

## THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN'S LANGUAGE IN *THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA* MOVIE

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### ABSTRACT

This research with the title investigated the differences between men and women's language feature and the consistency of the using of that language features by each gender. This research used the theory from Coates (2004) about men's language features and Lakoff, quoted by Holmes (2003) about women's language. The researcher got the data from every dialogue by main and supporting characters. The research design in this research used qualitative method from Mack et al (2005). The data source of this research got from the dialogue of men and women's characters and the researcher also used books and journals which are related to this research to analyze the data. The technique of data analysis is descriptive method. The researcher draws two conclusions: firstly, this research found that men and women's character in *The Devil Wears Prada* movie did not use all of the language features from Coates and Lakoff. Secondly, the researcher found that in some situation, the men and women's character did not consistent use their own language features.

**Keywords:** features consistency, men's language, women's language, *The Devil Wears Prada* movie

### ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meneliti tentang perbedaan antara bahasa pria dan bahasa wanita dan konsistensi penggunaan tersebut pada masing-masing jenis kelamin. Penelitian ini menggunakan teori dari Coates (2004) tentang bahasa pria dan teori dari Lakoff yang dikutip oleh Holmes (2003) tentang bahasa wanita. Peneliti mendapatkan data dari seluruh percakapan yang dilakukan oleh pemeran utama dan pemeran pendukung. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dari Mack et al (2005). Sumber data diperoleh dari percakapan karakter pria dan wanita dan juga didukung oleh buku dan jurnal yang berkaitan dengan penelitian ini. Cara untuk menganalisis data adalah dengan menggunakan metode deskripsi. Peneliti mendapatkan dua kesimpulan: pertama, ditemukan bahwa karakter pria dan wanita di film *The Devil Wears Prada* tidak menggunakan seluruh kriteria dari Coates dan Lakoff. Kedua, peneliti menemukan bahwa di beberapa situasi, karakter pria dan wanita tidak konsisten menggunakan karakter bahasa masing-masing gender.

**Kata kunci:** konsistensi karakter, bahasa pria, bahasa wanita, film *The Devil Wears Prada*

## A. INTRODUCTION

Language is what members of a particular society speak (Wardhaugh, 2005). Language has the special role in society. It is because language has been connecting the people and they need it for interaction with each other. Sociolinguistics taught us about the relationship between language and society. It can definite men and women from appearance, behavior, and language that they used. Based on Weisberger website (n.d.), *The Devil Wears Prada* was published in 2003. Fox 2000 released *The Devil Wears Prada* movie on June 30, 2006. *The Devil Wears Prada* told about the story of Andrea Sachs, who worked in a place which consisted of the fashionable society. There are two research questions, that the researcher tried to answer, firstly, “what are the language features of men and women characters in *The Devil Wears Prada* movie” and secondly, “how consistent men and women’s character used the language features in *The Devil Wears Prada* movie?”

Based on the research questions, there are two purposes in this research. The first is to know the features of men and women’s language which used in *The Devil Wears Prada* movie. Secondly, the researcher wanted to analyze the consistently of men and women’s character used the language features *The Devil Wears Prada* movie on the conversation.

There are four journals or researches that were similar with this research. First journal is *Comparison of Sexist Language Used in The Twilight Saga Eclipse Movie* (2013) by Ni Wayan Ayu Santi. Santi (2013) used three theories for her research, they are Women’s Language from Lakoff (1973), Men’s Language by Holmes (1992), and the differences between men and women’s language by Coates (1986). She used those theories to analyze the conversation between all characters in that movie. The first, she analyzed the conversation using men and women’s language theories. After that, she compared that conversation using theory by Coates. She found all women in that movie using all women’s language features based on theory from Lakoff except precise color terms in their conversation. She also found that men’s language features from Holmes (1992) also used in their conversation. And the last, she found the differences between men and women based on verbosity, the used of tag question, questions, command and directive, and swearing or taboo language. Finally, she found that women politer than men.

