

Features and Function of Woman Language Found in The La La Land Film: A Sociolinguistics Study

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Abstract

This research aims to examine the features and functions of women's language, according to Lakoff's theory, as demonstrated by the main female character in the film "La La Land." Data about the speech of the characters are collected through documentation by following several steps. The first step is to watch the film to understand its content. this initial stage is carried out through observation of film recordings on netflix. The second step is to identify, researchers begin to carefully determine the features and functions of the female language of conversation between men and women. The third step is to classify, the identification results are then classified into two more structured categories to facilitate further data analysis. for features and functions of female language using Lakoff theory. The fourth step analyze Data that has been collected and then analyzed involves the process of removing data that is less relevant and then converting raw data to a format more suitable for analysis. It also uses qualitative and descriptive methods. through the pronunciation of words by the female characters in the film "La La Land". The conclusion of this study is that there are 10 characteristics and features of female language, namely:lexical hedges, tag question, rising intonations, empty adjectives (2) , intensifiers, super polite (2), swear words (2).

Keywords: *language features, La La Land, Netflix*

Introduction

According to Masruroh and Purwati (2019), sociolinguistics has an important function in understanding language and cultural differences between individuals and assisting in resolving conflicts related to language and culture. language has an important role in establishing and maintaining connections with society while also expressing both individual and collective identities, suggests sociolinguistic research. Therefore, sociolinguistics is an important discipline in understanding the complexities of social interactions involving language and culture (Wardhaugh, 2010).

Safrina Noorman (2018) shows that language is used in the struggle for women's rights through the use of digital technology, such as social media. He emphasized that the use of language in community struggles can be an effort to improve unfair and unequal social conditions. Sociolinguistics has a variety of expert suggestions on the subject of women's language that offer different perspectives on how women use language.Linguist Lakoff (1975) asserts that men and women use language differently and that women generally use language that is more refined and courteous. Moreover, he pointed out that men's words

seems more powerful and forthright than compared to women, whose speech is typically interpreted as hesitating or deficient in confidence.

The conversation between women and men in this context can be illustrated as follows:

Woman : Sorry, but can I give you my opinion on this topic?

Man: Of course, I'm interested in your thoughts on this.

In this conversation, the woman uses complicated and polite language when asking for permission to give her opinion. According to Lakoff's theory in sociolinguistics, such differences can occur due to the presence of gender stereotypes implanted in society. Gender stereotypes are beliefs and expectations formed by society about the behavior or characteristics of both men and women. These gender stereotypes can sometimes put pressure on women to change their way of speaking to meet social expectations. Accordingly, this study focuses on how men and women use language differently in communication by analyzing the features and functions of women's language, in accordance with Lakoff's theory, based on a speech by the film's main female character, "La La Land."

Language

Sociolinguistics analyzes language as it applies in contexts of society and culture, taking into consideration language choice, variety of languages, and the influence of politics on how language is used. According to Roger W. Shuy (1997), social language in sociolinguistics is a choice of language system used in social situations and provides discourse to individuals in the use of language. This social language includes the choice of words, the variety of languages, and the use of social activities that reflect social and cultural norms.

Research by Labov (1966) also showed that the language variation seen in the layers of society was more influenced by social factors than linguistic factors. These social factors include social, ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic classes. The results of a study by Labov (1966) show that regional and social variation affect language usage. In this regard, languages are not seen as a uniform system but are divided into regional and social variations.

Research by Fishman (1964) also shows that language has significant political influence. Language is viewed as an expression of a group's distinctive culture and as a way to confirm that culture's presence. Language has occasionally been employed politically to further the interests of a specific group. This means that language plays an important role in transmitting political and cultural messages.

Language & Gender

In this instance, Abdul Chaer (1992) underlines how language usage affects how we view men and women in society. The function of language in maintaining gender stereotypes is highlighted by Robin Tolmach Lakoff (1975), who demonstrates how language is likely to affect how we perceive men and women in society and how expressions like "He is the boss" can support gender inequality public. According to Ronald Carter (1995), language not only reflects in society accepted gender roles, but it also maintains them. He emphasized how crucial it is to pay attention to how language is utilized in spoken and written communication every day.

