

WOMEN'S LANGUAGE FEATURES OF THE MAIN FEMALE CHARACTER IN HARPER LEE'S TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD

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Abstract

This research aims to find out the women's language features that used by the main female character in "To Kill a Mockingbird Novel 1960" using Lakoff's theory (1975) Women's Language theory. The research will also describe how the main female character expressed every sentence that has women's language features with stylistic analysis and show the situation in the sentence with Hyme's (1974) Speaking theory. The descriptive analytics approach was applied in this research to characterize the aspects and qualities of the subject. The research findings show that lexical hedges or fillers, tag question, rising intonation on declaratives, empty adjective, emphatic emphasis, superpolite form, hypercorrect grammar, avoidance of powerful swear words, and intensifier are nine features of women's language used by the main female character. The researcher also finds how the main female character expressed her sentences with linguistic deviation and literary analysis. And the researcher discovers 8 elements of situation that happened in the conversation, namely setting, participant, ends (goal), act sequence, key, instrumentalities, norms of interaction, and genre. The research was able to identify the women's language features and define how they are communicated as well as the situation in the conversation as a conclusion.

Keywords: *Language and Gender, Women's language, To Kill a Mockingbird*

INTRODUCTION

Many factors can influence the way people converse in their everyday lives. People speak a language through observing the social context, social relation, or social identity they tend to communicate with. Another thing is language also can be characterized based on the speaker's gender. A pattern of language use reflects society and social division gender (Talbot, 2010). During 1960s and 1970s, research on seeing men and women developed language differently and also determine each of women's language features have been conducted by many linguists. A hypothesis about language use to the connection of power was written by the linguists after the research. The function that provides women and men their social roles in society is a significant variation in their language development. Women's language sounds to speak in a more polite manner than men's language in common. From the use of intonations, structures, gestures, and expressions, women's speakers are tended to be softer than men's speakers. Figurative words are also mainly used and they come to be more careful when they delivered a speech. Also, when women are unsure about anything, they blame themselves. It is implying that they lack confidence in themselves. In 1973, Lakoff observed the first difference between women and men in use of language. The linguistic inequality that women face in society is the significant focus for this research. Then, this linguistic inequality is being generally divided by Lakoff in two types. First, investigate how women's language use. Second, the way common language addresses them, both of which tend to downgrade women's status in society to that of a submissive one (Svendsen, 2018).

Research about women's language have been conducted by some researchers. A study from Chandra and Yulia (2018) learns about Nicki Minaj's comments on American Idol Season 12 that contain references to women's language. The result is Nicki Minaj emphasized just five women's language features in her comments on American Idol Season 12 contestants speech. In a movie, a recent study which done by Oktapiani, Natsir, and Setyowati in 2017 looked for women's language in *In The Devil Wears Prada* on its every female character. This study observed that *In The Devil Wears Prada*, intensifiers are used most frequently by female characters because they seek to stress or reinforce their statements deeply to capture the attention of the addressee. Another women's language study also conducted by Hardini, Darmawangsa, and Nada (2017) about women's language varieties in French Movie, *La Vie en Rose*. The researchers discovered ten features of Lakoff's women's language theory from female characters in the film. The most frequent language variation in *La Vie en Rose* is rising declaration on declaratives, whereas

precise color terms and avoidance of strong swear words are the least common. In this film, ten aspects of Lakoff's women's language theory are presented by female characters.

Based on the mentioned in background, the researcher chose to analyze similar topic. However, the researcher looks at other forms of utterances, including women's language in *To Kill a Mockingbird*'s main female character. The distinction between the previous research and this one is those researches focused on women's language features found in oral utterances. This research, on the other hand, tried to determine the language used in a novel. Other characteristics of the main female characters' utterances, such as how she expressed her utterances, are employed in women's language, and the situations that happened in the conversation are explained by the researcher. The research question, based on the background above, are as follows:

What are the women's language feature found in *To Kill a Mockingbird*?

