

THE FEATURES OF WOMEN'S LANGUAGE IN "ENOLA HOLMES 2" FILM: A SOCIOLINGUISTICS STUDY

Dewi Ranida Wulandari¹, Puspita Sari²

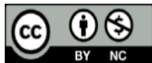
^{1,2} English Department, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Widyatama University
ranida.wulandari@widyatama.ac.id, puspita.sari@widyatama.ac.id

Corresponding author: Dewi Ranida Wulandari, Widyatama University
Email: ranida.wulandari@widyatama.ac.id

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Abstract:

This research aims to identify the features of women's language used in Enola Holmes 2 Film based on Robin Lakoff's theory (1973) and to analyse the functions of women's language that appears in Enola Holmes 2 Film based on Judy C. Pearson (1985). The method used in this research is the descriptive qualitative research method, which discusses and observes the data source. The data analysed were collected by transcribing the film Enola Holmes 2. In total, there are 70 data collected from the data source. The collected data were then classified based on 10 features of women's language proposed by Lakoff in 1973. The results of this study show that 8 (eight) features of women's language appear in Enola Holmes 2. The dominant feature that appears in the data source is lexical hedges or filler with 30 data in total (43%). Others are classified as rising intonation on declaratives for 13 data (19%), 7 data of tag questions (10%), 7 data of emphatic stress (10%), 6 data of intensifiers (9%), 3 data of avoidance to strong swear words (4%), 2 data of super polite form (3%), and 2 data of empty adjectives (3%). Then, the functions of women's language found in the data source are to express feeling as much as 34 data (49%), 12 data to start discussion (17%), 10 data to express uncertainty (14%), and 8 data to get respond (11%). The function of women's language that is less used in the data source is to soften utterance, 6 data or 9%.



Keywords: Women's language; Language Features; Women's Language Function; Lakoff; Pearson.

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INTRODUCTION

As social creatures, we always use language to communicate every day. It is concrete evidence that the use of language is inseparable from the social conditions that we experience. That is what underlies the study of sociolinguistics. In line with Wardhaugh (2006: 315) that states 'connection' is the main topic of sociolinguistics. The connection refers to a relation between social roles and linguistics. Gender plays an important role in sociolinguistics where gender differences are said to be one of the determiners in the choice of words. However, there needs to be a bottom line regarding the difference between gender and sex, because the two are not the same. If

interpreted, the term sex refers more to the physical differences and reproductive functions of living things, while gender is more complex. Eckert & McConnell-ginet (2003: 10) argue that gender is a social description of biological sex, while sex is a biological categorization based on reproductive potential. From these opinions it can be concluded that the term gender is the result of the social description of the biological conditions of men and women.

Since gender differences are always associated with language use, experts argue that men and women have differences from a linguistic perspective. In terms of linguistics, women are often referred to as more polite than men. Supported by Suhesty & Sriyono (2023: 29) that stated in scope of communication, generally, women are more polite. Thus, emphasizing the differences in speech functions between men and women as in the following example:

(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.*

(Lakoff, 1973: 50)

There is a contrast in the two expressions used in a spontaneous situation above which shows that there is a difference in the expressions of men and women. The use of the word oh dear in (a) tends to be used more often by women, while the expression shit in (b) is labelled a word for men because it is commonly used by that gender. Both words when drawn out the meaning will be the same, but when viewed from the politeness of the two words, of course, the word oh dear is considered more polite than the word shit. This proves that women tend to be more polite in their choice of words. The difference is raised by Robin Lakoff (1973: 45) who argues that appropriate women speech will avoid expressing feelings emphatically, expressions of uncertainty are preferred, and the manner of expression concerning subjects is considered 'trivial' to the 'real' world is elaborated. Women tend to have their uniqueness by refining language more than men. Where Lakoff (1973: 50) calls the difference in particle usage in man and woman utterances 'meaningless'.

The term 'Language Features' in sociolinguistics refers to components or characteristics of linguistics that are influenced by social variables such as location, ethnicity, social class, gender, age, and other contextual factors. Studying these features can help us understand how language variation or diversity occurs in various groups and social conditions. As in the case of gender differences that will affect differences in language choices which are debated among experts. Lakoff (in Holmes: 2013) from her observations further argue that the subordinate social status of women in US society is indicated by the language women use, as well as the language used about them. She identifies several linguistic features that she argues are used more frequently by women than men, and which she argues reveal uncertainty and lack of confidence. These features are further said to be features of women's language. Women's language features are a term in sociolinguistics to describe linguistic characteristics associated with women's speech patterns and communication styles.

