

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, the writer presents the theories and references that are related to the analysis. They are women's language, women's speech features, and previous study.

1.1 Theoretical Framework

1.1.1 Women's Language

Language is sometimes believed to be varied in accordance with gender, namely men's language and women's language variety (Jendra, 2010:51). Woman's language has become foundation the attitude that women are weakness. The weakness and powerlessness of women is reflected in both the ways women are expected to speak, and the ways in which women speak. In appropriate women's speech, strong expression of feeling is avoided, expression of uncertainty is favored, and means of expression in regard to subject-matter deemed 'trivial' to the 'real' world are elaborated (Lakoff, 1973:45).

Robin Tolmach Lakoff has a professor of linguistics at the University of California at Berkeley since 1972. She is the first linguist who began the research for definitive features of women's language. She introduced the terms *women's language* in 1973 article in *Language and Society*, and made it the title of a 1978 book chapter. Her 1975's book *Language and Woman's Place* has been enormously influential and cited by a lot of linguistics who study the search of sex in language use for the next two decades. As cited in Cuellar (2006), during the

last three decades, Lakoff's ideas have been appraised, discussed, disputed, accepted and/or rejected.

According to Cuellar (2006), Robin Lakoff's seminal book *Language and Women's Place* (1975) opened a new strand in linguistic studies when she called the attention to a traditionally forgotten issue: the differences in language used by men and women. Lakoff's work was portrayed a clear situation of inequality in society and how it was reinforced by the use of language by men and women. Moreover, Lakoff underlines that linguistic features typical of women's language are general tendencies and correspond to spoken, not written language.

Lakoff's writing has become the basis for many researchers who conduct the research about women's language as subject. She published ten basic assumptions about what she felt as special women's language in 1975.

1.1.2 Women's Speech Features

Lakoff suggested that a distinct group of feature-lexical, syntactic, and pragmatic-distinguish the speech of women by using introspection and linguistic intuition as her method. Below are the types of women's speech features based on Lakoff's theory as cited in several sources.

1. Lexical Hedges Fillers

Lakoff decided hedging as one of characteristic of women's speech features. She refers to the frequent use of such as *well, you see, sorta/sort of, like, you know, kinda/kind of, like, I guess, I think, and it seems like*. Holmes (1992:317) said that some researchers reported that women used up to three times

as many hedges as men, while in others there were no differences between the sexes. For example:

- *Its' sort of a good film*

Lakoff (cited in Holmes, 1992:316) claimed that hedging devices explicitly signal lack of confidence. So, she claimed women use hedging devices to express uncertainty, and they use intensifying devices to persuade their addressee to take them seriously.

Fishman (cited in Cameron, 1990:237), also deals with 'you know' in her own analysis in 1979. In her research, the women used 'you know' five times more often than men. Fishman found that 'you know' were almost appear in all places where the women were unsuccessfully attempting to pursue topics

Fishman (cited in Cameron, 1990:238) '*you know*' shows conversational trouble, but it is usually become an attempt to solve the trouble as well. '*You know*' is a way to get attention or a way to check with one's interactional partner to see if they are listening, following and attending to the one's remark. When people consider '*you know*' interactively, it is not surprising to find that its use to concentrated in long turns at talk, where the speaker is unsuccessfully attempting to carry on a conversation. Besides, Fishman (cited in Cameron, 1990:239) argued that '*you know*' seems to be an explicit to respond when it occurs immediately before or after pauses in the women's speech.

2. Tag Question

The tag question is a syntactic device listed by Lakoff which may express uncertainty (Holmes, 1992:318). We find that syntactically too women's speech is

peculiar. There is no syntactic rule in English that only women may use. But there is at least one rule that a woman will use in more conversational situations than a man. This is the rule of tag question formation (Lakoff, 1973:53).

Lakoff (1973:54) said that a tag, in its usage as well as its syntactic shape (in English) is midway between an outright statement and a yes-no question: it is less assertive than the former, but more confident than the latter. Therefore it is usable under certain contextual situations: not those in which a statement would be appropriate, nor those in which a yes-no question is generally used, but in situations intermediate between these.