The second journal is *An Investigation into Differences between Women’s and Men’s Speech* (2003) by James Broadbridge. He examined and discussed gender differences in language using a recording of a conversation recorded by the writer. He analyzed the transcription and divided it into four sections: conversational dominance, swearing and vulgar language, verbosity, and assertive and tentative speech styles. In conversational dominance, he saw from the overlaps and interruptions from the recorded conversation. This section based on previous research studies by Zimmerman and West (1975), which used the overlaps and interruptions. He found both men and women were interrupted most; a woman used the most active listening devices, and a man used the least; a man spoke the most, and a woman spoke at least; both women used more hedges which signify tentative speech; and both men used more vulgar terms. There are many factors could influence this research, such as nationality, length of relationship, seniority in company, and not least that the researcher is a man.

The third journal is *Women’s Language in Soap Operas: Comparing Feature of Female Speech in Australia and Germany* (2011) by Kathrin Lambertz and Melanie Hebrok. They concerned with investigating Robin Lakoff’s claims about tentativeness in women’s language and the influence of media role models on reproducing gender stereotypes. And because of this, she wants to investigate representations of women’s language in German and Australian soap operas. Lambertz and Hebrok in that research focused on the frequency and the functions of sentence-prefacing disclaimers and sentence-ending tag questions. They found there are

no universal conventions that account for women's language in every social or cultural context, but rather that women deliberately employ different linguistic devices different situations to serve different functions.

The fourth journal is *Differences in Language Use by Male and Female Students in Tertiary Academia in Dhaka City* (2014) by Ishrat Akhter. He used quantitative method in his research. He chose fifty students from five top ranking private universities in Bangladesh as the participants. The subjects were randomly chosen from BRAC University, North South University, East West University, Independent University of Bangladesh (IUB), and South East University. He used questionnaire to analyze the choosing of language features by each gender. That research found that participants have multiple reasons behind the variation of language use between male and female.

## **B. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **1. Sociolinguistics**

Jendra (2010) stated that Sociolinguistics is a branch of linguistics that takes language as an object of the study, in a way that is usually distinguished from how syntax, semantics, morphology, and phonology handle it. Coulmas (as cited in Wardhaugh, 2006) stated micro-sociolinguistics investigated how social structure influences the way people talk and how language varieties and patterns of use correlate with social attributes such as class, sex, and age. According to Nobelius (2004) sex referred to biological differences; chromosomes, hormonal profiles, internal and external sex organs. Sex as male or female is a biological fact that is the same in any culture, what that sex means in terms of gender role as a 'man' or a 'woman' in society can be quite different cross culturally. These 'gender roles' have an impact on the health of the individual.

### **2. Sexist Language**

Holmes (2013) stated the sexist language is a language that expresses both negative and positive stereotypes of women and men. The negative stereotype of women is animal imagery but less than men. The positive stereotype of men is sexual prowess. And food imagery is one of positive stereotypes of women. Therefore, sexist language is the language that used by men and women based on their gender and have their own linguistics feature.

### **3. Men's Language**

Coates (2004) gave language feature that used by men. First, minimal responses, this is also known as backchannel. These include term such as *mbm*, *yeah*, and *right*. Men tend to use these terms to assert dominance. Second, command and directives, men tend to use explicit commands especially when they were in the same-sex groups, for example: *gimme*, *gonna*, and *gotta*. Third, swearing and taboo language, there is a widespread belief that men used more taboo forms than women. Research showed that men and men conversation used substantially more taboo words than women and women conversation, while mixed conversations tend to accommodate both sides. For example, damn, fuck, suck, shit, etc. Fourth, compliments, research show that men tend to compliment each other based on skill and possessions. For example, it's cool, good boy, good job. Fifth, theme, men and men or in the same-sex group conversation sometime talk about current affairs, travel and sports. And the last, question, men ask the questions to gain information, it has different pattern to women which sometime use question tag to ask question. They ask the question directly.