Some researchers identify certain linguistic features that are more often found in women's speech, although the use of the feature is not always used or appears in every women utterance nor is it specific to women. Lakoff in her journal argues that women's speech is characterized by linguistic features which are then better known as "Women's Language Features". Women's Language Features according to Lakoff are ten language features based on her observations that are often used by women including lexical hedges or fillers, tag questions, rising intonation on declaratives, empty adjectives, precise color terms, intensifiers, hypercorrect grammar, super polite forms, avoidance of strong swear words, and emphatic stress. Judy C. Pearson (1985) argues about women's language features, that there are functions of women's

language that enlighten about what women mean in speech, they are to express uncertainty, to get responds, to soften utterances, to start discussions, and to express feelings (Widyawati, 2018: 227).

The reason for choosing *Enola Holmes 2* as a data source is that there are interesting phenomena in the movie related to the uniqueness of *Enola Holmes'* character and the main case raised in the movie. The main conflict used is an adaptation of a true story called "The Match Strikes" which was initiated by Sarah Chapman. The incident is said to be the first industrial strike carried out by women to fight for the rights of fellow female workers who worked in a match-making factory. It can be highlighted that in an era that is thick with manners and differences in social views between women and men, there is a real movement or action related to women's empowerment in the 1800s that indirectly illustrates the desire for equality. Supported by *Enola Holmes'* personality who has a mindset and views that can be said to be different from women in general in that era.

The phenomenon described above makes the author interested in conducting this research. The analysis in this scientific work is focused on examining the utterances of women actors to be analysed with a sociolinguistic approach. This scientific work aims to examine the types of women's language features used in the movie *Enola Holmes 2* in accordance with the theory proposed by Robin Lakoff (1973) about ten features of women's language obtained from his article entitled 'Language and Women's Place'. Also, to examine the category of functions of women's language that is based on the functions of women's language by Judy Cornelia Pearson (1985) in her book entitled 'Gender and Communication'.

METHOD

The method used in this research is the descriptive qualitative research method. Descriptive method is a research method that will discuss or describe research problems specifically and deeply, then qualitative method is an observation process where the research data used generally cannot be calculated with a formula like qualitative research, because the phenomena that are generally raised are social phenomena or events, and the objects that are the center of attention are people, places, institutions that show behavior. According to Sugiyono (2013: 8), it is called a qualitative method because the data and analysis of the research are qualitative. Sugiyono (2013: 9) also explains that another term for qualitative methods is naturalistic research methods because they research on natural object conditions. The descriptive qualitative research method is a combination of two methods that intend to raise phenomena or objects in the form of qualitative films with descriptions and results presented in detail and in-depth related to the use of women's language features and the function of women's language in related films.

This scientific work examines the types of women language features used in the movie *Enola Holmes 2* by Robin Lakoff's (1973) theory of ten women's language features obtained from her article entitled 'Language and Women's Place'. Also, it examines the category of functions of women's language used according to Judy Cornelia Pearson (1985) in her book entitled 'Gender and Communication'. The research object used in this scientific work is the women's language features found in the movie "*Enola Holmes 2*". Data collection is conducted by watching, then transcribing, analysing data based on women's language features theory by Robin Lakoff and looking for the function of women's language used based on Pearson. Classification was done based on ten features of women's language, and sorted based on the most common features of women's language in the object of research.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The classification is based on ten women's language features, and is sorted based on the most frequent features from the women's talk in the object of study. The variable that follows is the function of the women language. There are eight data analyses presented in this article, each of which represents the features of Robin Lakoff's women language that appear in the source data of this study, namely the movie *Enola Holmes 2* [EH 2].

Data 1: Lexical Hedges or Fillers

Enola Holmes: You know, I swear I know your face. What must it be?

William Lyon: We have never met before, but I've seen you looking. Why?

