

## **WOMEN'S LANGUAGE FEATURES USED BY THE FEMALE MAIN CHARACTER ON IT ENDS WITH US NOVEL**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study entitled *Women's Language Feature Used by The Female Main Character on It Ends Us* novel aims to explore the women's language features and the function that was used by the female main character, Lily Bloom from Colleen Hoover's Novel 'It Ends with Us.' A documentation method was applied as the method of collecting data, to analyze the data, a descriptive qualitative was applied, formal method used to present the analysis. The female lead character's conversation in the movie "It Ends with Us" was used as the source for the study's data. Additionally, the data were categorized and analyzed in accordance with various types of women's language as described in Lakoff's theory (1973). and the function of its feature was analyzed based on the theory of women's language function by Pearson (1985) The findings of this study, from 10 language features, only 7 language features that used by the female main character, there are lexical hedge, tag question, empty adjectives, intensifiers, super polite forms, avoiding super strong swear words and empathic stress. In addition, there were four functions of women's language found in this study such as to express uncertainty, to get response, to express a feeling and to soften an utterance.

**Keywords: Language Features, Main Character, Novel**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Language is a tool for daily interactions that can be used individually, in pairs, or groups. The most efficient and important form of communication for people is language. Through sociolinguistics, people might express their feelings and thoughts through language, social, or community-related language studies. Society and language are closely related. One of the reasons why communication has become such a crucial part of daily life for people is because they need to interact and communicate with other people in society to meet their requirements.

As stated by Furfey (1944) Men and women typically speak differently in terms of phonetics, grammar, and vocabulary. When conversing with others, men often speak bluntly, whereas women use language that is more expressive and more considerate in manner. Gender is one of several factors that influence language variation, gender is not only about male and female appearance or their body,

however, it is about their differences in using language in society. Some sociolinguists have discovered that men and women use language in various ways. The fact that men and women utilize different languages is determined by society's power and dominance; women in particular have less power than men.

Despite living in the same environment and belonging to the same speech group, men and women have different language styles, which can sometimes be heard in their pronunciation and lexical choices. There are various ways in which men and women speak differently. As stated by Lakoff (1972:53) there are ten linguistic features such as lexical hedges, tag questions, super polite forms, rising intonation, empty adjectives, precise color terms intensifiers, hypercorrect grammar, avoidance of strong swear words, and empathic stress.

In this study, the female language features used by the main characters of the novel *It Ends with Us* were selected for analyzed. Colleen Hoover's novel *It Ends with Us*, which was based on actual events in her and her mother's lives, is the narrative of a woman's fight to end the cycle of violence and overcome it in order to build a safe life for both herself and her kid.

The study by Ridana (2021), and Dewi (2020) are relevant to this research because the three studies discuss the same thing as this research. Ridana (2020) emphasis on identifying the features of the women language and how each characteristic provided, the data source was gathered from the *Suffragette* movie using the documentation method as the technique of collecting data. Furthermore, the mixed method was applied to the research. The theory of Women's Language proposed by Lakoff (1973) and the theory of five women's language function by Pearson (1985) was used to analyze the data. The author founds that there is eight women's language used by the main female characters as follows; lexical hedges or fillers, rising intonation on declarative, empty adjectives, intensifiers, hypercorrect grammar, super polite forms, and emphatic stress. Moreover, the research found five women's language functions, they are to express uncertainty, to get a response, to soften an utterance, to start a discussion, and to express feeling.

Dewi (2020) aims to identify the characteristics of women's language and analyze its function. The data source was gathered from the *Mean Girls* movie script. The documentation method was applied to collecting the data and the qualitative method was applied to the research. To identify the characteristics of women's language and its function, the theory by Lakoff (1975) was used. Among ten women's language features, the study only found nine. They are lexical hedge or fillers, tag questions, rising intonation on declarative, empty adjectives, intensifiers, hypercorrect grammar, super polite form, avoidance of swear words, and empathic stress. Furthermore, its function found in the movie are indicating uncertainty, reduce possibility of being unfriend, avoid to affirm herself in a strong way, looking for confirmation from addressee, as a tentative utterance, to show politeness, to avoid being unladylike, and strengthening a judgement and assertion.

There were two problems analyzed in this study, they were (1) what are the types women's language features used by the female main character on '*It Ends with Us*' novel and (2) what are the function women's language feature used by the female main character. The theory used in this study is the theory proposed by Lakoff (1973) to analyze the women's language feature used by the main female character and its function using theory proposed by Pearson (1985).