Someone makes a statement when she/he has confidence in her/his knowledge and sure that her/his statement will be believed. Someone asks a question when she/he lacks knowledge on some point, and has reason to believe that this gap can and will be remedied by an answer by the addressee. A tag question, being intermediate between these, is used when the speaker is stating a claim, but lacks full confidence in the truth of the claim. For example if she says:

- *“Is John here?”*

Woman will probably not be surprised if her respondent answer ‘no’, but if she says:

- *“John is here, isn’t he?”*

Based on that question, instead, one of the chances that she is already biased in favor of positive answer, wanting only confirmation by the addressee. She still want a response from her addressee, as she do with a yes-no question; but she has enough knowledge to predict that response, much as with a declarative

statement. A tag question, then, might be thought of as a declarative statement without assumption that the statement is to be believed by the addressee leeway, not forcing the addressee to go along with the views of the speaker.

There are situations in which tag is legitimate, in fact the only legitimate sentence-form (Lakoff, 1973:54). For example, if the speaker has seen something only indistinctly, and has reason to believe her addressee had a better view, she can say:

- *“I had my glasses off. He was out at third, wasn’t he?”*

Sometimes we find a tag question used in cases where the speaker knows as well as the addressee what the answer must be, and does not need confirmation. One such situation is when the speaker is making ‘small talk’, trying to elicit conversation from the addressee: *“Sure is hot here, isn’t it?”*. In discussing personal feelings or opinions, only the speaker normally has any way of knowing the correct answer. Strictly speaking, questioning one’s own opinions is futile.

3. Rising Intonation on Declaratives

Related to this special use of a syntactic rule is a widespread difference perceptible in women's intonational-patterns. Lakoff (1973:55) said that there is a peculiar sentence intonation-pattern found in English only among women, which has the form of a declarative answer to a question, and is used as such, but has the rising inflection typical of a yes-no question, as well as being especially hesitant. The effect is as though one were seeking confirmation, though at the same time the speaker may be the only one who has the requisite information.

A. When will dinner be ready?

B. Oh... around six o'clock...?

It is as though (B) were saying, 'Six o'clock, if that's OK with you, if you agree'. Example (A) is put in the position of having to provide confirmation, and (B) sounds unsure. Here we find unwillingness to assert an opinion carried to an extreme. One likely consequence is that these sorts of speech-patterns are taken to reflect something real about character and play a part in not taking a woman seriously or trusting her with any real responsibilities, since 'she cannot make up her mind', and 'is not sure of herself'. Here again we see that people form judgments about other people on the basis of superficial linguistic behavior that may have nothing to do with inner character, but has been imposed upon the speaker, on pain of worse punishment than not being taken seriously.

Lakoff (1973:56) said that such features are probably part of the general fact that women's speech sounds much more 'polite' than men's. One aspect of politeness is as we have just describing: leaving a decision open, not imposing your mind, or views, or claims, on anyone else.

4. Empty Adjectives

Similar sorts of disparities exist elsewhere in the vocabulary. There is, for instance, a group of adjectives which have, besides their specific and literal meanings, another use, that of indicating the speaker's approbation or admiration for something. Some of these adjectives are neutral as to sex of speaker: either men or women may use them. But another set seems, in its figurative use, to be largely confined to women's speech. This kind of adjectives called 'empty'

adjectives, which means that those only convey an emotional reaction rather than specific information. Representative lists of both types are below:

<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Women Only</i>
great	adorable
terrific	charming
cool	sweet
neat	lovely
	divine

In Lakoff's opinion (cited in Cameron, 1990:226-227), if a man uses the women's adjectives, it will damage his reputation. On the other hand, a woman may freely use the neutral words. However, a woman's use of 'women's words' is without risks. Where a woman has a choice between the neutral words and the women's words, as man has not, she may be suggesting very different things about her own personality and her view of the subject matter by her choice of words of the neutral words or words of the women's words. Look at these two sentences:

(a) *What a terrific idea!*

(b) *What a divine idea!*

Sentence (a) might be used under any appropriate conditions by a female speaker, but (b) is more restricted. Probably it is used appropriately only in case the speaker feels the idea referred to be essentially unimportant to the world at large - only an amusement for the speaker herself. In other words, the use of neutral word is more appropriate for formal situations, while the use of women's

words is only used in non-formal situations. Therefore, the choice of words for women is not really free: words restricted to women's language suggest that concepts to which they are applied are not relevant to the real world of male influence and power.