How does the main female character express every dialogue that contains women's language?

What are the situations that cause the main female character use women's language?

Women's language

The gendered language research by Lakoff, published in *Language and Woman's Place*, focuses on women's linguistic inequity in society (Lakoff, 1975). Lakoff classifies ten linguistic elements as women's language style based on her thesis, as this style dominates the majority of how women speak. Hedges, empty adjectives, intensifiers, and tag inquiries are examples of these negative features that contribute to a woman's subjugation by limiting her the capacity to express herself strongly (Lakoff, 1975). Furthermore, these injustices, according to Lakoff, have important implications for women's authority in society (Lakoff, 1975). Women's language features, according to Lakoff (1975), include:

Lexical hedges or fillers

Women employ lexical hedges or fillers to avoid appearing too masculine by being forceful and speaking plainly (Lakoff, 1975). The word that classified as hedges are such as *sort of* and *kind of* and while *well* are classified as fillers. Fillers are employed to add tentativeness to a statement, whereas lexical hedges are utilized to diminish the power of an utterance (Apridaningrum, 2018).

Tag question

Tag questions, which are employed more by women than men, according to Lakoff, are an example of a characteristic of women's language. According to Lakoff, tag questions fall between an explicit declaration and a yes-no question (Lakoff, 1975).

Rising Intonations on Declaratives

The employment of a high-rising tone at the conclusion of a phrase is known as rising intonations on declaratives, also known as uptalk or inquiry intonation (Eckert & Ginet, 2003). When a declarative response is offered in a high-rising tone, the declarative response becomes a question (Lakoff, 2004).

Empty Adjective

Empty adjectives are used by women to communicate their sentiments about something in a certain context (Apridaningrum, 2018). In most vocations and social strata, men are forbidden from using empty adjectives since they would be perceived as suspicious (Lakoff, 1975).

Hypercorrect Grammar

To deal with etiquette and the use of conventional verb forms, women use hypercorrect grammatical components, such as pronouncing the final g in phrases like "going" instead of the more casual "goin'" (Pebrianti, 2013). Because women are inferior to men, they must avoid offending them and communicate with them in normal ways (Holmes, 2001 in Pebrianti, 2013).

Precise Color Term

In comparison to men, women employ more lexical items (Lakoff, 1975). The more particular one is concerning color terminology; women report that those phrases are regularly used, while males do not view them as such.

Avoidance Strong Swear Words

Women tend to utilize polite language rather than swear words to retain their civility. The invective of women differs from that of males (Lakoff, 2004).

Super Polite Forms

Women are thought to be euphemism specialists who know how to say the right words to the right people (Lakoff, 1975). There's a concept that illustrates how to express a courteous command in such a way that it sounds more neutral to ask for (Apridaningrum, 2018).

Emphatic Stress

When women wish to emphasize a point, they use emphatic emphasis. (Lakoff, 1975). In written content, women can emphasize or improve their point of view by utilizing italic, bold, coloring, repeating,

capitalizing, or typing with longer characters (Pebrianti, 2013).

Intensifier

The extreme so, which is severely accentuated when purists insist on absolute superlatives, appears to be more common in women's language than in men's, but it may be found in both, especially in male academics' speech (Lakoff, 2004).

Novel

Novel is a kind of literary works that has numerous topic and style. The term "novel" originates from the Italian word "novella," which means "little new staff.". Some experts give different definition of novel as a literary works.

In aspects of the novel, the novel is as any prose of at least 50,000 words is being broadly defined by Forster (1927). Novels disregarded other literary genres' conventional methods and universal narratives (i.e., mythology, folklore, history, etc.) in favor of the reality of the individual (personal/private) experience, which is always unique and hence fresh (Goodyer, 2008). Character types (such as the hero and villain) evolved into distinct persons with complete names who were psychologically complicated and evolved as a consequence of their experiences and personal connections.