## **DATA SOURCE**

The data was gathered from the conversations in Colleen Hoover's book *It Ends with Us*. The book was published on August 2, 2016 by Atria Books and won Goodreads Choice Awards for Best Romance in the same year. In 2019, the book has sold one million copies and has been translated into twenty languages. The protagonist of this book, a young woman named Lily, is at the center of a story about love, loss, deceit, and personal decisions. When Lily meets Ryle, a successful surgeon, she thinks her fantasies have come true. Lily is aware that her situation has improved since leaving her small-town background behind. The reason why this novel was chosen is because it provides interesting data for this research and this book is worth to read.

## **METHODS**

This study applied the documentation method as the method of collecting data. The data was collected from all dialogues in the novel that indicates the possibility of women's language features used by Lily Bloom as the female main character. A descriptive qualitative was applied to this analysis in this study. According to Bogdan & Biklen (1998) qualitative researchers instead of being presented as numbers, the data are presented as words or images, this method was applied to gain an in-depth understanding of the features of the women's language and the functions of these features. The result of the analysis using an informal method because the data that has been analysed previously was presented in the form of paragraph without using tables or diagrams according to the aspect of analysis and theories that were used throughout the analysis. There were several steps to collecting the data: (1) Read the book thoroughly (2) Write the dialogue on a note with note-taking techniques (3) classify the data according to the types of language features.

## **THEORETICAL REVIEW**

A theory regarding women's languages and their function put out by Lakoff (1973) was used as the major theoretical framework for this study's analysis.

### **A. Theory of Women's Language**

There are various ways in which men and women differ from one another, as well as in how they communicate. Women's language is a style of speech that reflects the verbal and nonverbal communication patterns of women. Language used by women frequently indicates behavior, etiquette, and the status of women in society. According to Lakoff (1973), women's speech avoids strong emotional expression, uncertainty, and ways of communication regarding unimportant topics.

#### **1) Lexical Hedges**

This expression, which relates to the fact that women employ more hedges than males, is occasionally used to describe the language of women as uncertain.

2) Tag Question

Women, unlike men, are uneasy about their opinions, so they ask questions even when declaratives are expected.

3) Rising Intonation on Declaratives

When presenting information or making a statement, women commonly use declarative intonation to convey their doubt. They usually respond to questions with a rising intonation. It could be that they are unsure and require confirmation from others.

4) Empty Adjectives

The empty adjectives, according to Lakoff, are used to convey praise or appreciation. There are gender-neutral adjectives that can communicate the similar thing. Examples include cool, great, and terrific.

5) Precise Color Terms

Women are better at naming colors than men. Women's language includes words like ecru, beige, lavender, and aquamarine. Men are just not used to that color.

6) Intensifiers

Devices that increase performance include intensifiers. Women use intensifiers and boosters more frequently than men do.

7) Hypercorrect Grammar

Sociolinguistic studies have shown that women tend to employ more straightforward grammar than men. Women typically employ regular verb tenses.

8) Superpolite

When communicating with others, women tend to use polite words. People often associate politeness with merely saying please and thank you in the appropriate places.

9) Avoidance strong swear words

The difference between men and women's meaningless words. Men's language may be adopted by women, while men rarely use women's language. Women's expletives and meaningless words are weaker than men. Men say things like "shit" and "damn." Instead of powerful swear words, women will propose oh dear, oh fudge, goodness, and any other word.

10) Emphatic stress

Women put a strong emphasis with the rising of their intonation, as in "what a lovely dress!" Because they are not taken seriously by the other person, ladies use an over-the-top emphasis.

## B. Function of Women Language

According to Pearson (1985) women languages have their five own functions as follows:

a) To express uncertainty

Women's speech is frequently taken as a sign of uncertainty or a lack of resolution. When women speak, their body language is employed to convey any hesitancy.

b) To get response

Women frequently ask questions in an effort to be understood by others by being ambiguous in their questions. Unlike males, who typically communicate what they want directly.

c) To start discussion

Women commonly utilize lexical hedges just before they start a discussion. In women's language, those hedges are regarded as the basic expressions that can be used in any context.

d) To express a feeling

Women easily let people see how they feel. They'll use emotional language in conversation and anticipate others doing the same. They may utilize empathic stress to emphasis their words when communicating their feelings.

e) To soften an utterance

Because they talk more politely—sometimes too politely—women are perceived as having a lower status in society and can be overwhelmed by men.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Below is the result of the language features found in this book according to the theory of women language by Lakoff (1973) and function of women language by Pearson (1985), as follows:

### 1) Lexical Hedge

*I think* I'm going to take a break from writing to you for a while. Writing to you reminds me of him, and it all hurts too much. (*It Ends with Us* p.170)

The data found in the book, Lily used lexical hedge *I think* to implies that she felt unsure about what she was saying or showing lack of confidence. In this situation the function *I think* to show Lily's uncertainty regarding what she wrote to Ellen, whether she will keep writing to Ellen or not because it makes her remember Atlas and it hurts her.

