

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of the Research

Women care approximately themselves status, they believe that the way they talk reflects their social class background or social standing. They use more formal language in both formal and informal situations. It is assumed that linguistic features are generally associated with high social status. As a result, they make extensive use of women language traits to assert privilege or high social standing.

Women's language frequently leads to an explanation of how they speak. By comparing the language between men and women in daily life, it can be seen that there are differences in the way of speaking. The way women speak is often described with terms that are rarely used to describe behavior. They have a more polite way of communicating or interacting with others.

Women use more softening language and less swear words. Women's speech has been ideologically distinguished from men's speech in the choice of sentence-final expressions, referential terms, and honorifics, which indicate softness, no assertiveness, and politeness (Lakoff, 2004). They have a social character to interact with others. They communicate for the establishment and maintenance of relationships with others.

Communication between women is usually personal, reveals information and also supports others. In addition, women also have a unique language in

conveying something to others. Therefore, women's language has interesting functions and characteristics to be studied. Women's language has two functions, namely boosting devices (strengthening device) and hedging devices (weakening device) (Holmes & Wilson ,2022).

Boosting devices can be used to strengthen the power of speech. Boosting devices illustrate the anticipation of speakers for speech partners who may still be unsure and then additional information is provided. In short, these features are used to convince the speech partner of his speech. Women use this function when they desire to reinforce their speech and intend to convince the other person of what they are saying. Boosting devices include empty adjectives, intensifiers, and emphatic stress. In addition, to boosting devices of women language also have a language function where women show a lack of confidence called hedges devices.

Hedges devices can be used to weaken the power of speech. Hedges devices explicitly indicate a lack of confidence. In other words, these features are used to express uncertainty. Women use this function when they are in a situation where they feel a lack of confidence in responding to something to the interlocutor when communicating. Hedges devices include lexical hedges or fillers, tag questions, rising intonation, hypercorrect grammar, super polite forms, and avoidance (Talboot, 2020).

If the two functions of women's language are combined, the characteristics of women's language are formed. In women language, these characteristics are called features of women language. Lakoff (as cited in Holmes & Wilson,

2022) suggested that women's language features were characterized by linguistic features. These ten linguistics features form women's language features.

The first language feature is a lexical hedge or fillers it is used to start a conversation, express uncertainty in the conversation. Women say this to start a conversation in any context and express uncertainty in speech to keep the conversation going. The examples of hedges modal verbs such as could, might, may, would, should. While the examples of fillers sort of, I think, you know, well, kind of, like and I guess.

The second language features, is tag questions. Women use tag questions because they feel uncertain and unsure of what they are saying. The purpose of the tag question is to get an answer from the interlocutor, for instance (Lakoff, 2004): *Sure, it's hot here, isn't?* One possible view of the sentence below is that the speaker has a certain yes-no answer but is very hesitant to state it.

The third is the use of intonation on declarative sentences, which is rising intonation on declaratives. Women deliver their statements to get an accurate answer. Also, women often raise the intonation of their voice when saying declarative sentences to get the right information. For example, *when will dinner be ready?* and *Oh ... around six o'clock?* from those sentences we can say that what is mean by second statement is if six o'clock' six o'clock is correct 'ok with first statement or if the first statement agrees. First statement is put in the position of having to provide confirmation, and second statement sound unconfident.

The next language feature is an empty adjective. Empty adjectives, group of adjectives that have the meaning of showing approbation or admiration shown by the speaker for something. Besides, it can also be called an empty adjective which means that women convey their emotional reactions from certain information. For example, women said '*What a terrific idea*' instead of '*What a define idea*' in appropriate condition. it is used to amuse the speaker herself.

Precise Color terms is the fifth language features. Women give more precise terms in naming colors compared to men. They have a more detailed and meticulous nature than men. They can see many different colors in one color category, while men see only one color in one color category. This can be seen from the large vocabulary that women have.

Furthermore, is intensifier used to strengthen or emphasize the meaning of adjectives or adverbs. They use intensifier to emphasize or affirm meaning in a sentence. Usually, like to emphasize their vocabulary when communicating. For example, *I feel so happy* and *That movie made me so sick!*. Men seem to have difficulty using sentences like this when in an unemotional or non-subjective condition without mentioning themselves.

The seventh language feature is hypercorrect grammar. Women used to correspond to the standard verb form. They have the tendency to talk with clear grammar, and they tend to pay greater attention to utilizing standard language. In relation to politeness in pronunciation, this avoids impolite language. They are more likely to use standardized forms of language than men.



The next language feature is super polite form. In speaking women usually use polite words. The super polite form is associated with the idea that women are expected to be respectful and cautious when speaking or engaging with others. They prefer to use polite language than men. Super polite form considered as something that must be done by women. As well, the way They speak shows the background of social status.

Avoid swear words is the ninth language feature. Instead of using swear words and rude women prefer to use words that are polite and do not hurt the other person. It can be seen from the following sentence: *Oh dear! you broke my glass again* and *Shit you broke my glass again*. The two types of sentences are the same in syntactic form and lexical reference terms. The difference is only in the choice of meaningless particles. The first sentence will be grouped as a women language and the second sentence as a men language.