#### 4. Women's Language

Lakoff (as cited in Holmes, 2003) suggested ten language features such as the following characterized women's speech: First, lexical hedges or fillers, Lakoff (1975) presented a collection of hedges and tag questions which are considered language features that express indirectness and uncertainty. And she also stated fillers as a word or sound filling a pause in an utterance or conversation. For example: *well, you see, um, and ah*. Second, rising intonation on declaratives, Bi (2010) stated women like modulating the intonation, speed and volume when they speak. In some specific situations, women like to use rising tone to answer the interrogative sentences, even at the end of declarative sentences. For example, *it's really good?* The third features is precise color terms, Bi (2010) stated women are sensitive in color. They are good at using some color words by describing colors. For example: *chartreuse, beige, mauve, lavender, azure*, and so on. The fourth is intensifiers; Lakoff (1975) found that female use more intensifiers than male, such as "so", "awfully", "pretty", "terribly", "quite" and so on. The fifth features is 'empty' adjectives, Bi (2010) stated women also used empty adjective to express when they like that things. For example, *adorable, charming, cute, quite, awfully, perfectly*, etc.

Sixth features from Lakoff, (as cited in Holmes, 2003), 'hypercorrect' grammar, Bi (2010) stated women usually use following grammar structures, such as tag questions, embedded imperatives, and euphemism. They used a pronunciation, word form, or grammatical construction produced by mistaken analogy with standard usage out of a desire to be correct. For example, "Would you lend me your dictionary, please". Seventh features is tag questions, it is the kind of sentence pattern has a strong meaning of appeal as well as inquiry, which function as polite and implicit expressions. For example: *she's very nice, isn't she?* The eighth features are 'superpolite' forms, Bi (2010) stated women use kind of polite sentence pattern to ask others to do a favor. In the conversations, women prefer to use it to express their opinions. Women tend to use hypercorrect grammar structure, so they seldom use nonstandard multi-negative structure. They did not use "ain't" or "go in". The example of sentence for this feature is "*Will you please open the window?*".

Ninth features from Lakoff, (as cited in Holmes, 2003), avoidance of strong swear words, Bi (2010) stated women are more implicative, cautious, gentle and polite than men, so their language is more elegant. "Even when they are disgruntled or unpleasant, they usually do not use coarse words but euphemism, such as, *damn, shit, fuck*, etc." When they express surprise, they often use *oh, dear, dear me, good heavens, my God*. The last features is emphatic stress, Bi (2010) stated emphatic stress is expressing something forcibly and clearly with bearing stress of a word or syllable. For example, *it was a BRILLIANT performance*.

### C. RESEARCH METHOD

#### 1. Research Design

This research used qualitative method to investigate *The Devil Wears Prada* movie. According to Mack et. al. (2005) qualitative research is especially effective in obtaining culturally specific information about the values, opinions, behaviors, and social contexts of particular populations. Mack et al. said that qualitative methods are also effective in identifying intangible factors, such as social norms, socioeconomic status, gender roles, ethnicity, and religion, whose role in the research issue may not be readily apparent. The researcher delineated about the specific information about the feature of men and women's language, the researcher also wants to analyze the differences of that feature in *The Devil*

*Wears Prada* movie. The subject of this research is from the conversation between the men and women in *The Devil Wears Prada* movie. To support this discussion, the researcher used the theory from Lakoff (1975) about women's language and Coates (2004) about men's language.

## 2. Data Sources

The data sources of this research is from the dialogue of *The Devil Wears Prada* movie. The other data sources taken from books and journals related to the discussion about features of men and women's language. *The Devil Wears Prada* book first published in 2003 and released as a movie in 2006. The researcher is going to use some previous research studies in chapter two which are related with this research. Those studies have similar theory such as women's language, the investigation of differences between men and women's speech, and the comparison of sexist language, so the researcher got the description of supporting theories which conducting with this research.