Lakoff (1973:53), said that these words aren't, basically 'feminine', rather, they signal 'uninvolved', or 'out of power'. Any group in a society to which these labels are applicable may presumably use these words; they are often considered 'feminine', 'unmasculine', because women are the 'uninvolved', 'out of power'.

5. Precise Color Terms

'Women's language' shows up in all levels of the grammar of English. We find differences in the choice and frequency of lexical items; in the situations in which certain syntactic rules are performed; in intonational and other super-segmental patterns. As an example of lexical differences, imagine a man and a woman both looking at the same wall, painted a pinkish shade of purple. The woman may say (2):

- “*The wall is mauve*”

Lakoff (cited in Wardhaugh, 2006:318), claims that women use color words like *mauve*, *beige*, *aquamarine*, *lavender*, and *magentabut* most men do not. Fine discrimination of color is relevant for women, but not for men. Men find such discussion amusing because they consider such a question trivial, irrelevant to the real world.

Women are not expected to make decisions on important matters, like what kind of job to hold they are relegated the non-crucial decisions as a sop.

Deciding whether to name a color 'lavender' or 'mauve' is one such sop. This lexical disparity reflects a social inequity in the position of women. If we want to change this opinion, we should give women the opportunity to participate in the real decisions of life (Lakoff, cited in Cameron, 1990:224).

6. Intensifier

Intensifiers such; *so*, *just*, *very*, and *quite* seem more characteristic of women's language than of men's, though it is found in the latter, particularly in the speech of male academics. Consider, for instance, the following sentences:

(a) *I feel so unhappy!*

(b) *That movie made me so sick!*

Men seem to have the least difficulty using this construction when the sentence is unemotional or non subjective-without reference to the speaker himself:

(c) *That sunset is so beautiful!*

(d) *Fred is so dumb!*

Substituting an equative like *so* for absolute superlatives (like *very*, *really*, *utterly*) seems to be a way of backing out of committing oneself strongly to an opinion, rather like tag questions. One might hedge in this way with perfect right in making esthetic judgments (as in (c)) or intellectual judgments (as in (d)). To hedge in this situation is to seek to avoid making any strong statement: a characteristic, as we have noted already and shall note further, of women's speech.

7. Hypercorrect Grammar

Lakoff (cited in Holmes, 1992:314), stated that hypercorrect grammar is the consistent use of standard verb forms. Lakoff said that hypercorrect grammar involves an avoidance of terms considered vulgar or coarse, such as 'ain't', and the use of precise pronunciation, such as sounding the final 'g' in words such as 'going' instead of the more casual 'goin'.

8. Superpolite Forms

A request may be in the same sense a polite command, in that it does not overtly require obedience, but rather suggests something be done as a favor to the speaker. An overt order (as in an imperative) expresses the (often-impolite) assumption of the speaker's superior position to the addressee, carrying with it the right to enforce compliance, whereas with a request the decision on the face of it is left up to the addressee. The same is true of suggestions. Here, the implication is not that the addressee is in danger if he does not comply, merely that he will be glad if he does. Once again, the decision is up to the addressee, and a suggestion therefore is politer than an order.