Stylistic Analysis

Because it combines intuition and extensive linguistic examination of the text, stylistic analysis of a novel goes beyond standard, intuitive interpretation (Candria, 2019). The distinguishing features of modern language are found inside the text itself, rather than being imposed from beyond (Niazin, 2013). Understanding modernist writings frequently requires a detailed examination of the linguistic system described within the text itself.

The study of style in literary language is known as literary stylistics. It may be viewed as an investigation of the confluence of form and content. (Niazi, 2013). When examining a text, one is particularly interested in the author's grammatical choices. It's usual to think of aspects of style assessed in terms of deviations from the norm as a text's recurring predilection for specific sentence patterns or recurrence or frequency of certain words belonging to a given lexical group.

Hymes's Speaking Theory

Hymes introduces ethnography of speaking as a new approach that focuses on communication behavior patterns as an important component of cultural systems. Language will not have meaning without being communicated. According to Hymes(1974), speech events include components that must be considered in order to generate a good description of any given speech event. He proposes the SPEAKING grid mnemonic technique as a heuristic for the numerous variables he considers important. Setting or scene, participation, end, act sequence, key, instrumentalities, norm, and genre are all important aspects of Hyme's speaking context.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the study and the research problem, this thesis belongs to the domain of descriptive qualitative. This research is conducted in a descriptive study by using qualitative approach. This research employed a descriptive qualitative analysis technique to evaluate and characterize the women's language in Harper Lee's (1960) novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*. This study also looks at Lakoff's women's language theory and the impact of societal circumstances on the language used by women. Descriptive qualitative research entails describing but without changing variables while asking questions about their nature, occurrence, or distribution (Ary et al, 1990). Because a descriptive qualitative study announces anything spontaneously, it can only quantify what currently exists in this study. The goal of descriptive research is to describe a phenomenon and its characteristics. This study is more interested in what happened than how or why it happened.

There are two kinds of data sources the researcher would use in this research:

The major data comes from Harper Lee's 1960 novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*. The supporting data, which is taken from journals, articles, books that has relationship with the main data. The researcher followed three phases in gathering data. The data collection procedure can be described as: Read and re-read the novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* 1960 by Harper Lee, taking notes on the main female character's utterance found in the novel. Then each sentence and utterance would be examined to determine if it falls into Lakoff's category of women's language. In order to address the issue posed in the problem statement, all data that has been proven to support Lakoff's women's language theory is classified into each aspect of women's language. Last, the researcher draws conclusions concerning *To Kill a Mockingbird*'s women's language features. The techniques of data analysis are very important to any research. To examine the data, the researcher employed a descriptive qualitative method. There are three data analysis procedures in the descriptive qualitative method. (Miles and Huberman, 1994). They are data reduction, data display,

and drawing conclusion. The first procedure, known as data reduction, involves selecting, concentrating, simplifying, abstracting, and manipulating material that appears in the notes. The researcher will decrease the data in this study by selecting any identifiable sentence or speech based on the relevant hypothesis. Next is data display. Data display comes as a process to provide an organized information from the data that will belongs to conclusion drawing. The researcher will arrange the data into some tables to make it easier to classify. After reducing the data, the researcher selects, identifies, and concentrates on the data by reference to the study issue formulation. The results will be displayed in a data display, and the researcher will draw conclusions based on what he or she discovered during the research.

FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

The researcher focused on the film and novel's female language elements. The findings provided have derived from the main female character's dialogue. Based on the research questions, the researcher will divide the extract into three sections. Below, the researcher will show extracts that have women's language feature to answer research question number 1.

Women's Language Features

Lexical Hedges or Fillers

Extract 1

Scout: "Anyway, Jem hollered and I didn't hear him any more an' the next thing- Mr. Ewell was tryin' to squeeze me to death. I reckon... then somebody yanked Mr. Ewell down. Jem must have got up, I guess. That's all I know..." (p.392)

Mr. Tate: "And then?"