## 3. Data Collection

Bogdan and Biklen (1982) stated that the term data refers to the rough materials that researchers collect from the world they are studying; they are the particulars that form the basis analysis. Data also included what others created and the researcher found, such as diaries, photographs, official documents, and newspaper articles. Data are both evidence and the clues. Data involve the particulars researcher need to think soundly and deeply about the aspects of life that the researcher explored. In this research, the researcher collected the data in some steps. The first step is the researcher watched *The Devil Wears Prada* movie. The second step is separated the conversation based on men's language feature and women's language feature.

## 4. Data Analysis

After the data are complete, the next step is to analyze the data. Based on the data, the researcher analyzed it using descriptive method. The researcher analyzed the data which have been collected. After that, the researcher classified the conversation into men's language and women's language. Then, the researcher count how much the features of men and women's language are used in that conversation. Finally, the researcher found the consistently of the using linguistic feature based on the gender of each characters in *The Devil Wears Prada* movie.

## 5. Research Instrument

According to Diether (2015), the instrument used to collect data may be created by the researcher or based on an existing instrument. In this research, the researcher became the instrument of the research because the researcher conducted the research and observation. The researcher collected the data in order to find the understanding of an object as detail. The researcher focused on observe *The Devil Wears Prada* movie (2006) as the main data of the research. For additional information, to support the analysis of this research, books, journal, and article, which related to this research, would be use.

## 6. Triangulation

According to Miles et. al. (2013) triangulation is the methodology that is used in a research to support and strengthen the findings of the research by using more than one

approaches. The used of triangulation in a qualitative research is in order to avoid the bias of the finding or analysis. According to Denzin (1970) there are four types of triangulation:

1. Data triangulation is the type of triangulation which uses variety of data sources and the evidence from the different situations. The data sources gathered from the different people who have the same activities, from the data at different times, and from the data at the different place.
2. Investigator triangulation refers to the use of more than one researcher in the field of the study that used in research to gather and interpret the data.
3. Theoretical triangulation involves the use of variety perspective from the expert or professional from the outside of the study to interpret the data information.
4. Methodological triangulation is the type of triangulation that uses the multiple qualitative and quantitative methods to check the consistency of findings of the research.

In this research, the researcher used the data triangulation and theoretical triangulation to interpret the data. The researcher used data triangulation method by collecting some data from previous studies, some journals, and articles about men and women's language.

#### D. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

##### 1. The Language Features Used by Men Characters in *The Devil Wears Prada* Movie

The conversation in Dialogue 1 showed Nate, as the men who used men's language feature. He used two language features from Coates (2004). Those were asked to gain information and using the strong swear words and taboo language. Dialogue 1 showed the conversation between Nate and Andrea. She could not say anything after Nate knew she would go to Paris.

- Nate : **"You're going to Paris?"**  
Andrea : "Yeah, it just happened."  
Nate : "I thought Paris was a big deal for Emily or..."  
Andrea : "Great. Now you're gonna give me a hard time too?"  
Nate : "Hey, Andy. Andy! Andy, what the **hell** is wrong with you?"  
Andrea : "I didn't have a choice." (01:15:25 - 01:15:45)

On dialogue 1 Nate asked Andrea to gain information that Andrea really goes to Paris or not and he also used swearing and taboo language. Wardhaugh (2006) stated women spoke less forcefully than men, and men swore much more than women. Men were also blunter and to the point in their speaking. There was also some evidence that the use of words like *nice* and *pretty* was gender-linked. That statement gave the evidence that Nate asked Andrea towards to the points. He really wanted to know whether Andrea really went to Paris, he used the feature of men's language, ask to gain information and he asked Andrea without said anything else, he focused to ask Andrea that she went to Paris or not.

On Dialogue 1 also showed that Nate used swearing and taboo language "hell". On that situation, Nate used "hell" to express his anger to Andrea. He thought that Andrea was changed and might be something wrong with her. Therefore, he expressed it with saying the "hell".

## 2. The Language Features Used by Men and Women Characters in *The Devil Wears Prada* Movie

Dialogue 2 showed the conversation between Nigel and Andrea in the cafeteria. Nigel tried to make a conversation with Andrea and discussed everything that happened on Elias Clarke.