The more particles in a sentence that reinforce the notion that it is a request rather than an order, the politer the result. Look at the sentences below:

- a) *Close the door*
- b) *Please close the door*
- c) *Will you close the door?*
- d) *Will you please close the door?*
- e) *Won't you close the door?*

A sentence like *won't you please close the door* would then count as a doubly compound request. A sentence like (c) is close in sense to 'Are you willing to close the door?' According to the normal rules of polite conversation, to agree that you are willing is to agree to do the thing asked of you. Hence this apparent inquiry functions as a request, leaving the decision up to the willingness of the addressee. Phrasing it as a positive question makes the (implicit) assumption that a 'yes' answer will be forthcoming. Sentence (d) is more polite than (b) or (c) because it combines them: Please indicating that to accede will be to do something for the speaker, and will you, as noted, suggesting that the addressee has the final decision. If the question is phrased with a negative, as in (e), the speaker seems to suggest the stronger likelihood of a negative response from the addressee. Since the assumption is then that the addressee is that much freer to refuse, (e) acts as a more polite request than (c) or (d): (c) and (d) put the burden of refusal on the addressee, as (e) does not.

The following phrases are kind of superpolite forms also:

- *Would you please...*
- *I'd really appreciate it if...*
- *Would you mind...*
- *...if you don't mind...*

9. Avoidance of Strong Swear Words

Lakoff (1973:50) found that the speech of women and that of men in the use of particles that grammarians often describe as 'meaningless'. There may be no referent for them, but they are far from meaningless: they define the social context

of an utterance, indicate the relationship the speaker feels between himself and his addressee, between himself and what he is talking about. Consider to the following sentences:

(a) *Oh dear, you've put the peanut butter in the refrigerator again.*

(b) *Shit, you've put the peanut butter in the refrigerator again.*

It is safe to predict that people would classify the first sentence as part of 'women's language', the second as 'men's language'. Women usually use softer forms such as 'Oh, Dear!' or 'Darn!', while the men use stronger ones such as 'Dammit!' or 'Shit!'. It is interesting, by the way, to note that men's language is increasingly being used by women, but women's language is not being adopted by men, apart from those who reject the American masculine image (e.g. homosexuals).

The language of the favored group, the group that holds the power, along with its non-linguistic behavior, is generally adopted by the other group, not vice-versa. In any event, it is a truism to state that the 'stronger' expletives are reserved for men, and the 'weaker' ones for women. The difference between using 'shit', 'damn', or one of many others, as opposed to 'oh dear', or 'goodness', or 'oh fudge' lies in how forcefully one says how one feels. Perhaps, one might say, choice of particle is a function of how strongly one allows oneself to feel about something, so that the strength of an emotion conveyed in a sentence corresponds to the strength of the particle. In really serious situation, the use of 'women's particles' constitutes a joke, or at any rate is highly inappropriate. Below are the examples

of inappropriate in some sense, either because it is syntactically deviant or used in the wrong social context:

(a) *Oh fudge, my hair is on fire.

(b) *Dear me, did he kidnap the baby?

Lakoff (1973:50-51), stated that as children, women are encouraged to be 'little ladies'. Little ladies do not scream as vociferously as little boys, are chastised more severely for throwing tantrums or showing temper: 'high spirits' are expected and therefore tolerated in little boys; docility and resignation are the corresponding traits expected of little girls.

Ability to use strong particles like 'shit' and 'hell' is, of course, only incidental to the inequity that exists rather than its cause. But once again, apparently accidental linguistic usage suggests that women are denied equality partially for linguistic reasons, and that an examination of language points up precisely an area in which inequity exists. Further, if someone is allowed to show emotions, and consequently does, others may well be able to view him as a real individual in his own right, as they could not if he never showed emotion. The behavior a woman learns as 'correct' prevents her from being taken seriously as an individual, and further is considered 'correct' and necessary for a woman precisely because society does not consider her seriously as an individual.

10. Emphatic Stress

Women tend to use words which are used to emphasize the utterance or strengthen the meaning of an utterance. For example:

- *It was a brilliant performance*

The word *brilliant* is one of the examples of an emphatic stress. This word can be used to strengthen the meaning of the utterance.