Leonie Agustina (2012) highlighted the importance of changing the way of speaking and writing as a tool in avoiding gender stereotypes in language. In order to advance gender equality, he also underlined the importance of using gender-neutral language. Language and

gender experts have demonstrated how incorrect language use can influence people's thinking and attitudes about women and men. As a result, it is critical to understand how language impacts the gender social system and to take necessary action to establish language that is inclusive and does not hurt one gender in particular. In this scenario, using words that are gender-neutral will aid in achieving gender equality in society.

Women's Language

Holmes (1995), a linguist, stated that different communication genres and contexts can influence women's use of language. He makes the observation that women typically speak in more formal circumstances or when speaking with people who are older or of higher social status. Holmes added, though, that women don't always speak politely in social situations or when speaking to people their own age.

The researchers demonstrate that there isn't just one language pattern or style that describes how women use language in a sociolinguistic situation. Sociolinguistics constantly considers the context and particular communication settings, as well as the connection between gender stereotypes in society and language use by women, when analyzing women's language.

Other language researchers, including Deborah Tannen, think that gender-based communication disparities are more important. In her book "You Just Don't Understand," Tannen describes how women frequently use language that may open hearts and establish emotional connections with others. Men, on the other a situation frequently communicate in a more powerful and direct manner.

Differences in Male & Female Language

The languages of women and men have different characteristics in communication. Another study by Coates and Cameron (1988) also showed that women's and men's languages had differences in vocabulary selection. Women's language more often uses words that indicate affection, while men's use more words that relate to activity and power. Coates and Cameron (1988) also argued that the use of vocabulary and the way of speaking can shape a person's self-image and gender identity.

Recent research by Romero and Bodine (2020) also found differences in word selection in women's and men's languages through social media. The findings demonstrate that on social media, men prefer to use negative language, but women usually use positive words. Lakoff (1975) stated that women tend to use languages that have language features, including lexical hedges, tag questions, rising intonations, empty adjectives, color words, intensifiers, hypercorrect grammar, super polite, swear words and emphatic stress.

Features & Functions of Female Language

In 1975, linguist Robin Lakoff became interested in the use of language. In her writings, she expresses her belief that a woman has several linguistic characteristics. A woman will receive criticism if her speech style does not resemble that of a "lady" (a classy woman), as it is thought to be unfeminine. If he speaks, he is seen to be unable to think effectively and to participate in serious discussions (Lakoff, 2003: 48).

We tend to tolerate emotions / anger in the form of swearing from men, but not from women. Women may protest, but they may not show their feelings by swearing (Lakoff,

2003: 51). Lakoff (1975) claims in her book *Language and Woman's Place* that there 10 features & function of female language that include:

a) Lexical Hedges

Lexical hedges are words or phrases that are used in conversation to extend or limit meaning, distract or direct speech without communicating important details. Robin Lakoff men's language uses lexical hedges more frequently, which may represent their social roles (2004: 79) proposed this theory. She discovered that women in more cooperative and humble talks. lexical hedges that are often used are "well", "you know", "sort of", "kind of", "like", "I guess", "maybe", and the like.

For example: "Well, I think the movie was like, you know"

These words are used to indicate uncertainty or to give the impression of being kinder or less aggressive. However, use of lexical hedges can hide the true meaning or aim of the dialogue and reduce communication effectiveness. As a result, Lakoff suggests that we use language with care and pay attention to the context and goal of our conversation.

b) Tag Question

The question tag is a short question that is added at the end of a statement. It is used to ask for confirmation or confirm a fact. Robin Lakoff, a linguist and feminist, has studied the use of tag questions, namely the differences between the way women and men use tag questions. Lakoff found that women tend to use tag questions more often than men, and their use can

indicate lower social status and a less dominant role in conversation. Examples of the use of question tags by women in English are:

"It's a bad hair, isn't it?"

