactions (Bizimana 2021).

### **Research Design**

The design of this research follows the stages of SLR that are commonly used in the study of linguistics and social sciences, including: (1) formulation of research questions, (2) literature

search, (3) determination of inclusion and exclusion criteria, (4) selection and evaluation of research quality, (5) data extraction, and (6) data synthesis (Moore and Spencer 2021). This stage is carried out systematically to minimize bias and increase the validity of the research results. The main research question in this study is: how is the representation of friendship in film *3 Idiots* Through language interaction reviewed from a psycholinguistic perspective based on the findings of previous research

### **Data Sources and Strategies**

The data sources for this study come from national and international journal articles relevant to the topics of psycholinguistics, film analysis, friendship, and language in audiovisual media. Literature searches are conducted through academic databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, and DOAJ using Boolean operators (AND, OR) on keywords: *psycholinguistics*, *Friendship*, *Film Analysis*, *Language Interaction*, *Audiovisual Media*, and *3 Idiots*.

The time span of publication is limited to the last ten to fifteen years with scientific considerations to capture the evolution of psycholinguistic theory in digital media as well as ensure that the data analyzed includes contemporary language dynamics relevant to the social context of the film *3 Idiots* (2009 release). In addition, this limitation aims to maintain the novelty (*state-of-the-art*) of research findings to remain accurate in mapping the gaps of current studies. Only scientific articles in the form of full text are included in the selection process to ensure the depth of literature analysis.

### **Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria**

To maintain the consistency and quality of the data, this study established inclusion and exclusion criteria. Inclusion criteria include: (1) articles that discuss psycholinguistics or aspects of language related to cognitive and emotional processes, (2) research that analyzes film or audiovisual media as an object of study, (3) research that alludes to interpersonal relationships or friendships through language, and (4) articles that use qualitative or theoretical approaches that are relevant to the research objectives. Instead, exclusion criteria include: (1) articles that are not relevant to psycholinguistic topics or language analysis, (2) non-scientific publications such as popular opinions, non-academic essays, or film reviews without a theoretical basis, and (3) research that focuses only on the technical aspects of cinema without language analysis or social interaction.

### **Study Selection and Evaluation Procedure**

The study selection process is carried out through several stages. The first stage is the screening of titles and abstracts to identify initial relevance to the research topic. The second stage is the reading of the full text to ensure compliance with the inclusion criteria. Articles that meet the criteria are then evaluated for quality based on the clarity of the research objectives, the theoretical framework used, and the methodology applied. This quality evaluation aims to ensure that the studies included in the synthesis have adequate and credible scientific contributions (Berezhna 2023). Articles that were judged to not meet methodological quality standards were excluded from further analysis.

### **Data Extraction and Analysis Techniques**

Data were extracted from the selected articles by recording important information such as the research objectives, the object of the research, the psycholinguistic framework used, as well as key findings related to language use and friendship. The extracted data were then analyzed thematically by grouping findings based on key themes, such as cognitive processes, emotional

expression, and the social function of language in friendship. This thematic analysis is used to identify patterns and relationships between previous research findings. Furthermore, the results of the analysis were interpreted in the context of the film *3 Idiots* to understand how the interaction of language in the film reflects the psycholinguistic processes that have been discussed in the literature.

### Synthesis and Reporting of Results

The final stage of this research is data synthesis, which is integrating the results of thematic analysis into a coherent and systematic narrative. This synthesis aims to answer research questions and identify research gaps that are still open. The results of the study were then reported descriptively-analytically by emphasizing the relationship between psycholinguistic theory and the representation of friendship in the film *3 Idiots*. With this method, the research is expected to make a theoretical and methodological contribution to the study of psycholinguistics as well as enrich the understanding of the role of language in friendship relations represented through film media.

