Language Style of Women in the Movies *Pitch Perfect*

Putu Upik Mahardiani
English Department, Faculty of Arts, Udayana University
[upik.mahardiani25@gmail.com

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi dan mendeskripsikan tipe dan karakter gaya Bahasa perempuan yang digunakan dalam film. Data diambil dari skrip film berseri yang berjudul Pitch Perfect yang ditulis oleh Kay Cannon dengan mengaplikasikan metode dokumentasi dan teknik mencatat. Teknik menganalisis data dilakukan dengan memberikan deskripsi dan penjelasan tentang gaya bahasa perempuan dan juga karakteristik yang digunakan. Data dari gaya bahasa perempuan dianalisis berdasarkan teori oleh Tannen (1990) dan yang digunakan untuk menganalisis karakteristik pada bahasa perempuan adalah teori oleh Coates (2004). Hasil temuan menunjukkan bahwa semua jenis gaya bahasa perempuan dari teori Tannen (1990) dapat ditemukan pada film berseri Pitch Perfect seperti: dukungan, keintiman, pengertian, perasaan, usulan, dan kompromi. Sedangkan karakteristik dari bahasa perempuan yang digunakan dalam film seri Pitch Perfect berfungsi untuk menunjukkan beberapa kata yang memiliki arti tidak terlalu penting, untuk mendapatkan tanggapan, untuk menunjukkan ketidak yakinan, untuk memberi usul, dan untuk mengungkapkan perasaan.

Kata kunci: gaya bahasa perempuan, karakteristik, film

Abstract

*This study entitled **Language Style of Women in the Movies Pitch Perfect** aims to identify and analyze the women's language styles and their characteristics in an American sequel movie. The data were taken from the movie scripts entitled Pitch Perfect and Pitch Perfect 2 written by Kay Cannon in 2012 and 2015 and were collected by applying documentation method and note-taking techniques. The technique of analyzing data was done by giving the description and explanation of women's language style and characteristics. The data were analyzed by applying the theory of women's language style by Tannen (1990) and the characteristic of women's language by Coates (2004). The findings showed that all of women's language styles proposed by Tannen (1990) found in Pitch Perfect movies, those are: support, intimacy, understanding, feelings, proposal, and compromise. The characteristics of women's language found in the movies were to show a connote triviality, to get response on something, to show uncertainty, to give a suggestion, and to express feelings.*

Keywords: women's language styles, characteristics, movies

1. Background of the Study

Language is used by people around the world as a tool of communication in speaking or writing in daily life. One of the linguistic branches that studies about the relation between language and society is sociolinguistics. According to Coates (2004: 4) sociolinguistics is the study of language in social context.

In social context, there are some different styles of language used by women and men. The differences could be in phonology, vocabulary, grammar, and conversational topics. Tannen (1990) states that any observation of gender differences will be heard as implying that it is women who are different from the standard. Furthermore, if there are different styles between men and women, it is women who are usually told to change.

The phenomenon about women language is interesting to be studied because it is related to the usage of language in different gender. In identifying and analyzing the women's language, theory proposed by Tannen (1990) about women's language style and theory proposed by Coates (2004) about characteristic of women's language were applied.

The study about women's language style and its characteristics is interesting to be studied because it is related to the usage of language in different genders. The differences in language gender have been an interesting topic since the early 1990s. The data used were taken from the American sequel movie entitled *Pitch Perfect* and *Pitch Perfect 2* that can show the phenomenon of women's language.

2. Problems of the Study

a) What language styles are applied by women in the *Pitch Perferct movies?*

b) What characteristics of women's language and how they are used in the movies *Pitch Perfect*?

3. Aims of the Study

a) To identify the language style applied by women in the movies *Pitch Perfect* .

b) To analyze the characteristics of women's language and how it is used in the movies *Pitch Perfect*.

4. Research Method

Research method is procedure in the systematic study applied within a discipline. The reserch method covers four points, namely data source, method and technique of collecting data, method and technique of analyzing data, and method and technique of presenting analysis.

4.1 Data Source

The movie scripts of *Pitch Perfect* and *Pitch Perfect 2 written by Kay Cannon* were used as the data source in this study. *Pitch Perfect* was released in 2012 and *Pitch Perfect 2* was released in 2015. The movies were American musical comedy and almost all of the characters were women. The movies were used as the data source because there were many conversations of women's language style and also the characteristics found.

4.2 Method and Technique of Collecting Data

Documentation method was used to collect the data in this study. The technique of collecting data in this study was done in several steps. Firstly, reading the subtitles of the movies *Pitch Perfect* downloaded form https://opensubtitles.co/download-subtitle/Pitch-Perfect-2012_49945 and https://opensubtitles.co/download-

subtitle/Pitch-Perfect-2-2015_9476.
Secondly, note taking the women's language style. Finally reading extensively the subtitles and highliting the conversation of women's language style.

