

THE TYPES OF WOMEN LANGUAGE FEATURES FOUND IN THE FAULT IN OUR STARS MOVIE

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Abstract

This study entitled The Types of Women Language Features found in The Fault in Our Stars (movie, 2012). The study aimed to find out the types of women language features used by the female main character. This study focused on Lakoff's theory (1975) about women language features. This study applied qualitative and quantitative methods in revealing the data. The study used note taking as a technique to get a valid data. The findings showed that there were 9 out of 10 types of women language features used by the female main character. The finding show that intensifiers became the dominant type of women language features uttered in this movie because the female main character in this movie was a typical of feminine girl who always tries to inform the hearers about her emotion or feeling through a sentence.

Keywords: *women language features, types, movie*

I INTRODUCTION

Sociolinguistics is a branch of linguistics that takes language as an object of the study, in a way that usually distinguished from how syntax, semantics, morphology, and phonology handle it (Coulmas, 2013). Sociolinguistics covers a wide variety of sub-disciplines. It can involve the study of linguistics variation, language attitudes, pragmatics, discourse analysis, multilingualism, creolistic, language and gender and so on. Language and gender differences are now considerably interesting and important in sociolinguistics. Many sociolinguists suggest that men and women speak differently in any community. Women and men have a big gap in a way to use a certain language. For example, when both male and female students are asked to discuss one particular topic, men uttered more slang and impolite words than women do. Women and men do not use completely different forms. They use different quantities or frequencies of the same forms. Women tend to used more standard forms than men do, while men use more of the vernacular forms than women do. Many characteristics of women's language, including hesitations, rising intonations, tag questions, hedges and intensifiers used to express degrees or certainties about a preposition. Women are more linguistically polite than men, for instance, and that women and men emphasize different speech functions, and they do not speak in exactly the same way as each other in any community (Holmes, 2001: 150-151).

It is often claimed that in many societies, there are negative stereotypes relating to women. Many people stereotypically think that women are more talkative or talk too much. In some studies in laboratories, classroom meetings, and television chat shows indicate that women in fact talk less than men do in mixed-sex conversations the different usage of language between men and women. Women's language is a very interesting and important topic to discuss because it is not only about language that women speak but it is much more complex than that. The reason in choosing this topic is because all phenomena about human's language, both men's and women's, happen every day in our lives. One of the reflections can be drawn from a movie. Movie is one of the media to communicate moral and social values to the society through the situation and the dialogue presented in it. People's lives can be reflected through a movie since many movies are reflection from the reality. This study took The Fault in Our Stars movie to be analyzed because the main character in this movie is woman. Therefore it contains great part of women's language features.

II MATERIALS AND METHOD

2.1 WOMEN LANGUAGE FEATURES

Lakoff as cited in Holmes (2013) claimed that there are 10 types of women language features, those are: lexical hedges or fillers, tag questions, rising intonation on declaratives, empty adjectives, precise color terms, intensifiers, hypercorrect grammar, superpolite forms, avoidance of strong swear words, and emphatic stress. The description of each feature is in order.

2.1.1 LEXICAL HEDGES OR FILLERS

Hedges are a type of verbal filler items which reduce the force of an utterance. Verbal fillers are used when speaker fills in a silence of their conversations. Lakoff (1975) differentiates four types of hedges. The first type is to express uncertainty such as, you know, well, kinda/kind of. The second type is hedges that are used for the sake of politeness such as sorta/sort of. The next type is to express that the speaker is certain about the truth of a statement to attract the attention of the listener, for example you know. The last type is the type that is a preface to declarations or questions, for example, *I guess, I wonder, I think*.

2.1.2 TAG QUESTIONS

Tag questions are question tagged on to an utterance. Tag questions are defined formally as grammatical structures in which a declarative is followed by an attached interrogative clause or 'tag'. According to Lakoff (1975) women tend to turn a statement into a question in order to reduce the force of the statement. Tag questions are used when speaker is feeling unsure with topic being discussed such as *Don't you? Haven't we? did you? really? isn't it?*

2.1.3 RISING INTONATION ON DECLARATIVES

In many languages, including many varieties of English, intonation rises at the final point of questions. Rising intonation is used to turn a statement into a question, weaken the force of it and making the speaker sound uncertain. Lakoff (1975) associated rising intonation on declaratives with showing tentativeness. Rising intonation on declaratives is used when the speaker seeks for confirmation, though at the same time the speaker may be the only one who has the requisite information.