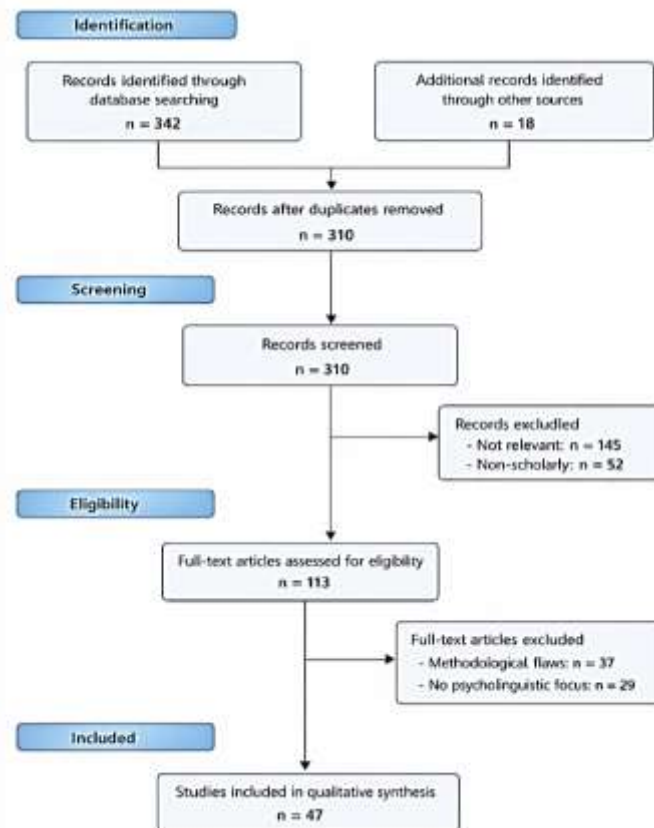


Figure 1. Research Prism Diagram

The PRISM diagram is used to systematically describe the literature selection process in the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) study. The initial stage of identification is carried out by searching for articles from various academic databases using relevant keywords, then followed by the removal of duplicate articles. Furthermore, at the screening stage, articles are selected based on titles and abstracts to assess their relevance to psycholinguistic studies, friendship, and film analysis, so that articles that are not suitable are excluded from the research process. The feasibility stage is carried out through the reading of the full text to assess the suitability of the article's

methodology and theoretical framework with the research objectives. Articles that do not have a psycholinguistic focus or have methodological weaknesses are omitted. The final stage is included, resulting in a selected article that is qualitatively analyzed. The use of the PRISMA Diagram ensures that the literature selection process is carried out in a transparent, systematic, and scientifically accountable manner.

## FINDINGS

This section presents the results of the synthesis of selected articles analyzed through the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method. The results of the study focused on how friendship is represented through the use of language in the film *3 Idiots* and how this representation can be understood from a psycholinguistic perspective, especially related to cognitive, affective, and social processes.

### Characteristics of the Studies Analyzed

Based on the results of the selection using the PRISMA Diagram, a number of relevant scientific articles were successfully identified and analyzed qualitatively. The study was drawn from various national and international journals with a primary focus on psycholinguistics, film analysis, language interaction, and interpersonal relationships. In general, the majority of research uses a qualitative approach with discourse analysis techniques, thematic analysis, or psycholinguistic theoretical studies.

**Table 1. General Characteristics of the Analyzed Study**

Aspects	General Description
Publication year range	2010–2024
Types of research	Qualitative, theoretical, discourse analysis
Object of study	Film, audiovisual media, social interaction
Theoretical focus	Cognitive and affective psycholinguistics
Dominant method	Thematic and descriptive analysis

Source : Secondary Data, processed 2026

The results of this study show that psycholinguistic studies in film are still dominated by a qualitative approach with a focus on the interpretation of the meaning of language in social and emotional contexts.

### Psycholinguistic Themes in the Representation of Friendship

The results of the synthesis show that the representation of friendship in *the film 3 Idiots* can be classified into several main psycholinguistic themes, namely: (1) cognitive processes in language interaction, (2) the expression of emotions and affection, and (3) the social function of language in building solidarity.

### Cognitive Processes in Language Interaction

Some research emphasizes that the dialogue between characters in *3 Idiots* reflects cognitive processes such as understanding meaning, reasoning, and decision-making. Rancho's characters, for example, often use reflective and metaphorical language, which shows a high cognitive ability to process abstract concepts. The language used not only conveys information, but also influences the way other characters understand the reality of academics and life. From a psycholinguistic perspective, it shows the relationship between language and thought processes. Persuasive and argumentative dialogue serves as a cognitive stimulus that encourages a change in the mindset of other characters, especially Farhan and Raju.