4.3 Method and Technique of Analyzing Data

The method of analyzing the data based on the qualitative method. There were two steps in collecting the data. Firstly, to analyze the types of women's language style the theory proposed by Tannen (1990) was used. Then, to analyze the characteristics of women's language style the theory proposed by Coates (2004) was used. Dictionaries like online oxford dictionary and urban dictionary were also used to find the meaning of some words in the data analysis.

4.4 Method and Technique of Presenting Result of Data Analysis

The informal method was used to present the analysis of the data in this study since the data were described descriptively. The analysis only describes about women's language style and its characteristics. The data were described by explaining the situation and analyzing the women's language style and its characteristics in the movies.

5. Result and Discussion
5.1 Preliminary

The discussion of women's language style was described in phararaphs. The data were chosen from the utterances of women characters in the movies *Pitch Perfect* and *Pitch Perfect 2* . The analysis of the data was about the description of the type of women's language styles based on the theory proposed by Tannen (1990) and then followed by the analysis of the characteristics of women's

language based on the theory proposed by Coates (2004).

5.2 The Analysis of Women's Language Styles and the Characteristics

The types of women's language style found in the character's utterances are support, intimacy, understanding, feelings, proposal, and compromise. The characteristics of women's language found in the character's utterances are verbosity, question, commands and directives, and swearing and taboo language. The description of each type is as follows:

5.2.1 Support

Support was used by the women characters in the movies as a negotiation for closeness.

Data
Chloe : **Oh, my God! Oh, my God! Oh, my God!**
Fat Amy : **Chloe, don't blame yourself.**
Chloe : **Oh, my God**
Fat Amy : You're a ginger. That's punishment enough.
Beca : **This is not all your fault. This is on all of us.**

In the conversation above, Chloe was panic because The Bellas made a terrible mistake when they performed in front of Mr. President on his birthday. That made The Bellas was suspended by the National A Cappella Group from competing at the colligative level. They could not participate in any campuses competition anymore. Chloe thought that was like the end of her journey with The Bellas because something bad happened to them. At that time, Chloe needed a support that could make her feel better. Fortunately, Fat Amy and Beca could handle that situation and gave a support to Chloe. Fat Amy gave her support to

Chloe by saying **"Chloe, don't blame yourself."** Beca tried to give a support to Chloe in her utterance by saying **"This is not all your fault. This is on all of us."**. Beca said every member of Barden Bella took the responsibility for what they had done.

In the dialogue above, Chloe used the swearing word **"Oh, my God"** to show that she was surprised and shocked by the punishment that they got from the National A Cappella Group. The swearing word **"Oh, My God"** that was used by Chloe also could indicate that she needed a support to make her feel better. A lot of women tended to use weak swearing word like what Chloe said **"Oh My God."** even though nowadays there are also some women started to use strong swear words, in this conversation, Chloe still used weak swear word.

5.2.2   Intimacy

Intimacy was used by the women characters in the movies in order to negotiate complex networks of friendship, reach consensus, and avoid superiority.

Data

Fat Amy : **I thought of a new name for this hairstyle. It's called the Orthodox Jew ponytail.**
Aubrey : **O Yeah?**
Fat Amy : 'Cause it's very reserved at the front.
Aubrey : I see that
Fat Amy : But the party in the back.
Aubrey : I see these happening here.

In the dialogue above, the conversation was still between Fat Amy and Aubrey, but with different topics. Fat Amy and Aubrey who felt comfortable with each other did a small talk about Fat Amy's new hairstyle. Even though that was not an important topic, Aubrey still gave a positive response to it. The conversation above showed that there was an intimacy between Fat Amy and Aubrey. Fat Amy opened the conversation and tried to build a close friendship with Aubrey by saying **"I thought of a new name for this hairstyle. It's called the Orthodox Jew ponytail."**. She started the conversation and wanted to build a good relationship with Aubrey since they were at the same a cappella group.

The characteristic of women's language that appeared in the dialogue above to show their intimacy is Aubrey's utterance **"O Yeah?"**. In giving her response about Fat Amy's new hairstyle, Aubrey used an interrogative form **"O yeah?"** to keep the conversation going between Fat Amy and her. Aubrey showed her concern to Fat Amy's statement by questioning her about it. Furthermore, Aubrey as the captain of the Bella who did not want Fat Amy to get upset and she also wanted to build a connection with her new member.

5.2.3   Understanding

Women tend to show understanding of other women's feelings. Sometimes they are not looking for advice. They just want to be understood.