### 2) Tag question

Allysa looks over my shoulder at her bedroom door. She purses her lips together and tries to hide her smile. "He's standing in the doorway, *isn't he?*" She nods. (*It Ends with Us* p.176)

Lily Bloom used tag question feature. The tag question feature appears in Lily's question about Ryle. Lily uses tag question to stating fact that Ryle was standing in the doorway to Allysa, yet she has a lack of confidence to claims the truth of information. Therefore, she uses *isn't he?* to seek

a validation for her statement. The tag question feature used by Lily to get response and validation towards her statement.

### 3) Empty Adjectives

Ryle is **amazing** in many ways. (*It Ends with Us* p.279)

The empty adjective appears in Lily's sentence "Ryle is **amazing** in many ways" the empty adjective **amazing** to describe her husband, Ryle. In addition, the function of **amazing** in Lily's statement to express her admiration towards Ryle and emphasized that Ryle is indeed amazing in every way.

### 4) Intensifiers

Atlas is the **very** reason Ryle was angry at me last night. (*It Ends with Us* p. 224)

Lily used intensifier features because it is very clear that the sentence above contains the word **very** which indicates intensifier features. The word **very** to emphasized that Atlas was the reason why Ryle angry at her. In this case, the features are used to express feeling, she's feeling guilty towards Atlas because Atlas caused Ryle to get angry with her but Lily always goes to Atlas when she needs help.

### 5) Super polite form

"She's gorgeous," she says. "Looks just like you. Identical mouths." I smile. "**Thank you**. But you should see her father. She definitely has his eyes." (*It Ends with Us* p.283)

Based on the Lily's sentence above, Lily used **thank you** as a form of gratitude for the compliment that was made to her. She used super polite form when Allysa complimented Lily's baby that her daughter looks very identically to Lily. The function of this features is to express a feeling to the compliment that received by her.

### 6) Avoidance strong swear words

I know he can hear my heart breaking with just that one word, because I can feel it in every part of me. "**Oh my God**. You pushed me, Ryle. You . . ." The realization of what has just happened hurts worse than the actual action. (*It Ends with Us* p.147)

The situation above happens when Lily had a heated argument with Ryle, where Ryle became violent, assaulted Lily and pushed her. Lily used avoidance strong swear words in her sentence "**Oh my God**. You pushed me Ryle." to express her feeling. In this case she used **Oh my God** to soften her utterance, she may use harsh words such as "**fuck**" or "**damn**" to express her feelings but she chose to use **Oh my god** instead.

### 7) Empathic stress

"Allysa, you're **brilliant**!" I stand up and begin pacing the floor. "We'll take everything everyone loves about flowers, and we'll do the complete opposite!" (*It Ends with Us* p.37)

The conversation above happens when Lily asked a suggestion to Allysa about her flower shop, and she gave a good idea. Lily used empathic stress **brilliant** to strengthen her sentence that

Allysa's idea was indeed good, she uses *brilliant* in order to express her feeling towards Allysa's ideas.

## CONCLUSIONS

Language is a tool for daily interactions that can be used individually, in pairs, or groups. One of the many elements that affects language variance is gender, gender is not only about male and female appearance or their body, however, it is about their differences in using language in society. When it comes to pronunciation and vocabulary choices, men and women sometimes talk differently, although men and women live in the same environment and belong to the same speech community, their language styles are different.

Using Lakoff's theory regarding women's language features, among ten women's language feature there were seven features of language identified in this study such as; lexical hedges, tag question, empty adjective, intensifiers, super polite form, avoidance strong swear words and empathic stress, three features that were not found such as rising intonation on declarative, precise colour terms and hypercorrect grammar. Using the theory of Pearson, there were shown to be four functions for women's language used for each type of features namely to express uncertainty, to get response, to express a feeling and to soften the utterance.

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