- Andrea : "None of the girls here eat anything?"  
Nigel : "Not since two became the new four and zero became the new two."  
Andrea : "**Well**, I'm a six."  
Nigel : "Which is the new 14."  
Andrea : "**Shoot**."  
Nigel : "Oh, never mind." (00:20:11 - 00:20:27)

Andrea used hedges, "well" on dialogue 2. Actually, she just need to say "I am a six". But, she used "well" first because she could not answer it suddenly and "well" is the expression that she used to express uncertainty. Andrea was avoidance of strong swear words. She used "shoot" rather than "shit" to express annoyance. Lakoff (as cited in Wardhaugh, 2006) stated women are also said to have their own vocabulary for emphasizing certain effects on them, words and expressions. Andrea used "shoot" words in that situation to refine her way to express her annoyance when she ate the corn chowder and it felt to her clothes, so her clothes was dirty.

## 3. The Consistency of Men and Women's Character in *The Devil Wears Prada* movie used the language feature

Sometimes the men and women's characters were not consistent to use that language features. For example, on Dialogue 3. It occurred when Andrea came to Nigel's photo shoot and she wanted to take the file from Nigel.

- Nigel : "Hi. All right, turn around for me, **darling**."  
Andrea : "Oh, I get it. I get it. The piece is called "Urban Jungle," right?"  
Nigel : "Yes. The modern woman unleashes the animal within to take on the big city. Good. Go."  
Nigel (cont'd): "Sometimes I can't believe I talk about this crap all day. Bobby, come here."  
Andrea : "Thanks."  
Nigel : "Make sure Miranda gets these as soon as possible. And tell her that I switched in the Dior for the Rocha."  
Andrea : "Great, can't wait."  
Nigel : "Excuse me. Can we adjust the attitude?"  
Andrea : "I'm sorry."  
Nigel : "Don't make me feed you to one of the models."  
Andrea : "It's a busy day. And my personal life is hanging by a thread, that's all."  
Nigel : "Well, join the club. That happens when you start doing well at work, **darling**." (00:56:28 - 00:57:10)

Empty adjective is the feature of women's language from Lakoff, (as cited in Holmes, 2003). But in this situation the speaker was not only the women, but also the men. On Dialogue 3 Nigel used empty adjectives "darling" to call Andrea. Wardhaugh (2006) stated Lakoff in 1973 also maintained the adjectives such as *adorable, charming, divine, lovely, and sweet* are also commonly used by women but only very rarely by men. On that situation, Nigel was doing that to build intimacy with Andrea and he was closer to Andrea. They seem like a best friend and Nigel always help Andrea when she need it. Therefore, any possibility for men to use empty adjective because of the situation in the conversation opened a chance for him to use that empty adjective.

## E. CONCLUSION

The researcher found that men characters in *The Devil Wears Prada* movie performed four out of six men's language features. They were: asked to gain information, the using of swearing and taboo words, explicit command and ungrammatical form, minimal response. Two features that did not use by men character were compliments and theme about current affairs, travel, and sports. The researcher also found the women character showed seven out of ten women's language features. They were lexical hedges or fillers, avoidance of strong swear words, empty adjectives, intensifiers, tag questions, precise color terms, and super polite forms. The women character did not use women's language features: rising intonation on declaratives, hypercorrect grammar, and emphatic stress. Therefore, they used these feature based on the theory from by and Coates (2004) about men's language and Lakoff (1975) about women's language.

The other side, the men and women character in *The Devil Wears Prada* movie did not consistently use men and women's language based on each gender. This is because the environment of the speaker who using these language features. For the example Nigel, he was the designer at Runway Magazine and his environment full of women and fashion. Therefore, it forced him to used women's language. It also happened with Andrea, she was living with Nate. Sometimes, she could use men's language to express her anger and annoyance. On the other side, she showed her feminine side when she was on society. When Andrea and Nate were in a group conversation with mixed sex, they would expressed anything that they wanted. It was because to build intimacy with their friend.

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