According to the form of the previous statement, question tags frequently conclude with the phrases "isn't it?", "can't we?", "did not I?", "will not he?", and so on. In summary, a question tag is a short question put to the end of a statement to request confirmation or to check facts

c) Rising intonation on declaratives

Robin Lakoff discovered particular intonation patterns as part of gender language in informal discussions among women. This is a rising intonation pattern, which is an increase in tone at the end of a sentence that should be said with decreasing intonation. Rising intonation is often used to show doubt, request confirmation, or seek agreement from the other person. Rising intonation can be obvious in everyday conversation in sentences that should be pronounced with declining intonation but end with an increase in tone.

Here is an example of using an rising intonation in a sentence is like :

Woman : "You're not angry with me, right?"

Man: "Of course not; why do you ask that?"

In this conversation, at the end of the sentence, a woman shows uncertainty about obtaining a response from a man. This is used to give an indirect message or generate empathy, especially in social situations that require women to show sensitivity. Women are often considered more emotional and open about their feelings than men. Therefore, a more sensitive personality and speech style can change a woman's intonation frequency.

Even in psychological studies, there are studies that show that women actually have a more varied intonation and have rising intonations more frequently than men. This is probably because women are easier to express empathy and attention, so their way of speaking becomes more subtle and emotional.

d) Empty adjectives

Empty adjectives are adjectives that provide basically a general, non-specific assessment or evaluation of something. "Nice", "lovely", and "interesting" are some examples. These words do not convey concrete information about the nature of the object being described, thus they are frequently substituted by more concrete or descriptive words.

An example of using an empty adjective in a sentence is like :

"She has a nice personality"

The terms "nice" express positive evaluations in both statements, but do not provide actual information about the characteristics that make a person have a good personality. The use of empty adjectives is often connected with female language patterns, but it does not always have a negative connotation. Overuse, on the other present, may hide the true meaning of the sentence. To explain the nature or features of an object or situation, it is preferable to use more explicit and detailed language.

e) Precise color Term

The word "precise color" may also indicate cultural differences in color perception and aesthetic concepts. In Chinese, for example, there are particular words for the colors gold and silver but none for purple. This can represent a culture's opinions about which colors are significant or not important.

Example : "The sky is blue"

In these sentences, "blue" and "red" are specific and descriptive "precise color terms". The usage of a "precise color term" in sociolinguistics can reveal cultural variations and symbolic meanings connected with color in a society. White, for example, is a sign of cleanliness and simplicity in Western traditions, but it may also represent passing and sorrow in Asian traditions.

f) Intensifiers

Intensifier is a feminist sociolinguistic environmental term that refers to words or phrases used by women in conversation that can emphasize or explain the nouns to which they refer. Words like "like", "kind of", "you know", and "sort of" are examples of intensifiers. According to Robin Lakoff, the usage of intensifiers reflects the social functions and cultural conceptions attributed to women and is seen as a method for women to communicate kindly while not disappointing cultural standards. Intensifiers are used in female language in sentences such as :

"The shirt dress is really cute, but it is somewhat pricey, you know?"

The terms "you know" is frequently used to emphasize or clarify meaning in these statements. According to Lakoff, use of intensifiers may also reflect cultural differences in gender, where women are usually told to talk kindly and avoid disagreement when speaking. Intensifiers are supposed to assist women achieve conversational goals without appearing to as assertive or confrontational.

g) Hyper-correct grammar

According to Lakoff, this hyper-correct grammar reflects the social roles and cultural beliefs that belong to women, who are expected to deliver their messages in a more formal and educated manner even when it is not required. Lakoff also remarks that using hyper-correct grammar in everyday conversation can give the sense of being less familiar. Examples of using hyper-correct grammar can be found in sentences like :

"Whom did you give the pencil to?"

If the form is being used which represents more grammatically accurate than the phrase which has become more common and easier to use by people in general. Educational and economic status can also influence the use of hyper-correct grammar. People with a more educated educational background or from a higher social class use excessively justified grammar more frequently.

h) Super Polite

The general truth of women's speech features is that the sound of women's speech is more polite than men's (Lakoff; 1975: 56). Super Polite is used to underline the idea that it is a request or to avoid offending others. As an example:

"Could I potentially bother you for a brief moment?"