Data

Emily : Is it weird that we never got around to singing today?
Beca : Uh, well, it's kind of hard to start singing without arrangements, and that's on me. So thank you for reminding me.
Chloe : Yeah, Bec, we're gonna need that ASAP so we can start nailing down our choreography.
Beca : Right on top of that, Chlo.
Chloe : **Awes!**
Beca : Yeah, **awes.**

The conversation above was taken from minute 00:33:10 to 00:33:25. The

conversation occurred after the Bellas finished practicing their choreography for the next show. Emily who was the new member of the Bella asked why they did not practice their singing and Beca said it was hard to sing without the arrangement. Then, Chloe came and asked Beca about the arrangement. They needed it as soon as possible. Beca said the arrangement that she made did not finish yet, but she promised to finish it soon. The understanding style was applied by Chloe. Instead of getting mad with Beca because she did not finish the arrangement, Chloe just reminded her that she needed to finish the arrangement as soon as possible. Chloe knew that Beca could do her job impeccably.

The characteristic of women's language that appeared in the conversation above was verbosity. A lot of women sometimes use various adjectives to express their feeling. That is showed in the conversation above by Chloe and Beca when they used the verbosity **"Awes"**. According to Fahot (cited in urban dictionary (2009)) the word 'Awes' is short for the adjective word awesome. Chloe used the adjective **"Awes"** because she knew that Beca would make a good arrangement for them. Meanwhile, Beca used the adjective **"Awes"** to make sure that she would make the arrangement as soon as possible.

5.2.4 Feelings

The women characters in the movie *Pitch Perfect 2* tended to use their feeling in showing their interest and caring for others.

Data

Beca   : **You know, when I look back on this, I won't remember performing and competing. I'm gonna remember you weirdos. It makes me** **really sad to think it won't ever be like this again. I'm gonna miss you guys.**
Cynthia Rose : Me too.
Stacie   : Me too.
Fat Amy   : Yeah. Me too.
Chloe   : (start singing)
The other members   : (singing)
Beca   :**Did we just find our sound?**
Chloe   : I think we did.

The conversation occured at the night after the Bellas finished their retreat. Beca shared her emotional feelings because she would graduate soon and she would remember the time that they had spent together by saying **"You know, when I look back on this, I won't remember performing and competing. I'm gonna remember you weirdos. It makes me really sad to think it won't ever be like this again. I'm gonna miss you guys."**. While Beca shared her feeling, the other members show their caring to Beca by listening to her. Cynthia Rose, Stacie, and Fat Amy also could feel the same thing with Beca and the situation was getting emotional until Chloe started to sing. Women sometimes speak just to share their emotions and feelings. That kind of situation is categorized as feelings in the women's language style proposed by Tannen (1990).

In the conversation above, the characteristic of women's language that appeared was questioned by Beca, after the Bellas stopped singing. Beca's utterance **"Did we just find our sound?"** showed her surprise that they found their harmonization in singing again. She wanted to make sure about what she just heard. She was glad because finally, the Bellas could find back their harmonization.

5.2.5 Proposal

Women use some suggestion to express their preferences. They suggest people to do something indirectly.

Data

Chloe : **My God.** This is a travesty. God, if we can't even recruit Baloney Barb, then we can't get anybody.

Aubrey : Just take the dramatics down a notch, okay? Hi, do you wanna...

Chloe : Well, you're the one who got us into this hot mess.

Aubrey : We'll be fine. I am confident that we will find eight super-hot girls with bikini-ready bodies who can harmonize and have perfect pitch. Okay? Hi, would you like to be a member of... Just keep flyering. We have tradition to uphold.

Chloe : **How about we just get good singers?**

The dialogue above occurred between Chloe and Aubrey in the activities fair before Fat Amy appeared in front of them. Chloe felt anxious because they could not get any new member of Barden Bella yet. It was because Aubrey who was too picky about recruiting the new members of Barden Bella. Aubrey was too optimistic that they would get good singers with a nice appearance. However, no one interested in joining Barden Bella because after a silly accident when Aubrey was throwing up in the middle of their performance. Aubrey asked Chloe to keep fleering. Chloe then suggested that they just pick a good singer. In this case, the language style used by Chloe is proposal as showed in her sentence **"How about we just get good singers?"**. She did not directly give an order, but she gave a suggestion in expressing her preferences. Her utterance means that Chloe just wanted to pick the good singer even though they did not have a good appearance as Aubrey asked.

There were two characteristics of women's language that appear in this dialogue; question and swearing and taboo language. Chloe used weak swear word like **"My God"** that showed that she was panic because she thought they would not be able to get new members for Barden Bella. The other language function is question. In giving her suggestion, Chloe used an interrogative form **"How about we just get good singers?"**. Her interrogative form showed that Chloe was asking a consideration about only getting good singers to Aubrey.

5.2.6 Compromise

The women characters in the movies show their compromise to each other in order to avoid the conflict and keep their closeness.