As cited in Holmes (1992:316), the internal coherence of the linguistic featured Lakoff identified can be illustrated by dividing them into two groups. First, there are linguistic devices which may be used for hedging or reducing the force of an utterance. Secondly, there are features which may boost or intensify a proposition's force. Features which may serve as hedging devices are lexical hedges, tag questions, question intonation, superpolite forms, and euphemisms, while boosting devices are intensifiers and emphatic stress.

Lakoff (cited in Holmes, 1992:316), claimed both kinds of modifiers were evidence of an unconfident speaker. Hedging devices explicitly signal lack of confidence, while boosting devices reflect the speaker's anticipation that the addressee may remain unconvinced and therefore supply extra reassurance. So, she claimed women use hedging devices to express uncertainty, and they use intensifying devices to persuade their addressee to take them seriously. Women boost the force of their utterances because they think that otherwise they will not be heard or paid attention to. So, according to Lakoff, both hedges and boosters reflect women's lack of confidence.

1.2 Related Studies

Studies on women's language have been done by several researchers. First researcher is Farida Mas Huriyatul Mu'minin (2010) from State Islamic University of Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. She analyzed about women's language used by the main character of "*Thirteen*" movie. She found that there

are seven types of women's linguistic features occur in the dialogues, they are lexical emphatic stress, intensifiers, empty adjective, tag question, super polite form, lexical hedges, and rising intonation. She also found that women's language that used by the main character is affected by the social and education background. She used Lakoff's and Holmes' theory to answer her research problem.

Second researcher is Futika Permatasari (2010) from State Islamic University of Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. She analyzed about women's speech features used by the characters of "*Sex and The City*" movie. She used Lakoff's theory to find her research problem. The finding of her research showed that the characters of "*Sex and the City*" movie used women's speech features which reflect uncertainty and lack of confidence. There were only eight types of women's speech features used in the dialogues, such as lexical hedges or fillers, tag question, rising intonation on declaratives, empty adjectives, intensifiers, superpolite forms, avoidance of strong swear words, and emphatic stress. Two kinds of features which were not used by the characters were specialized vocabularies and hypercorrect grammar.

Third researcher is Nuri Februariani (2008) from State University of Surabaya. Her research title is *A Study on Women Speech Style in "Desperate Housewives" TV series*. She used Lakoff, Coates and Tannen's theory in her research. She found five types of women's speech style in "*Desperate Housewives*" TV series that are lexical hedges or fillers, questions tag, intensifiers, superpolite form, and empty adjectives while the conversational strategies were

interruption, overlapping, minimal response, and silence. The women's speech features and the conversational strategies that mostly used in "*Desperate Housewives*" TV series were lexical hedges or filler and interruption. They used these speech styles for different reason. Lexical hedges or fillers were used since they feel lack confidence or uncertain with their statement. Intensifier was used by them to give intensity in their utterances, so their hearer will take them seriously. The tag question was used to show their lack of confidence in her statement. Superpolite forms are often used by women to give a positive impression to the hearer. The last was empty adjective used to express the admiration about what they see.

Last researcher is Khoirul Umami Mazidah (2009) from State University of Surabaya. She analyzed about women's speech features used by character Margaret in '*The Iron Lady*' movie. She used Lakoff's theory. She found nine types of women's speech feature that used by Margaret, that are lexical hedges or fillers, tag question, rising intonation on declaratives, empty adjectives, intensifier, hypercorrect grammar, superpolite forms, avoidance of strong swear words, and emphatic stress. She did not find specialized vocabularies (precise colors item) in her research. Margaret still has feminity side as women in Commo as The Iron Lady and Woman Prime Minister. It found based on her utterances that she uses her sentences correctly and will not damage her reputation as a woman and A Prime Minister.

The present study is different from the previous study. This research analyzed about women's speech features used by the main characters in "*The*

Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe” movie. The writer used a fantasy adventure movie as her corpus of the study. The writer used Lakoff, Holmes and Cameron’s theory to answer her research problem. The purpose of her research to find the women’s speech features that used by the main characters in “*The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*” movie and find out the type of women’s speech features which occurs most frequently by the main characters in the movie.