In this extract, Scout explained to Mr. Tate everything that happened to her and Jem when Mr. Ewell attacked them. She explained clearly but she still unsure about her answer.

Extract 1 shows that the used of lexical as a women's language features can have a meaning as a pause that contains uncertainty towards the utterances spoken by the interlocutor. Scout added "*I reckon...*" (Extract 1) at the end to her sentence to emphasized her opinion. By saying "*tryin' to squeeze me to death, I reckon...*" she felt uncertain about what actually Mr. Ewell was going to do that night. It might be too dark so she cannot see everything obviously so she just thought Mr. Ewell tried to squeeze her. Therefore, this is suitable with Lakoff (1975), In the dialogue, the ledge and fillers are paused-shaped, indicating that the information is not totally correct and unclear

Tag Question

Extract 2

Dill: "No..."

Scout: "Then if he's not dead you've got one, haven't you?" (pg.7).

In this extract, Scout was asking about Dill's dead and she did not believe that Dill's father is dead.

In the second extract, it showed that Scout wanted to emphasize her opinion about Dill's father. The used of question tag at the end of her, "*then if he's not dead you've got one, haven't you?*" (Extract 2) utterance has a purpose to make her statement strong and incontestable. This indicated the function of tag question by Lakoff's (1975) theory. Tag question is used by women in order to avoid assertion, to find opinions from Dill, and give chances for Dill in order that to reject or accept her statement.

Rising Intonation on Declaratives

Extract 3

Scout: "You mean when somebody's dyin' you can smell it'?" (pg.48)

Dill: "No, I mean I can smell somebody an' tell if they're gonna die. An old lady taught me how"

In this extract, Scout was curious about Dill's ability to smell death on someone.

In extract 3, Scout sounded unsure about Dill's ability to smell somebody who is dying. The way she answered Dill's using positive sentence and turning it into declarative so it made the utterance's intonation rise. By giving feedback like this, Scout's utterance can help her to seek the information. This is suitable with Lakoff (2004) according to the study, women utilize rising intonation on declaratives to communicate doubt and ensure the veracity of information.

Empty Adjective

Extract 4

Scout: "It's lovely, Jem. Look almost like he'd talk to you" (pg. 95).

Jem: "It is, ain't it?"

In this extract, Scout was giving a compliment on Jem's snowman.

One of women's characteristic, they are more emotional than men, gives an effect to their language and bring more language feature of women's language. It called empty language. In this researcher, the researcher only found one phrase of this feature. From the extract, Scout gave a compliment about Jem's

snowman by using the word “*lovely*” to show her expression and opinion about the snowman. According to Lakoff (1975), because it just concerns the emotive word of the specific information, the empty adjective has an expressive function

Hypercorrect Grammar

Extract 5

Jem: “No it ain’t. It so cold it burns. Now don’t eat it, Scout, you’re wasting it. Let it come down.”

Scout: “But I want to walk in it” (pg.92).

In this extract, Scout was excited to play in the snow.

The fifth extract showed another example of the main character used standard verb form. In Scout’s last statement “*but I want to walk in it*” contains hypercorrect grammar when she expressed it. Rather than make the sentence shorter to “*wanna walk in it*”, she still used the standard form. Hence, Scout’s statement of using formal language has in line with White (2003), Women are more inclined than males to use language forms that are deemed to be ‘better’ or ‘proper.’ Because women are more status sensitive than males, they utilize linguistically. As a result, people strive to improve their language skills.

Avoidance of Strong Swear Words

Extract 6

Jem: “Two sisters married two brothers. That’s all I’ll tell you figure it out”

Scout: “Gee minetti, Jem” (pg. 23).

In this extract, Scout was shocked with Jem’s explanation.