### Expression of Emotion and Affection

The second dominant theme is the expression of emotions through language. The analyzed studies show that friendships in *3 Idiots are built* through dialogue loaded with expressions of empathy, humor, and emotional support. The use of humor, mild taunts, and informal language became linguistic strategies to reduce psychological tension and strengthen the emotional bonds between characters.

**Table 2. Forms of Emotional Expression in Character Interactions**

Forms of Expression	Examples of Language Functions	Psycholinguistic Perspective
Humor	Reduces stress and anxiety	Emotion regulation
Verbal empathy	Provide emotional support	Affection and emotional processing
Informal language	Creating closeness	Social attachment

Source : Secondary Data, processed 2026

These results suggest that language plays an important role in regulating emotions and establishing a sense of security in friendship relationships.

### The Social Function of Language in Friendship

The third theme is related to the social function of language. The analyzed article confirms that language is used as a tool to build solidarity and group identity. In *3 Idiots*, the use of special terms, internal jokes, and certain speaking styles creates a sense of community that distinguishes friendship groups from other social environments. From a psycholinguistic point of view, language serves not only as a means of communication, but also as a symbol of social identity that influences self-perception and interpersonal relationships.

### Synthesis of Psycholinguistic Findings

The results of the synthesis show that the three themes are interrelated and form unity in representing friendship. Cognitive processes affect the way characters understand messages, emotional expression strengthens affective bonds, and the social function of language maintains the sustainability of friendships.

**Table 3. Synthesis of Psycholinguistic Themes in the Film 3 Idiots**

Main themes	Focus of Analysis	Impact on Friendship
Cognitive processes	Language understanding and reasoning	Mindset change
Expression of emotions	Empathy and support	Strengthen emotional bonds
The social function of language	Solidarity and identity	Relationship sustainability

Source : Secondary Data, processed 2026

These findings suggest that psycholinguistic approaches are able to explain friendship dynamics in more depth than conventional film analysis that focuses only on narratives or moral messages. In addition to revealing the pattern of findings, the results of the study also show that there is a significant research gap. First, there is still limited research that explicitly links psycholinguistic theory with friendship film analysis. Second, most research has not examined in depth the relationship between language, emotions, and mental processes in the context of interpersonal relationships. Third, there have not been many studies that use the SLR approach to bring these findings together systematically.

Overall, the results of the study show that friendship in *the movie 3 Idiots* is represented through the use of language that reflects cognitive, affective, and social processes. Language plays a key role as a medium in building understanding, managing emotions, and strengthening solidarity between characters. The psycholinguistic approach provides a comprehensive analytical framework for understanding these dynamics, while the SLR method allows for a systematic and structured synthesis of literature.

## DISCUSSION

More deeply, the interaction in *3 Idiots* shows that language serves as a manifestation of social neuropsychology, where each speech is not just an exchange of words, but a process of cognitive synchronization between group members. From a psycholinguistic perspective, the use of sarcastic humor and distinctive terms by Rancho and colleagues serves to lower *the affective filter* (affective barrier) in the midst of the pressure of a rigid education system. This phenomenon proves the relationship between mental lexicons (vocabulary stored in memory) and emotional states; When characters are under pressure, their choice of language strategy shifts from communicative-formal to expressive-emotional as a form of psychological self-defense. This analysis confirms that in friendship, language acts as a cognitive regulator capable of altering an individual's perception of external stressors, thereby creating a mentally safe space through the linguistic resonance that is built between them. From a psycholinguistic point of view, the verbal interactions that occur not only serve as a means of communication, but also reflect the cognitive and affective processes that underlie a character's social behavior. These findings reinforce the view that language and mind are dynamically interconnected in the context of interpersonal relationships.

The study's key findings suggest that cognitive processes such as understanding, reasoning, and decision-making are clearly reflected in the film's dialogues *3 Idiot*. Rancho's character, for example, uses reflective, argumentative, and metaphorical language to challenge the conventional mindset of other characters (Harris 2021). In the psycholinguistic framework, linguistic strategies can be understood as a form of activation of high-level cognitive processes, such as the elaboration of meaning and the restructuring of thinking schemes. The language used is not only passively

accepted, but actively processed by the opponent, thus influencing their attitudes and outlook on life. This is in line with psycholinguistic theories that emphasize that language plays a role as a cognitive mediation tool in the formation of individual understanding and thinking (Norqizilovich 2022).