2.1.4 EMPTY ADJECTIVES

Women convey their emotional reaction rather than give specific information by using empty adjectives. Lakoff (1975) suggests that many adjectives used in expressing approval or admiration is strongly marked as feminine. Some of the adjectives are neutral such as great, terrific, cool and neat, but some of them are confined to women's speech or called special adjectives such as *adorable, charming, sweet, lovely, and divine*.

2.1.5 PRECISE COLOR TERMS

Lakoff (1975) states that women have more vocabulary about colors more than men, for example, mauve turquoise, mustard, etc. Women use the precise color terms because it is related to their specific interest.

2.1.6 INTENSIFIERS

Intensifiers are employed on the intense sentences which a speaker says, whether to decrease or increase it. The use of 'so' has subsequently been viewed as a boosting device, like *very*.

2.1.7 HYPERCORRECT GRAMMAR

Hypercorrect grammar is related to the politeness in utterance and indifference of the relationship between the speaker and addressee. Hypercorrect grammar involves avoidance of harsh language, more frequent apologizing and the use of super polite form Lakoff (1975). Further, she states that hypercorrection includes the use of standard forms and pronunciation. For example, women avoid using *ain't* or double negatives.

2.1.8 SUPERPOLITE FORMS

Lakoff emphasizes superpolite forms into three things; (a) avoidance of swearing words, (b) extensive use of euphemism (the indirect expression used to utter taboo words in conversation), and (c) using more particles in a request sentence.

2.1.9 AVOIDANCE OF STRONG SWEAR WORDS

Swearing is considered as an expression of very strong emotion due to particular condition the speaker like or dislike. Swearing is kind of interjection that can express extreme statements. Lakoff said that women are not supposed to talk rough. Women tend to avoid using swear words because they will consider them as unladylike.

2.1.10 EMPHATIC STRESS

Emphatic stress is a term to emphasize the most important word in a speaker's statement Lakoff, (1975). Emphatic stress is women's greater pitch of range.

2.2 METHOD

The data of this study were taken from the dialogues by female main character in the movie entitled The Fault in Our Stars. This movie was chosen because the story is the reflection of reality. The data were collected by using observation method. The data were analyzed by using qualitative and quantitative method. This study used theory purposed by Lakoff (1975) in Language and Woman's Place, to classify the types of women language features.

III RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There were 46 utterances that can be categorized as the types of women language features used by the female main character in this movie. Hazel as the female main character was a 16-years-old cancer patient. She struggled with a stage four of thyroid since she was 13. The types of women language features can be seen in table below.

No	Women Language Features	Total	Percentages
1	Lexical Hedges or Fillers	7	15%
2	Tag Question	1	2%
3	Rising Intonation on Declaratives	4	9%
4	Empty Adjectives	2	4%
5	Intensifier	12	26%
6	Hypercorrect Grammar	3	7%
7	Superpolite Forms	4	9%
8	Avoidance of Strong Swear Words	7	15%
9	Emphatic Stress	6	13%
Total		46	100%

Table 1: The Types of Women Language Features in The Fault in Our Stars Movie

From the table above it can be seen that intensifier the dominant type of women language features. There are 12 data out of 46 data categorized as intensifiers. Intensifiers actually is explained as the words that aimed to strengthen the intended meaning, such as the words *really*, *so*, *such*, *quite*, and *very*. While, the least type of women language features used was tag question. There was only 1 datum found out of 46 data categorized as tag question. The reason why the female main character in this movie does not use tag question is because Hazel was a person with a good behavior. By using tag question, it showed that Hazel always insisted someone when she was looking for a confirmation and she was not that person.

3.1 LEXICAL HEDGES OR FILLERS

Lakoff said that women usually used lexical hedges or fillers if she lacks of self-confidence; they are socialized to believe that asserting themselves strongly is not nice or ladylike, or even feminine (Lakoff, 1975:79). The example of this type can be seen below.

Data 1 (00:03:49)

Patrick : Who's next? Hazel?

Hazel : (Sigh) *Umm*, I'm Hazel. Uh, thyroid, originally...but now with quite the impressive satellite colony in my lungs.