In extract 6, another example of strong swear words being avoided was discovered by the researcher. The word “*gee minetti*” Scout said as her respond to Jem’s statement is an old southern expression meaning “*oh my goodness*”. Lakoff (1973) also explained that women are not meant to speak harshly, and they avoid swearing since it is considered unladylike.

Super Polite Forms

Extract 7

Uncle Jack: “We’ll see about this. I’ve a good mind to go out there tonight.”

Scout: “Please sir, just let it go. Please” (pg.124).

In this extract, Scout was begging Uncle Jack for not telling Atticus about her fight with Francis

In extract 7, Scout wanted Uncle Jack for not telling Atticus that she just got in fighting with her cousin, Francis. She demanded her uncle by saying “*please sir, just let it go*”. It made the sentence being super polite. Lakoff (1973) stated super polite form is also an imperative statement but women use it in more polite way. The phrase is not only please but also can be thank you.

Emphatic Stress

Extract 8

Jem: “Our daddy’s a friend of your daddy’s. Scout here, she’s crazy- she’s won’t fight you anymore.”

Scout: “I wouldn’t be jump on you again. Don’t you like butterbeans? Our Cal’s a real good cook” (pg.29).

In this extract, Scout was trying to invite Walter to her house and describing her cook so Walter accepted her invitation.

In extract 8, Scout said “*a real good cook*” in her statement to strengthen of her opinion. She used the word to express her opinion about Calpurnia. To emphasize or improve their thoughts in written content, women might use italic, bold, colorful, repetition, capital characters, or typing with longer letters. According to Lakoff (1973), women are more likely to utilize emphatic accent to emphasize words and so increase the meaning of a welcome.

Intensifier

Extract 9

Jem: “Then I’m goin’ with you”

Scout: “No, you ain’t, you’ll just make noise” (pg.79).

In this extract, Scout tried to stop Jem who wanted to follow her to Radley’s place.

In extract 9, Scout did not want Jem to follow her. She could just said “*you’ll make noise*”. But in order to make her statement undebatable and Jem could stop to forced her, she added “*just*” as an intensifier. Therefore, this is suitable to Lakoff (1975) states intensifier used by the speaker to boast and emphasized their praise and strength their statement.

With stylistic analysis, the second research question is how the main female character presented her utterances that contain women’s language features. The researcher will show two extracts which will analyzed with stylistic analysis, linguistic deviation and literary analysis.

Stylistic Analysis on The Main Female Character’s Utterances

The researcher will show some extracts to answer the research question number 2 which about how the main female character expressed her utterances with women's language.

Linguistic Deviation

Extract 10

Scout: "It's okay, Dill. When he wants you to know somethin', he tells you. I mean all right... You know he wouldn't bother you, you know you ain't scared of Atticus." (pg.201).

Dill: "I'm not scared of Atticus."

In this extract, Dill seemed uncomfortable with Atticus. Scout then tried to calm him that he should not afraid with Atticus

The researcher will describe the analysis first with linguistic deviation. The linguistic deviation found in the extract is phonological deviation which is characterized by inadequate use of phonological rules of language. "*you know you ain't scared of Atticus*" (**Extract 10 tag question**), the word ain't is not grammarily correct. This is an example of poor pronunciation, which implies practically all of the sounds are out of the ordinary. The correct standard of the word "*ain't*" itself is "*isn't*" or "*aren't*".

Literary Analysis

Extract 11

Scout: "Whactcha looking at?"

Jem: "That old dog yonder"

Scout: "That's old Tim Johnson, ain't it?" (pg.133).

In this extract, Scout and Jem was curious with the dog the saw in around their house.

There are two sentences made in the extract 27. In this extract, the researcher categorized it as a nominal structure and deviation because these sentences talked about "the old dog" which means as Tim Johnson. Tim Johnson is Scout's neighbor's dog. In Jem's utterance, he could not identify the old dog as Tim because of its weird way to walk (later on the novel, Tim was infected by rabies). But Scout could identify it as Tim because of the clue "old dog" from Jem. Tim was an old dog, so it was the only way Jem can recognize Tim.