The last language feature, Women often use empathic emphasis when talking to others. Sometimes, they use empathic emphasis to emphasize the statement and strengthen the meaning of the speech. they also use emphatic emphasis to relate, clarify, compare, or highlight ideas. The use of language features is different between males and females. For example, *it was a brilliant performance*; the word brilliant is one example of emphatic stress. It is used to emphasize the meaning of appearance.

The study of women's language features becomes an essential aspect because women's speech differs from men's speech. Men and women use language differently, and these disparities can be attributed to the language's

structure, social norms, or the individuals who use the language in that society. In fact, women tend to be more polite when talking than men's. This kind of social judgments and stereotypes cannot be separated by the society. Women are perceived as weaker and having less power than men's, whereas men are believed to be stronger and more powerful.

People believe that men should behave masculinity and women should behave femininely. The study of the link between language and society is sociolinguistics. Sociolinguists study the relationship between language and society (Holmes & Wilson, 2022). They are interested in understanding the social purposes of language and the means through which it is used to express social meaning.

As explained earlier, the features of women's language have become an important characteristic of women's speech. Women's language can be found in literary works such as novels, poetry, drama, movies. Researchers used the film *Little Women* as a subject in this study. The focus of this research is the Features and Functions of Women's language used by Jo March in *Little Women* movie. In this study, the researcher did not display male language because the researcher only focused on women's language features and functions.

The researcher hopes that this research will enrich knowledge about the features and functions of women's language that occur in the movie entitled *Little Women* and make a useful contribution to everyone, especially students of the STBA JIA English Literature Department. Therefore, the researcher

wants to provide an analysis of the features and functions of women's language. Hopefully, in the future research the analysis can be carried out under the same topic with a more in-depth version of the researcher. Furthermore, the researcher hopes that everyone understands how to perceive women's speech.

## **B. Question and Scopes of the Research**

### **1. Question of the Research**

Based on the background of the research above, the problems discussed in this research are:

- a. What are the features of women's language used by Jo March in *Little Women* movie?
- b. What are the functions of language used by Jo March in *Little Women* movie?

### **2. Scopes of the Research**

In this study, researchers focused on analyzing a word in conversation to find out the features and functions of women language an American film entitled *Little Women*. The researcher is intended to analyze the features of women's language and the function of women's language used by Jo March, the main character in *Little Women*, to analyze the function of women's language the researcher using Holmes theory. While the writer using Lakoff Theory for features of women's language. Women's language features were characterized by linguistic features. These ten linguistics features form women's language features.

## C. Objectives and Significances of the Research

### 1. Objectives of the Research

Based on the question of the research above, the objectives of the research are as follows:

- a. To Describe how is the features of women's speech is used by women's character in *Little Women* movie.
- b. To identify the function of women's speech is used by women's character in *Little women* movie.

### 2. Significance of the Research

Through this research, the researcher hopes that this research can provide meaning for those who read it. It is divided into two parts, those are theoretically benefits and practically benefits.

Theoretically, the researcher hopes that this research can be a reference for linguistics students to learn more about women's languages, especially in the field of sociolinguistics. The researcher provides readers with additional information about language and gender. To inform readers that there are differences in language features between women and men. Practically, for the researcher, I hope this work can increase her knowledge and insight about the characteristics of women's language and its functions, as well as provide a reference for readers so that readers are more familiar with women's languages.



## **D. Operational Definition**

### **1. Women Language**

Women's language usually leads to an explanation of how women and men speak. Women have a more polite way of communicating or interacting with others. Women use more softening language and less swear words.

### **2. Women's Language Function**

Characteristic of women's language features. Women's language has two functions, namely strengthening function (boosting devices) and weakening function (hedging devices). Boosting devices can be used to strengthen the power of speech and Hedges devices can be used to weaken the power of speech.

### **3. Women's Language Features**

Women's Language Feature a language that represents the traits of women, such as avoiding direct and forceful statements. women's language features have ten characterized women's language features.

### **4. Sociolinguistic**

Sociolinguists study the relationship between language and society. They are interested in understanding the social purposes of language and the means through which it is used to express social meaning.

### **5. Little Women**

Little Women is a 2019 American romantic drama film directed by Greta Gerwig and produced by Amy Pascal, Denise Di Novi and Robin Swicord. The movie script was written by Greta Gerwig based on the novel

Little Women by Louisa May Alcott. The film premiered at the Rio de Janeiro International Film Festival on December 9, 2019 and was released in the United States on December 25, 2019.

#### **E. Systematization of the Research**

The systematization of the research intends to present the research in well edited composition. This research is divided into five chapters as follow:

Chapter I is Introduction explains about the Background of the Research, Questions and Scope of the Research, Objective and Significance of the Research, Operational Definition, and Systematization of the Research.

Chapter II is Theoretical Description consists of the description of Sociolinguistics, Movie, and Research of the Relevance.

Chapter III is Research Methodology contains about The Methods of the Research, Procedure of the Research, Technique of the Data Collection, Technique of the Data Analyzes, and Data Source of the Primary and Secondary Data.

Chapter IV is Analysis Data show about the Data Description, Data Analysis, and Interpretation of the Research Findings.

Chapter V are Conclusion and Suggestion conclude the entire chapter relating to the hypothesis discussion and gives suggestions relating to the significance of the research.