In addition to the cognitive aspect, this discussion also highlights the role of language in regulating emotions and forming affective bonds. The results show that the friendship dialogue in *3 Idiots* is loaded with expressions of empathy, support, and humor. From an affective psycholinguistic perspective, the use of emotional language can help individuals manage stress and anxiety, especially in situations of academic stress experienced by the character. Humor and informal language serve as psychological buffer mechanisms that allow characters to express their feelings without fear of negative judgment. These findings support the view that language has a therapeutic function in the context of social relationships.

Further discussion shows that language also serves as a tool to shape group identity and solidarity. In *3 Idiots*, the use of specific terms, distinctive speech styles, and internal jokes create a sense of community that reinforces the identity of the friendship group. From a social psycholinguistic point of view, this phenomenon suggests that language not only reflects social relationships, but also actively shapes the structure of those relationships. Identity as a "friend" is constructed and maintained through repetitive and meaningful linguistic practices. It emphasizes that language is an important component in the construction of social identity and interpersonal relationships.

The findings of this study also reveal the close relationship between language, emotions, and social context. Friendship in *3 Idiot* cannot be understood only through the analysis of the text of the dialogue in isolation, but must be seen in the context of the situation, the nonverbal expression, and the social setting that accompanies it. A psycholinguistic perspective allows for a more holistic analysis by considering how meaning is produced and understood in real-life situations. Thus, film as a multimodal text becomes a rich source of data to examine the interaction of language in complex social contexts (Tree et al. 2020).

Related to previous research, the results of this discussion show compatibility with a number of psycholinguistic studies that emphasize the importance of affective factors in language use. However, the study also went beyond previous research by placing friendship as the main focus of the analysis (Tuzzahrah 2024). During this time, much psycholinguistic research focuses on individual aspects such as language processing or language disorders, while the relational dimension tends to receive less attention. Thus, this research contributes to expanding the scope of psycholinguistic studies to the realm of interpersonal relationships.

This discussion also emphasized the relevance of the Systematic Literature Review approach in examining interdisciplinary topics such as psycholinguistics and film. Through SLR, this research succeeded in bringing together findings spread across various disciplines, resulting in a more comprehensive and structured understanding. This approach allows the identification of patterns of findings and research gaps that have not been explored much, especially related to psycholinguistic analysis in friendship films. The theoretical implications of this study lie in strengthening the position of psycholinguistics as a relevant analytical framework for understanding language in social and emotional contexts (Kaksina and Purwaningtyas 2020). The findings suggest that cognitive, affective, and social processes are inseparable in language analysis. Language serves as a bridge between thoughts and emotions, as well as a tool for building and maintaining social relationships. This perspective can be the basis for the development of psycholinguistic models that are more contextual and oriented towards social interactions.

From a practical perspective, this discussion shows that films such as *3 Idiots* can be used as a medium of reflection to understand the dynamics of friendship and the role of language in everyday life. An understanding of how language is used to express empathy, support, and solidarity can provide insight for individuals in building healthy social relationships. Although this study did not directly focus on language learning, the resulting findings remain broadly relevant in the context of interpersonal communication and psychological well-being. Overall, this discussion confirms that the representation of friendship in *the film 3 Idiots* reflects the complexity of language interactions involving cognitive processes, emotions, and social functions. The psycholinguistic approach provides a strong analytical lens for understanding those dynamics, while the SLR method ensures that the analysis is based on a systematic and accountable synthesis of the literature.

## CONCLUSION

This research shows that friendship in *the film 3 Idiot* is represented through the use of language that reflects complex cognitive, affective, and social processes. From a psycholinguistic perspective, dialogue between figures not only serves as a means of communication, but also as a medium for the formation of meaning, the regulation of emotions, and the strengthening of solidarity and group identity. These findings confirm that language plays a central role in building and nurturing friendships, while reflecting on the close interconnectedness between language, thoughts, and emotions in social interactions.

Through the Systematic Literature Review approach, this study successfully maps and synthesizes relevant scientific findings, as well as identifies research gaps in psycholinguistic studies and film analysis. This conclusion reinforces the urgency to develop a more contextual and interdisciplinary study of psycholinguistics, especially in analyzing audiovisual media and interpersonal relationships. Further research is expected to develop more in-depth empirical studies to enrich understanding of the role of language in the dynamics of friendship and human social life.

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