The Situation on The Main Female Character's Conversation

Extract 12

Scout: "You mean all you drink in that sack's Coca-Cola? Just plain Coca- Cola?" (pg. 292)

Mr. Raymond: "You mean all you drink in that sack's Coca-Cola? Just plain Coca- Cola?"

In this extract, Mr. Raymond explained to Scout that the drink was just Coca-Cola.

Extract 13

Miss Maudie: "You know old Mr. Radley was a foot-washing Baptist-"

Scout: "That's what you are, ain't it?" (pg.60)

Miss Maudie: "My shell's not that hard, child. I'm just a Baptist."

In this extract, Scout was asking about Mr. Radley's occupation and she thought that Miss Maudie had the same occupation with him.

After explaining the extracts of *To Kill A Mockingbird* (1960), the researcher can finally answer the research questions that had brought the research up to this far. The first question concerns the characteristics of women's language in the novel. In the main female character's utterances, the researcher discovered nine aspects of women's language. Women's language features include lexical hedges or fillers, tag question, increasing intonation on declaratives, empty adjective, hypercorrect grammar, super polite forms, avoidance of powerful swear words, emphatic stress, and intensifier. The explanation of each feature will show below:

The third research question is about the situation that cause the main female character used women's language in her conversation. The researcher will show two extracts which will analyz with Hyme's speaking factors.

In extract 12, the conversation took place at the courthouse yard as the setting of this conversation, with Scout and Mr. Raymond as the participants. Scout was surprised knowing the fact that Mr. Raymond just drink Coca-Cola all the time and to show it she used lexical hedge to emphasize her sentence. The end of the conversation is when Mr. Raymond clarified Scout's sentence that he just drank Coca-Cola all the time. The conversation is an oral conversation and from norms of interaction side is a spontaneous verbal interaction between the participants.

In extract 13, the conversation happened between Scout and her neighbor, Miss Maudie. So the participants in this conversation is Miss Maudie and Scout. It was on Miss Maudie's front porch, as the setting, and this is an intended conversation because Scout was asking about Arthur Radley. Arthur's

father, Mr. Radley, was a foot-washing Baptist, according to Miss Maudie. Scout gave a respond with question tag because she thought that Miss Maudie was also a foot-washing Baptist. The conversation was closed by Miss Maudie's answered that she just a Baptist, not a foot-washing Baptist, because she was not that good. This is a type of conversation in daily routine and classified as an oral conversation.

CONCLUSION

After explaining and identifying the narrative structures and their comparison, the researcher concluded In the dialogue of the main female character in *To Kill A Mockingbird*, there are nine aspects of women's language, they are lexical hedges or fillers(20), tag question(13), rising intonation in declaratives(5), empty adjective(1), hypercorrect grammar(7), super courteous(5), avoidance of harsh swear words(4), emphatic stress(5), and intensifier (3)The main female character employed linguistic variation, such as phonological deviation, semantic deviation, and syntactic deviation, to communicate her utterances using women's language features. Other utterances that did not contain any linguistic deviation were analyzed with literary analysis. The researcher found that based on literary analysis, the main female character used nominal structure and deviation. The situation that happened in main female character's conversation happened in eight elements, based on Hyme's speaking theory. Based on this research, there are many situations that can cause women use women's language. Despite the fact that the novel's main female character is classified as a tomboy, she nonetheless uses most of the female language features to communicate her feelings and ideas. The only features of women's language that the main female character did not use is precise color terms. There is no scene or situation in the novel that can cause the main female character used precise color terms feature.

Moreover, due to the lack of narrative structure researching, the researcher would like to give some suggestions. First, the use of this research as a reference for related study in the future. Second, analyze a different aspect than women's language features in classic and contemporary literary works. Third, deepen the study of women's language features.

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