Women's Language Features in *Summer McKeen's* Vlogs

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Abstract

The title of this study is Women's Language Features in Summer McKeen's Vlogs. This study is mainly aimed to find out and describe women's language features found in Summer McKeen's vlogs and to find out and explain the functions of women's language in Summer McKeen's vlogs. This study used Summer McKeen's video blog as the data source. The data of this study were collected by using library research method by collecting the words or phrases uttered in Summer McKeen's vlogs. The words found in the utterance indicated women's language features. The collected data were organized into classification of women's language features and the function of women's language descriptively analyzed based on the theories applied in this study. The theories applied in this study were mainly based on the theory of women language proposed by Lakoff (1975). The findings showed that the features of women's language found in Summer McKeen's vlogs were lexical hedges filler, tag question, rising intonation on declaratives, empty adjectives, precise color terms, intensifiers, hypercorrect grammar, super polite forms, avoidance of strong swear words, and emphatic stress. Moreover, the findings also found that the functions of women's language were to show uncertainty, to intensify or emphasize an utterance, to get response, to express feeling and to soften an utterance.

Keywords: women's language features, women's language functions, vlog

Abstrak

Judul penelitian ini adalah "Women's Language Features in Summer McKeen's Vlogs". Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui dan mendeskripsikan fitur- fitur Bahasa Wanita yang ditemukan di dalam video blog Summer McKeen dan juga mengetahui dan menjelaskan fungsi- fungsi dari Bahasa Wanita yang ditemukan di dalam video blog Summer McKeen. Data penelitian ini diambil dari video blog Summer McKeen. Metode penelitian kepustakaan diaplikasikan dalam penelitian ini dalam pengumpulan data dengan cara mengumpulkan kata- kata atau frasa yang diucapkan di dalam video blog Summer McKeen. Data yang terkumpul dalam penelitian ini diorganisir ke dalam klasifikasi fitur- fitur Bahasa Wanita dan fungsi Bahasa Wanita tersebut yang di analisis secara deskriptif berdasarkan teori yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini. Teori utama yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah teori Bahasa Wanita yang dikemukakan oleh Lakoff (1975). Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa fitur-fitur Bahasa Wanita yang ditemukan di dalam vlog Summer McKeen adalah lexical hedges filler, tag question, rising intonation on declaratives, empty adjectives, precise color terms, intensifiers, hypercorrect grammar, super polite forms, avoidance of strong swear words, and emphatic stress. Selain itu hasil analisis juga menunjukkan bahwa fungsi dari Bahasa Wanita antara lain untuk menunjukkan ketidakpastian, untuk

mengintensifkan atau menekankan ucapan, mendapatkan tanggapan, mengungkapkan perasaan dan melembutkan ucapan.

Kata kunci: Fitur- fitur Bahasa Wanita, fungsi- fungsi Bahasa wanita, vlog

1.   Background of the Study

Women have a different way of speaking from men, a way of speaking that both reflect and produce a subordinate position in society. Lakoff (1975, cited in Holmes, 2011, p.169) argued that women are generally lacking status in society because they are more subordinate than men. Therefore, women are more aware of the way they talk by hedging and boosting their utterance to attract the addressee's attention. Lakoff (1975, cited in Holmes, 2001, p. 287) also stated that women are more careful to be correct when they speak, using better grammar than men. This certain way of using language by women is called women's language.

Lakoff (1975, p.7) argued that women's language reflects the powerlessness of women, women tended to speak politely since they were status - conscious. They also used standard forms since they believe that the way they speak is a signal or indicates their social status in society. This fact makes them aware of their speech, even though their real status background is not coming from the high-class society. Since women are designed to have the roles of modelling correct behaviour in society, they will speak politely and standardly in daily interaction. Women's role as mothers makes the society expect them to be politer in their acting and speaking. Women are the models of speech of their children. In society, women are categorized as subordinate group and women must avoid offending and they also have to speak politely.

The characteristic of women language can be found in our daily life and in social media such as a vlog. However, women language has wide meanings and each feature of women language has their own functions. Therefore, it is important to understand women's language in order to know the purpose of using it. The theory of women's language is interesting to be studied as it is related to the variation of gender, which is the main parameter in the language use. However, this study is interested in analysing vlog postings by Summer McKeen on her YouTube channel by using women's language features theory proposed by Lakoff (1975) as a tool of analysis.