The use of very polite and super polite forms of speech is considered something that women should do.

i) Avoidance of strong swears words

The use of swearing is generally associated in society with uncomfortable or unstable language, as well as uncontrolled or violent behavior. However, in certain settings, such as chats between close friends or in enjoyment situations, the use of swear words can be allowed or even seen as a method to demonstrate intimacy.

Example: "Oh, unfortunately I completely forgot for this!"

Lakoff analyzes language use from a gender viewpoint, focusing on how language can represent gender positions and responsibilities in society. Women, according to Lakoff, use more polite and regular language than men, avoiding or restricting the use of profanity.

j) Emphatic stress

Emphatic stress is used to point out specific words or phrases in a sentence, making what is meant clearer and more noticeable. According to Lakoff, women use emphatic stress more frequently than men. This is related to the concept that women prefer to use more polished and regular language, therefore emphatic stress might help them express assertiveness without using harsh words.

Examples of the use of emphatic stress are as follows:

"I am really so happy to have met you! " (emphatic stress on "really" to emphasize the joy felt)

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and regular language, therefore emphatic stress might help them express assertiveness without using harsh words.

Method

The qualitative descriptive research method is one of the research methods frequently used in social research. Creswell (2012) defines the qualitative descriptive research method as "a data collection and analysis technique used to discover new patterns and findings through the analysis of words, images, and actions." This approach seeks to comprehend a difficult phenomenon or issue in great detail. Researchers use qualitative data because the data is the utterances of the characters in the film using words and sentences, not numbers. This study uses descriptive qualitative research using Lakoff's theory to identify features of female language & identify functions of female language spoken by female characters in films "La La Land."

Talbot (1995) states "data collection begins with the researcher deciding from where and from whom the data will be collected". Data about the speech of the characters is collected through documentation by following several steps. The first step is to watch the film to understand its content. this initial stage is carried out through observation of film recordings on netflix. The second step is to identify, researchers begin to carefully determine the features and functions of the female language of conversation between men and women. The third step is to classify, the identification results are then classified into two more structured categories to facilitate further data analysis. for features and functions of female language using Lakoff theory. The fourth step analyze Data that has been collected and then analyzed involves the process of removing data that is less relevant and then converting raw data to a format more suitable for analysis. It also uses qualitative and descriptive methods. through the pronunciation of words by the female characters in the film "La La Land".

Data Analysis Techniques

The researcher selects and focuses on women's utterances that clarify the characteristics of women's language found in movie "La La Land" the next step is displaying the data. Data views are organized and compressed collections of information that allow inferences, drawings and actions. In this process, the researcher elaborates on the utterances uttered by the female characters in the film uses Lakoff's theory of ten female language features.

In the process of drawing conclusions, researchers find research results through analysis. The researcher elaborated on the findings descriptively and concluded that all parts of the analysis related to the research question contained features of female language found in the speeches of female characters in the film "La La Land" and identified the functions of language presented by female characters found in the speeches of female characters in the movie.

Data Types & Sources

The data from this research comes from the utterances of the female characters in film "La La Land" which contains features of female language, namely: lexical hedges, tag questions, rising intonations, empty adjectives, color words, intensifiers, hypercorrect grammar, super polite, swear words and emphatic stress. Researchers use primary and

secondary data sources. The primary data source is the film script “La La Land “ while secondary data sources were obtained from watching films that support this research.

Results

This first part presents the features of women's language through the main female character. Researchers found 10 features in this film. That is; lexical hedges, tag questions, rising intonations, empty adjectives (2) , intensifiers, super polite (2), swear words (2)

Women's Language Features	Total
1. Lexical hedges	1
2. Tag questions	1
3. Rising intonation	1
4. Empty Adjectives	2
5. Intensifiers	1
6. Super Polite	2
7. Swear Words	2

From the table above it is seen that the type of female features are more dominant, such as empty adjectives, super polite, swear words. The reason why the main female characters in this film use more language features: **empty adjectives**, because of the background of the story that tells the love story between a jazz pianist (Sebastian) and a young actress (Mia). and the struggle of both in difficulty achieving ideals, which involves emotions so many appear expressions of **swear words** and also Patience to face the difficult obstacles of a career in Los Angeles so appear **super polite**

Discussion

(1) Woman : “ Get.....Serious “

Man : “ Laura I had a very serious plan for my future “ (19 : 30)

The Function **Tag question** in Laura's speech “Get.....Serious” is used to show uncertainty about what she is saying as well as to seek confirmation. Laura as Sebastian's younger sister is not sure about Sebastian's words about her future plans to become a jazz pianist, because of financial difficulties to pay her house bills.