In the place where Support Group called The Literal Heart of Jesus as the setting of place, Hazel used one of the women language features which is Lexical Hedges or Fillers. The use of lexical hedges or fillers “Umm” is to show that she is feeling uncertain to do something that is asked by Patrick. Since Hazel is not really interested in this kind of activity, but she has to join this group to show her respect to her parents. In this situation, she is showing her respect to Patrick by trying to answer his question even though she uses lexical hedges in her statement.

3.2 TAG QUESTIONS

According to Lakoff (1975) women tend to turn a statement into a question in order to reduce the force of the statement. Tag questions are used when speaker is feeling unsure with the topic. The parts of conversation containing tag questions are shown in the following data below.

Data 2 (00:12:08)

Gus : (take a cigarette and put it between his teeth)

Hazel : GOD! *There's always a hamartia, isn't there?* And yours is – even

though you had freaking cancer you're willing to give money to a corporation for the chance to acquire even more cancer!? Let me just tell you that not being able to breathe sucks! It's totally sucks.

Gus : Hamartia?

The conversation above took place outside the building where the Support Group was held. The use of tag question *isn't there?* by Hazel as the main woman character in this movie showed that she wants to get confirmation. By using a tag question in her utterance, she wanted to express a request to show politeness in women's language and she wanted a response from the hearer. Hazel felt unsure with her statement thus she sent a signal to seek for a confirmation or sometimes the speaker predicted the confirmation but she still looks for a confirmation. Hazel wanted to know whether there is always a possibility of hamartia and she wanted to warn Gus about what he did has a fatal effect.

3.3 RISING INTONATION ON DECLARATIVES

Lakoff stated that women tend to state something with rising tone to make a firm statement. Moreover, Lakoff (1975) explained more that women tend to do this, because they are less sure about themselves and their opinions. The purpose of rising intonation on declaratives was to seek for a confirmation from the hearer. The parts of conversation containing rising intonation on declaratives are shown in the following data below.

Data 3 (00:50:09)

Mother : We're going to Amsterdam.

Hazel : You're se-.... *We're going to Amsterdam?*

Mother : We're going to Amsterdam.

This conversation took place in Hazel's house. The use of rising intonation on declaratives is intended to share Hazel emotion with her mother. Hazel used the rising intonation on declaratives *We're going to Amsterdam?* to seek the confirmation and a response because she was very happy and surprised at this news. This utterance is categorized as rising intonation on declaratives since Hazel utters the statement in declarative way but sounds uncertain and needed a confirmation from her mother. In this situation, Hazel's mother told her very good news that she could go to Amsterdam and Hazel reacted to this news excitedly.

3.4 EMPTY ADJECTIVES

The use of empty adjectives in women language indicates that the speaker wants to show the relationship of her emotional expression with the listener. The parts of conversation containing empty adjectives are shown in the following data bellow.

Data 4 (00:20:33)

Gus : Hazel Grace

Hazel : *Welcome to the sweet torture of reading An Imperial Affliction.*

This phone conversation is between Gus and Hazel. The female main character here used empty adjectives to express her feeling or emotion through a sentence. In this case she just wanted to tell Gus that the book entitled An Imperial Affliction has a hanging story ending. The phrase *sweet torture* here

means to have something that will torture us after reading the book but not literally tortured, but something different like a deep curiosity that make us feel tortured. She used empty adjectives to express her emotion without inform a specific thing.

3.5 INTENSIFIERS

The main function of intensifiers was to intensify the statement. Intensifiers could be used to strengthen speaker's statement by emphasizing the meaning of the statement so that it raised the listener's attention and they took seriously the speaker's statement. The parts of conversation containing intensifiers are shown in the following data below.

Data 5 (00:21:56)

Gus : It seems Isaac and Monica are no longer a going concern.

Hazel : Oh, Isaac, *I'm so sorry*.

The conversation above took place in Gus's room when Hazel came and saw Isaac was crying. After Gus told the reason to her, she uttered a sentence *I'm so sorry* which contain intensifier in it. The use of intensifier *so* here is to show that she wanted to emphasize the words *sorry*. Hazel used intensifier to boost her statement in order to attract listener attention. She wanted to share her emotional message to Isaac that she really felt sorry about what happened to his relationship. She wanted to make Isaac get what she was trying to show through the sentence that contain intensifier.