Summer McKeen's vlog was chosen to be analysed since her vlogs can show the phenomenon of the features of women's language more completely. Besides, based on the fact that Summer McKeen is a woman as the focus of this study, the employment of women's language features must be used in her vlogs. Those are the reasons why this topic was chosen as the final research.

2.   Problems of the Study

There are two problems formulated as follows:
a. What features of women's language are found in *Summer McKeen's* vlogs?
b. What functions of women's language are found in *Summer McKeen's* vlogs?

3.   Aims of the Study

In accordance with the problems of the study formulated above, this study has two aims; they are:
a. To find out and describe women's language features in *Summer McKeen's* vlogs.
b. To find out and explain women's language functions in *Summer McKeen's* vlogs.

## 4.	Research Method

Research method deals with the methods used in analyzing this study and in this point, the discussion was about the point stated in the research method. The methods of research include some of major components as follows:

### 4.1	Data Source

The data source of this study employed videos of YouTube by selecting nineteen videos in Summer McKeen's YouTube channel. The reason of using Summer McKeen's vlog as the data source is because the utterance contains women's language features. Moreover, the video is also interesting, which tells about the women's stuffs such as fashion, makeup tutorial, the daily routine of her and many more. The main data of this study are the utterances said by Summer McKeen in her vlogs.

### 4.2	Method and Technique of Collecting Data

The data were collected by using library research method. First of all, choosing and downloading the videos in Summer McKeen's YouTube channel. The second step was watching and listening intensively to Summer McKeen's utterances in her vlogs, while looking for references of women's language features. The third step was note taking of the utterance and the minute when the utterance was said and ordering it into list. Afterwards, the last step was selecting words or phrases as the data of this study related to Lakoff's theory about women's language features.

### 4.3	Method and Technique of Analyzing Data

This study used descriptive qualitative method as the method in analyzing the data. There were several steps used in analyzing the data. First, choosing the word and sentence in previous note which indicates the women's language features. Second, analyzing the features of women's language by explaining the situation in vlog first'; then describing and analyzing the features of women's language. After that the functions of women's language were analyzed. To analyze the first and the second problem, this study uses the theory of women's language by Lakoff (1975).

### 4.4	Method and Technique of Presenting Data

There are several steps used in presenting data analysis. First, the data were numbered and then the data were presented in the form of words found in Summer McKeen's speech. The word or sentence which were included into features of women's language were presented in a bold. This study uses () bracket sign to state the minute of the utterances in vlogs in order to prove the time when women's language features were used by the vlogger. Moreover, the bracket sign was also used to state the title of the vlogs. The purpose is to prove in which vlogs the statements were said.

## 5.	Result and Discussion

The data were analyzed based on women's language theory by Lakoff (1975) descriptively and with qualitative method. There are ten features of women's language: lexical hedges fillers, tag questions, rising intonation on declaratives, empty adjective, precise color terms, intensifiers, hypercorrect grammar, super polite form, avoidance of strong swear words, and emphatic stress.

5.1 Women's Language Features in *Summer McKeen's* Vlogs

The analysis of the features of women's language features found in Summer McKeen's vlogs are discussed below:

5.1.1 Lexical Hedges Fillers

(03:22) "also picks out this maroon bomber jacket and it's **like** silky looking and has a couple zippers" (*Back to school- try on clothing haul 2016*)

The word *like* in her utterance is indicated as part of lexical hedges. She does not know exactly the right material used in her maroon bomber jacket; thereby she used the word *like* to hedge her statement.

5.1.2 Tag Questions

(01:05) "this is my room. Welcome inside, it's beautiful, **isn't it**?" (*Pinterest Inspired Room Tour 2017*)

Summer McKeen used the words *isn't it* in her utterance. The word *isn't it* is categorized as part of tag question feature since this word is showed up when Summer McKeen sought a confirmation to the viewer because she was uncertain with her own statement.

5.1.3 Rising Intonation on Declaratives

(03:17) "**am I normal**?" (*Rose Gold Makeup Look-Home Coming GRWM*)

Summer McKeen gave stress and raised the intonation when she said *am I normal*. The word *am I normal* in her utterance is one of the examples of rising intonation feature since she tended to raise her intonation to get a clarification of response from the viewer.