Data

Chloe : I think Beca should take my solo.

Fat Amy : Yeah, Beca would be excellent. But also, someone else might be equally as excellent.

Beca : It's true.

Fat Amy : And they might be shy and not wanna come forward and say they wanted a solo.

Aubrey : Well, Beca doesn't want a solo, so...

Beca : I would be happy to do it if I got to pick a new song and do an arrangement.

Aubrey : Well, that's not how we run things here.

Chloe : Aubrey, maybe Beca has a point. Maybe we could try something new.

Aubrey : A-ca-scuse me? You can sing Turn the Beat Around and that's the last I wanna hear of this.

Beca : That song is tired. We're not gonna win with it. If we pull samples

from different genres and layer them together, we could make some...

Aubrey : Okay, let me explain something to you because you still don't seem to get it. Our goal is to get back to the finals and these songs will get us there. So, excuse me if I don't take advice from some alt-girl with her mad lib beats, because she's never even been in competition. Have I made myself clear?

Beca : Crystal. I won't solo.

Aubrey : Fine.

The conversation above occurred after the Bellas practiced for the Final championship. They had a problem about who would do the solo since Chloe who was the former soloist could not do solo anymore after she had nods. Chloe suggested Beca to do solo because she thought Beca could make it. Beca would be happy if she did the solo, furthermore if she could pick the song and do the arrangement. Aubrey who was skeptical about Beca from the very beginning did not want Beca to do the solo. Aubrey thought that Beca would ruin everything if she did solo and arranged the song. Aubrey who was still stick to tradition thought that Beca would change the music character of the Bellas that had been used for years. She tried to explain that they would not change the song that they had practiced and she was pretty sure the song that they had practiced for the final champion would bring their group as the winner.

Beca knew if she kept doing the solo, there would be a conflict between Aubrey and her. To avoid conflict that might appear, Beca decided not to do the solo. Since she was a new member in Barden Bella, she could accept and respect Aubrey's decision as the captain of the group. She did not want to add another problem that might affect their next performance and made Aubrey hate her more than before.

There were two types of language function that appeared in the conversation above that could show the compromise style; question and verbosity. The question was used by Aubrey to Beca in her utterance **"Have I made myself clear?"**. Aubrey used the interrogative form in order to give an indirect command to Beca so she would not do the solo. Beca responded Aubrey's question by using a verbosity **"Crystals"**. The adjective **"crystal"** according to online oxford dictionary is used for saying something that is clear and transparent like crystal. That means that Beca could clearly understand what was meant by Aubrey.

6. Conclusion

Based on the analysis and discussion that have been done in the previous chapter, there were six language styles of women found in the movies *Pitch Perfect* such as support, intimacy, understanding, feelings, proposal, and compromise. Support was the most language style used by the women characters in the movies. The characteristics of women's language used by the characters were verbosity, question, command and directives, and swearing and taboo language. Question was the type that was often used by the women characters in the movies.

Most of the women characters used conversation to seek and give a support to the others. They were comfortable even they only could give help and support. When they sought or gave support, it could create intimacy and build up the closeness with one another. Intimacy is the thing that women like to create while having a conversation. Women see the conversation to negotiate closeness and intimacy with their partner. A good intimacy is a good start of relationship. In every relationship that

women make, they tend to show understanding of other women's feelings. Understanding is a thing they use to respect others' decision and avoid conflict. Sharing their feelings about something to their friends or relatives is a usual thing that every woman does. That is a part of building an intimacy to the others. In respecting other opinion, women tend to suggest something instead of giving an order directly.

The characteristics of women's language in the movies have their own function. The function of verbosity was to connote triviality because women tend to speak various adjectives or adverbs. Question was often used by women to keep the conversation going and to make sure about something. The function of command and directives is to make a suggestion about something to do instead of giving a direct order. In using swearing and taboo language, women tend to use a weak swear word, such as *"My God"* to express their surprise. From five characteristics of women's language proposed by Coates (2004), the only tag question which was not found in the data analysis that have been done in the previous chapter.

7. References

Coates, J. (2004). *Women, Men, and Language: A Sociolinguistic account of sex differences in Language*. Third Edition. Longman, Harlow.

Oxford Dictionary [Internet]. Available from: https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/crystal [Accessed 3 April 2018].

Pitch Perfect. (2012). Universal Picture, United State. 28 September. English Subtitle. Available from: https://opensubtitles.co/Pitch-Perfect-2012-English-Subtitles [Accessed 7 December 2012].

Pitch Perfect 2. (2015). Universal Picture, United State. 15 May. English Subtitle. Available from: https://opensubtitles.co/download-subtitle/Pitch-Perfect-2-2015_9476 [Accessed 28 April 2017].

Tannen, D. (1990). *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation*. New York, Ballantine Books.