[EH 2/ 01:02:27]

The highlighted word in this data is *you know* which are lexical hedges or fillers. The underlying point is the use of the clause 'you know' as a conversation starter, which is one of the functions of using hedges. The "you know" clause is used by Enola in this dialog as a conversation starter to start extracting information from her dance partner, when the dance just started. Enola's dance partner is the character who, in her hypothesis, she suspects to be the murderer in her case.

The function of the woman's language contained in this datum is to start discussion. When examined in the data source, the utterance in this data is a conversation between Enola as a detective who is indirectly trying to investigate William Lyon who he thinks is suspicious. The setting of the conversation is when the dance starts, and the hedges found in this data are used when the conversation starts to investigate his dance partner.

Data 2: Rising Intonation on Declaratives

Enola Holmes: How did Sarah do it? Get into the office?

Bessie Chapman: There was a fire at one of the stations. Foreman got distracted.

Enola Holmes: Whose station? Mae's?

Bessie Chapman: ↗Yes! You are a good detective Enola ↗Holmes.

[EH 2/00:16:15]

The use of the rising intonation on declaratives feature in the data above is found in the dialog spoken by the character Bessie, which is "Yes. You are a good detective Enola Holmes.". There are two points of rising intonation in this data, namely at the end of the words 'yes' and 'Holmes', or it can be said as a fluctuation in speech tone. This is because the declarative sentence above is an expression of Bessie's happiness and surprise when Enola managed to guess what she was asking before Bessie answered it. The expression is expressed in an increase in intonation.

To express feeling is the function that appears and supports the feature above. Expression of feelings can be expressed in various media, one of which is intonation in speech. As in the sentence in the data above, where the character Bessie uses the rising intonation on declaratives feature to express her feelings in the form of a mixture of happiness and surprise at Enola's right guess.

Data 3: Tag Question

Enola Holmes: Did Sarah work here? She did, didn't she? And Bessie doesn't know.

Mae Izley: There's plenty Bessie don't know. And plenty you don't need to tell her.

[EH 2/ 00:19:45]

In the data above, the woman's language feature that appears is the tag question feature. It is characterized by a short interrogative question at the end of a sentence. The placement of the tag question underlined in this data is intended to convey the suspicion of the speaker, that is Enola, by asking 'Didn't she?' after stating her hypothesis to the listener, which is Mae.

The function of the tag question feature in this data is to get respond. It is based on the context of this data, that is to make sure of Enola Holmes' guess by asking in question tag form after stating her guess, in terms of getting feedback or answers from the suspect. Women tend to confirm their utterances and confirm due to their doubts, so the short question at the end of this data sentence or so-called tag question is intended to demand confirmation from Mae regarding Enola's guess.

Data 4: Emphatic Stress

Clients: Well, that was Sherlock Holmes. That was Sherlock Holmes, wasn't it?

Enola Holmes: I assure you it was 'mine'.

[EH 2/ 00:02:42]

The data above uses the women's language feature emphatic stress. The use of emphatic stress can be associated with several conditions. In this data, the condition that occurs is the use of emphatic stress as a tool to emphasize clarification. The clarification referred to in the context of the sentence is that emphatic stress is used in the word 'mine' to emphasize the speaker's explanation that the case which the client thought was solved by Sherlock Holmes, was actually solved by the speaker, namely Enola Holmes.

The function that appears in the data above is to express feeling. Women using the emphatic stress feature tend to express their feelings, as in the data above. The stress that emphasizes the clarification that has the function of expressing Enola's feelings lies in the sentence "I assure you it was mine." The stress on the word 'mine' done by Enola is intended to express her upset feelings towards the clients' misunderstanding that said case was solved by her brother, Sherlock Holmes.

Data 5: Intensifiers

Enola Holmes: 'Why did she leave? Did she run away with this fellow? Or is she running from him?' I hope it's the latter. His poetry is extremely bad.

[EH 2/ 00:22:08]

The use of the word extremely here shows that the sentence uses intensifiers. That is because the word extremely shows its function as intensifiers where the word adds intensity to the word bad which makes the listener understand that the level of how bad his poetry is for the speaker.

When associated with the women's language function, the word acts as to express feeling. Where in this sentence Enola thinks that the poem, she just read is very bad, where it is an expression of Enola's feelings. In fact, Enola feels that the

poem makes her feel that the person she is looking for is better off running away from the person she suspects because of the way the suspects make poems for the person they are looking for is terrible.