5.1.4 Empty Adjectives

(02:22) "I got another *Thrasher* shirt. I really like this one because of the colors tho, it's **cute**" (*Spring to Summer Haul! Clothes & Skincare*)

Summer McKeen said *cute* towards the color of her new *Thrasher* shirt which indicated her approbation or admiration on her shirt. It can be seen that the word *cute* is one of the examples of empty adjectives used by Summer McKeen as a representation of her admiration toward her new shirt.

5.1.5 Precise Color Terms

(03:23) "also picks out this **maroon** bomber jacket and it's like silky looking" *(Back to school- try on clothing haul 2016)*

The word *maroon* is one of the color terms that Summer McKeen used in her utterance. Her vlog showed that Summer McKeen used specific terms in naming color. Deciding whether to name a color like *maroon* is one such sop.

5.1.6 Intensifiers

(07:10) "it's **just** super fresh and it's **just** smells great" (*Back to school- try on clothing haul 2016*)

The word *just* employed by Summer McKeen is categorized as intensifiers since the word *just* was showed up as a boosting device on her opinion. It could be seen that the word *just* was used by Summer McKeen in emphasizing her assertion on her statement.

5.1.7 Hypercorrect Grammar

(10:17) "I'm just **going to** apply a little bit of my mascara to blend my fake lashes of my real lashes" *(Rose Gold Makeup Look-Home Coming GRWM)*

She used standard English form *going to* than *gonna* which is the contracted word used to speak informally. Based on the data, it is classified as the hypercorrect grammar since the word *going to* was showed up in Summer McKeen's utterance to speak in formal form

5.1.8 Super Polite Form

(01:09) "**first of all**, I primary my skin" *(Get Ready with Me- First Day of School)*

She used the word *first of all* in her utterance which indicated a polite

form. The word *first of all* was indicated as polite form since Summer McKeen used it in giving an introduction before she explained what she would be doing. Women are supposed to be particularly careful in speaking or when they want to say something.

5.1.9 Avoidance of Strong Swear Words

(03:51) "**oh my gosh**, I have such sensitive skin" *(HAUL-Pacsun, Nike, Sephora, +more)*

The word *oh my gosh* indicated that Summer McKeen was avoiding strong swear words because she used softer form to strengthen her emotion. In considering an expression of strong emotion, women are not supposed to be like a man who more severely shows temper (Lakoff, 1975, p.50-51).

5.1.10 Emphatic Stress

(02:35) "it's one of *Brandy's* **adorable band tee** and this is *the grateful death*" *(Winter Brandy Clothing (&Makeup) Haul)*

The word *adorable* in her utterance indicated emphatic stress since Summer McKeen emphasized her information and showed her admiration to her new shirt. The emphatic stress *adorable* gave stronger effect which can make the statement more credible.

5.2 Women's Language Functions in *Summer McKeen's* Vlogs

Each feature of women's language had their own function. The analysis of women's language function is discussed below:

5.2.1 To Show Uncertainty

Based on the findings of the research, Summer McKeen shows uncertainty through three features. They are lexical hedges filler and tag questions

feature. The explanation on each employment is shown below:

(06:15) "and I use my MAC stippling brush, **I think** this is called stippling brush, I don't know" *(Get Ready with Me- Everyday Makeup Routine)*

She tended to reduce the absolute effect of her statement by using hedge *I think* in her utterance. The function of lexical hedges such as *I think* was used to convey the speaker's uncertainty or that the speaker cannot vouch the accuracy of the statement.

(01:10) "can we make this video to ten thousand thumbs up, **can't we?**" *(Natural Drugstore Makeup Tutorial for School)*

She used the tag question *can't we* since she was pretty certain that her statement would be accepted but she lacked of confidence. The function of the tag question *can't we* was to show her uncertainty towardd her statement; therefore, she tended to avoid asserting herself in a strong way.

5.2.2 To Intensify or Emphasize an Utterance

This study found that there were some features used by Summer McKeen to make her utterance stronger. They were intensifiers and emphatic stress features. The explanation is presented below:

(06:37) "I got two more things and it's kinda random, but I'm **very excited** about both of them" *(Back to school- try on clothing haul 2016)*

She used the intensifier feature *very* to emphasize her strong emotion toward something. The intensifier *very* functions to emphasize strong emotion and assertion to something. Summer McKeen gave stronger effect to the statement by emphasizing the information with the intensifier *very*.