3.6 HYPERCORRECT GRAMMAR

Hypercorrect Grammar is the consistent use of standard verb form. Hypercorrect grammar is the tendency of women to speak using clear grammar and women is having the tendency to give more attention for using standard language. The parts of conversation containing hypercorrect grammar are shown in the following data below.

Data 6 (00:16:03)

Hazel : *Do you mind if I sit down?*

Gus : Yeah. Make yourself at home.

The setting place of the conversation above is in Gus's room. It is the first time Hazel visit Gus's room and she about too tired of the stairs. The used one of the women language features which is hypercorrect grammar *Do you mind if I sit down?* is intended to avoid harsh language. Hazel as a woman knew that the position of women in society are seen as subordinate group, therefore women must speak carefully and politely. Hazel used the utterance *do you mind* because in the situation she is getting tired after going down the stairs, because here she in only a guest therefore she has to ask permission to the host using polite language.

3.7 SUPERPOLITE FORMS

Superpolite form was applied in women's speech feature to show their identity that women tended to speak politely to create an impression that women concerned more on their behavior. She showed polite behavior as the device for persuading. The parts of conversation containing superpolite forms are shown in the following data below.

Data 7 (01:11:58)

Hazel : *Can we, for one second, just focus on Anna? Please?*

The conversation above happened in Peter's house when Hazel tried to ask her question but Peter keeps talking about something else. The use of superpolite forms by the female main character is to show politeness. She knows that she should speak in standard forms. Women use more Standard English forms because women looked after their need to be valued. The word *please* used by Hazel is added to the request sentence and make it more polite. Hazel wanted Peter to stop changing the subject and focus to her question about that book. But remember that Peter is older than her and also, he is the host, Hazel added *please* in her statement to keep the politeness in communication.

3.8 AVOIDANCE OF STRONG SWEAR WORDS

Women had a great position in the society, so that she behaves more politely and keeps her nature as women in order to keep their reputation and position in front of the society. The parts of conversation containing avoidance of strong swear words are shown in the following data below.

Data 8 (00:06:52)

Hazel : *Oh My God* (she catches her breath. Shakes her head. Surprised at herself.

She look in the mirror. So doesn't like what she sees)

This conversation took place in the toilet of a building where support group was held. The uses of avoidance of strong swear words by the female main character are to express a very strong emotion due to particular condition the speaker like or dislike. She tends to use soften words such as *God* rather than rough words because women are not supposed to talk rough. Hazel expressed her emotional feeling because of she does not like what she sees in the mirror. She felt pathetic and expressed her feeling by saying *Oh My God* rather than other rough word. In this situation, Hazel showed that she used avoidance strong swear words and control her expression.

3.9 EMPHATIC STRESS

The use of emphatic stress is to seek the agreement in persuading the audience by using the word that gives the strength to the whole meaning. Therefore, instead of using the utterances to persuade the listener, the speaker used emphatic stress to give the stress and boosting in the utterances, so that people will be convinced. The parts of conversation containing emphatic stress are shown in the following data below.

Data 9 (00:36:52)

Mother : That's incredible. Hazel, it's so beautiful and a little insane.

Hazel : Oh, it's super insane. It's ... it's... it's... It's crazy!

The conversation above took place in the kitchen of Hazel's house. The word *crazy* uttered by the female main character in this situation is used to emphasize the thing that just happened. She said that Gus booked ticket for them to Amsterdam, and she said *It's crazy*. The use of emphatic stress here to boost the feeling about what just Gus did. She tried to tell her mother that Gus did something crazy.

IV CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion above it can be concluded that there are 46 data of women language features found in this movie. 7 data are associated with lexical hedges or fillers, 1 data is tag questions, 4 data belongs to rising intonation on declaratives, 2 data are empty adjectives, 12 data are intensifiers, 3 data are hypercorrect grammar, 4 data are super polite forms, 7 data are avoidance of strong swear words and 6 data are emphatic stress, and precise color terms type cannot find in this movie. Furthermore, the dominant types of women language features used by the female main character are intensifiers because of the tendency of the character to show her feeling as a woman in stating something. While, the least type of women language features used was tag question. The reason why the female main character in this does not use used tag question is because Hazel was a person with a good behavior. By using tag question, it showed that Hazel always insist someone when she looking for a confirmation and she was not that person.

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