Data 6: Avoidance to Strong Swear Word

Enola: My word, you do get in awkward places.

Lord Tewksbury: Why are you holding a poker?

[EH 2/ 01:03:11]

The sentence uttered by Enola in the data above uses the avoidance of strong swear word feature. This is because the underlined word 'my word' is a spontaneous utterance when Enola is surprised by Lord Tewksbury's arrival, where spontaneous utterances for swearing are generally harsh. However, Enola, as a woman, does not use this crude swear words, as they would be considered taboo. Enola, or women in general, are required to be gentle creatures, including in speech. So, women use their own words to avoid using harsh swear words.

To soften utterance is the function that arises in this data. The pronunciation of harsh utterances is diverted into more polite words because women are said to be taboo to swear using harsh words. The pronunciation or use of harsh swear words will demean the class of a woman as a speaker in the eyes of the public or at least in the eyes of the listener. Especially in the time setting used by this movie which raises the era of old England which is still thick with rules and manners. So that women will tend to politer or soften their speech, including words that are not common for women to say, such as harsh swear words.

Data 7: Super Polite Form

Cecily: Sir, I feel that you're a man of great character and that I can trust you. Which is why I fear I may have to unburden myself, and it may prove shocking.

Lord Tewkesbury: Miss Cicely...

[EH 2/ 01:25:16]

The data from above uses the super polite form language feature. It is characterized by sentences that use standard words and have a prefix in the form of an utterance which in context is an introduction or pleasantries before explaining the real purpose of her speaking. The super-polite form of words in this data is intended by Cicely to politer the utterance that is intended to ask for help regarding something. It is in line with the function of the use of super polite form, its use by Cicely because she respects her interlocutor and she intend to ask for help that is serious to her interlocutor.

The women's language feature super polite form that appears in the sentence uttered by Cicely in the data above raises the function to soften utterance. Women are required to speak politely or indirectly, as in this data. The function to soften utterance arises based on the context of the conversation which is formal in nature and its nature is to polish the utterance of Cicely.

Data 8: Empty Adjectives

Random Girl: I believe I've seen that dress somewhere before. Oh yes, last year.

Cicely: I think it's charming, elegant.

Enola: I think you are kind.

[EH 2/ 00:49:30]

The underlined sentence in this data has the role of an empty adjective. This is because the utterance is empty and lacking in substance. Women sometimes use empty adjectives to express their concerns, express their admiration, and so on. This also happens in this data where in this data the words 'charming' and 'elegant' do not fully mean like that or are said to be empty, but Cicely or the speaker expresses it that way because she sympathizes and tries to express her heart to Enola who is mocked by a woman who is one of the participants in the dance party.

Meanwhile, the function of women language that appears is to express feelings. As explained in the previous paragraph, Cicely's main intention in expressing the sentence - which is the contra of the mocking sentence - is to express her feelings of sympathy. Where Cicely's utterance is not necessarily the reality, but she says it to Enola because she thinks that the sentence of taunts spoken is not good to be delivered and will make Enola feel bad. So, this data is categorized as an expression of the speaker's feelings.

CONCLUSION

From the research analysis, the total of 70 data were found meeting the classification. Not all women's language features appear in the data sources. However, this study proves that Lakoff's opinion in 1973 can still be said to be relevant because most of them are found in the data sources.

The women's language features that appeared were 8 features out of a total of 10 features of women's language by Robin Lakoff. The dominant women language features that appear in the data source are 30 data of lexical hedges or fillers (43%). Then, 13 data of rising intonation on declaratives (19%), 7 data of tag question (10%), 7 data of emphatic stress (10%), 6 data of intensifiers (9%), 3 data of avoidance to strong swear word (4%), 2 data of super polite form (3%), and 2 data of empty adjectives (3%). No data was found in Enola Holmes 2 which uses precise colour terms and hypercorrect grammar women language features.

The women's language functions that appear in the data source based on the 5 functions of women's language by Judy C. Pearson starting from the dominant one used in the Enola Holmes 2 movie is to express feeling as much as 34 data (49%). This is influenced by the characteristics of women who tend to use feelings in speech. There are 12 data to start discussion (17%), 10 data to express uncertainty (14%), and 8 data to get respond (11%). The function of women language that is less used in the data source is to soften utterance of 6 data or 9%.

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