(02:48) "oh my god, this is **the best moisturizer I've ever tried**" (*The Best Beauty Product Ever*)

She gave the stress mark to the main statement and directly showed her impression toward something by employing *the best* and *ever tried* to strengthen her statement. Here, the function of emphatic stress in the utterance above was to emphasize and strengthen certain parts of Summer McKeen's statement.

5.2.3 To Get Response

Summer McKeen used two features of women's language as a way to get response from her addressee. They are tag question and rising intonation on declarative feature. Below are the examples and explanation:

(01:05) "this is my room. Welcome inside, it's beautiful, **isn't it?**" (*Pinterest Inspired Room Tour 2017*)

She used the tag question *isn't it* since she lacked confidence and she was not sure whether the viewer would agree or not. She did this because she did not want to assert herself strongly. The tag question functions to ask one's opinion in discussing personal feeling because Summer McKeen's wanted the viewer confirm her statement.

(03:17) "**am I normal?**" (*Rose Gold Makeup Look-Home Coming GRWM*)

She used rising intonation on declaratives to get an agreement from the viewer because Summer McKeen was hesitant about her statement. The use of rising intonation indicated that there was unwillingness to be very assertive in carrying an opinion.

5.2.4 To Express Feeling

This study found that there were two features which functioned to express the speaker's feeling; they are empty adjectives and precise color terms. The data and the explanation of this function are presented in the following part:

(07:38) "shout out to make babes of the week. you guys are **awesome**" (*My Summer Morning Routine*)

Summer McKeen expressed her admiration by employing the empty adjective *awesome* to her viewer who already sent her appreciation posts. The word *awesome* was employed only to express the speaker's emotional reaction.

(06:45) "now I'd like to take a little bit color to my face. I'm just taking some like **berry pink** blush" (*No Makeup_Makeup Look_Chit Chat GRWM*)

Since women are regarded more expressive than men, deciding whether to name a color had led women to being more expressive in several ways than men in conversation. In her vlogs showed that Summer McKeen used more specific terms in naming color.

5.2.5 To Soften an Utterance

This study found that there were some features used by Summer McKeen in her vlog to soften her utterance. Those features were hypercorrect grammar, super polite forms, and avoidance of strong swear word features. The explanation of this function is discussed below:

(04:26) "so, you know **I've been using** the Becca champagne pop highlighter like a decade" (*My Coachella Makeup 2017*)

Her utterance used present perfect continuous tense, the rule is: S + have + been + V-ing. *I've been using* meant *I have been using*. She used hypercorrect grammar in her utterance to show politeness to the viewer.

(06:13) "**I hope** you having a good day and if you not I really hope this video made you happy" (*Brandy Melville and Urban Outfitters*)

In order to give less offensive and forceful effect, Summer McKeen used super polite form feature by exaggerating politeness in her utterance. If the utterance "I hope you having" turned into the non-polite form, it would be "I want you to have" which tended to force someone.

(03:51) "**oh my gosh**, I have such sensitive skin" (*HAULPacsun, Nike, Sephora, +more*)

She strengthened the particle in her utterance to show how annoyed she was. She tended to use the weak expletive *oh my gosh*. The word *oh my gosh* here functioned to show how strongly she allowed herself to feel about something and to soften her utterance.

6. Conclusion

Based on the analysis and discussion, there are ten features of women's language found in Summer McKeen's vlogs such as: lexical hedges filler, tag question, rising intonation on declarative, precise color term, empty adjective, intensifier, hypercorrect grammar, super polite form, avoidance of strong swear word and emphatic stress. This means that all of women's language features were found in Summer McKeen's vlogs.

The analysis also shows that the women's language functions used to show uncertainty were employed through lexical hedges fillers and tag questions feature. The function of intensifying or emphasizing an utterance was employed through intensifiers and emphatic stress feature. Followed by the function which to get response employed through tag question feature and rising intonation on declarative feature. The functions used to express feeling were expressed through empty adjectives and precise color term feature. The last function which was intended to soften an utterance was employed through hypercorrect grammar, super polite form and avoidance of strong swear words feature.

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