(2) Woman : “ Thank you for serving the day back there “

Man : “ well, you didn't really give me much of a choice “ (31 : 23)

The example of the conversation above shows that women are considered more polite and behave politely than men. The main female character, Mia, says "thank you" to Sebastian as a form of **super polite** .Because at a Hollywood Hills night party, Sebastian helps Mia's car, which was almost towed on the way back to her apartment

(3) Man : “ For about a month. That’s great

Woman : “ He’s He’s sweet “ (39 : 51)

Mia uses the word "He's sweet" in her speech when Sebastian is curious about Mia's relationship with her lover, who has been in a relationship for a month. And this includes **Empty Adjective** shows the existence of an adjective as the speaker's admiration for something.

(4) Woman : “ I Hate Jazz “

Man : “ What do you mean, you hate jazz ? “ (42 : 55)

emphasizes what you want to convey and is a way to express the annoyance & hatred that Mia utters, namely "I Hate" towards jazz music, including **swear words**. very different from sebastian who likes jazz as his career choice.

(5) Woman : “ Really “

Man : “ We can play anything we choose “(45 : 14)

Types of words such as "really" are emphasized to strengthen the statement that is said by the female speaker, so that her statement can be trusted by Sebastian. And includes the

characteristics of female language **itentifier** because this word contains an emotional side that is closely related to the speech of a woman.

(6) Man : “ congratulations “

Woman : “ it’s amazing “ (45 : 42)

One application example of **rising intonation** found in the conversation where Sebastian congratulated his inviting Mia on the television shows Dangerous Minds and The O.C. There is an increase in intonation at the end of speech by Mia " its, amazing " as a burst of joy, this is done in order to get a response from her interlocutor.

(7) Man : “ Did you forget ? “

Woman : “ damn it... “ (49 : 46)

In the speech above Greg (Mia's lover) invites him to meet his older brother Greg at night, but Mia forgets and directly says the swear word " damn it ", which includes **swear words** because he felt annoyed that he had made the mistake of not being able to keep his promise to Greg.

(8) Man : “ actually China’s going to build canal “

Woman : “ Excuse me “ (51 : 34)

A form of **super polite** that is done by female characters as something that should be done by women is in the form of using the word "excuse me" with the intention to end the conversation without offending her to hurry away because there is something urgent.

(9) Woman : " I'm so glad you're know "

Man : " I prepared for you " (1 : 17 :53)

Mia delivered her speech by using **empty adjective** to strengthen the speech from the meaning of "glad" that he was really very happy to get a surprise dinner from Sebastian.

(10) Woman : " So it's like the long haul ? "

Man : " What do you mean ? " (1 : 22 : 44)

When a woman wants to provide information/statements they are often unsure of the statement so they use **Lexical Hedges**. The question that Mia expressed "so it's like the long haul? " stated he was not sure about what he was saying. And need further clarification as to whether Sebastian will be in the band and will not be seeing Mia for a long time.

Conclusion

The conclusion of this study is to examine the characteristics and functions of women's language according to Lakoff's theory, as shown by the main female character in the film "La La Land". The researcher found 10 characteristics and features of women's language, namely:lexical hedges, tag questions, rising intonations, empty adjectives (2), intensifiers, super polite (2), swear words (2).

The researcher claims that gendered language adds to women's lack of authority in society. Women are often habituated to converse in ways that limit their own abilities and expose them to male domination. This emphasizes the reality that men have more power than women.And demonstrates how popular culture sustains gender stereotypes by evaluating the representation of the usage of gender language in the film La La Land. Overall, this linguistic study deepens our understanding of the importance of researching language and gender in understanding social interactions and the relations of power.

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