Women Language Used by the Main Character in the "Black Widow" Movie: Sociolinguistic Study

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Abstract

This research aims to identify the features of women language that are found and the dominant features of the women language in the utterances of the main character in the "Black Widow" movie based on Lakoff's theory. This research was conducted using a qualitative descriptive method. The sources of the data for this research are the Black Widow movie and its movie script that has been downloaded. From the findings, there are only nine of ten features of women language found in Natasha's utterances, those features are lexical hedges or fillers (16%), intensifiers (28%), 'hypercorrect' grammar (6,7%), 'super polite' forms (1,3%), avoidance of strong swear words (4%), emphatic stress (25,3%), tag question (4%), rising Intonation on declarative (6,7%) and empty adjectives (8%). Intensifier is the most dominating feature used in Black Widow movie with 28% of Natasha's utterances, seen she wanted to attract attention while assuring the addressee with her statement.

I. Introduction

Communication is the process of delivering messages by someone to other people to tell, change attitudes, opinions or behavior either directly orally or indirectly through the media. In this communication requires a reciprocal relationship between the delivery of messages and recipients namely communicators and communicants (Hasbullah, et al: 2018)**.**

Communication is an important thing that cannot be separated from our lives as social beings. With communication, we can relate to each other well in daily life. Megginson defines communication as the process of imparting knowledge, concepts, and understanding to an individual or a community. A tool used to convey messages from a communicator to the recipient is called a communication medium. The most common medium of communication is language.

Language is the most effective means of communication to communicate our thoughts, intent, and purpose to others. Languages are the primary means of communication that certain human groups within the society in which they live, according to John Lyons (1981). The best human communication system, according to some social groups, is language, as noted by Lyons.

The language study relating to social or community is sociolinguistics. Sociolinguistics examines how social constructs including gender, ethnicity, age, and socioeconomic class influence or interact with language use. (Coulmas, F. 2013). The study of language and gender in linguistics clarifies how gender affects language use. People use language as both a social system and a means of communication and are a component of some cultures and societies. (Hendar et al. 2021). Furthermore, language has a role to create and give identity based on the gender of the speaker.

"Women have allocated the function of demonstrating right behavior in the community," claims Janet Holmes (1992:173). Women are supposed to speak more courteously from this perspective. Swearing is not something a woman should do, such as shouting "damn" or "shit", women will just say "oh dear" or "oh, my God". Lakoff (in Holmes, 2013:302) characterized women's language by ten linguistic features: lexical hedges or fillers, tag question, rising intonation on declarative, empty adjectives, precious color term, intensifiers, super polite form, hypercorrect grammar, avoidance of strong swear words and emphatic stress.

The researcher decided to focus on the women's language features as the topic because it plays a part to show the different sides of women. To support that statement, the researcher chose the Black Widow movie. Black Widow has scenes that emphasize women's experiences and explore women's relationships, and the movie relies on a strong main character, Natasha Romanoff (Scarlett Johansson) to represent all women. Also, Lakoff's theory of women's language features was chosen because Lakoff is the creator of the concept of women language feature and because Lakoff's theory is simple to comprehend for character analysis.

Research Question
The researcher formulated two questions as follows
1. What are the features of the women language used by the main character's utterance?
2. What is the dominating feature of the women language used in the main character's utterance?

II. Review of Literature

Sociolinguists investigate how culture influences language via the lens of linguistics. They are interested in determining the social functions of language and the methods by which it conveys social meaning. They want to know why we communicate differently depending on the social context. (Holmes, 2013:1). In other words, they are interested in understanding why people communicate differently depending on the social setting. The study of how people communicate in a variety of social settings yields a wealth of information not only about the operation of language but also about the interpersonal connections that exist within a society as well as how people use language to communicate and create elements of their social identities. Furthermore, according to Vika and Ervina (2022) sociolinguistics is the study of how individuals utilize language, in what manner individuals apply language differently in various regions of the country, and how society decides which languages will be recognized in courts and education. It has a significant issue where many people are completely unaware of how language is utilized in different contexts.

The features of women's language are certain qualities of language that women use to distinguish between women's and men's language characteristics, according to Lakoff (1975) in her book Language and Woman's Place. Ten women language features are present, including lexical hedges or fillers, tag question, rising intonation on declaratives, empty adjectives, precise color terms, intensifiers, 'hypercorrect' grammar, 'super polite' forms, avoidance of strong swear words, and emphatic stress (Holmes, 2013:302)

One feature of the language used by women is lexical hedges, based on Lakoff (1975). Women often employ lexical hedges or fillers to convey hesitation and a lack of confidence, and to express uncertainty (Holmes, 2013:304). The words such as 'kind of, 'sort of', 'uhh', 'uhm', I guess' 'well' 'I mean' are examples of lexical hedges or fillers.

A tag question is a brief query that frequently appears at the end of a statement. When a speaker is making a claim but is not entirely certain that it is true, they employ the tag question technique (Lakoff, 1975:54).The instances of language used in 'tag question' are isn't it?, right?, don't we?, "hasn't she?' etc.

Rising intonation, which occurs frequently in yes-or-no questions, indicates how the voice rises at the end of a statement. The increasing intonation utilized by women in declarative answers to questions, according to Lakoff (1975). Even if the speaker may be the only one with the essential information, women often hesitate to voice their queries or thoughts and instead ask the person they are speaking to for confirmation before making a decision. For example, "This is yours? It's so cute"

Empty adjectives are expressions that convey emotion when the speaker says something. Lakoff (1975:51) stated that adjectives such as, 'adorable', 'charming', 'sweet', "cute', 'lovely' and 'divine' are frequently used by women but extremely infrequently by men. Those expressions can be used to express approval or admiration for anything (1975).

Women perceive males differently from men in terms of color. They might be referring to a more distinct hue distinction. According to Lakoff, women prefer colors like "aquamarine," "mauve," "lavender," or "magenta" (1975:49). These words are frequently used by women since they have a larger vocabulary than men.

An intensifier is a word that strengthens or weakens another word, it has no real meaning and can be removed from the sentence. Lakoff stated that intensifiers boost confidence because they convey the speaker's belief that the recipient would stay concerned. (Holmes, 2013:304). For example, the words such as 'really' 'so,' 'very,' 'quite,' 'just,' or 'such' can be considered intensifiers.

Hypercorrect grammar means speech made through a desire to avoid nonstandard grammar. (Holmes 1992), Men speak with more regional forms than women, whereas women employ more standard grammatical forms. According to Lakoff, women tend to employ -ing pronunciations more frequently than men do since men typically use -in pronunciations (2004:80).

The super polite form refers to the fact that women are required to show politeness in speech and must be respectful when talking to other people. One aspect of politeness is doing what we just said: leaving a decision open and not forcing your opinions or claims on other people (Lakoff, 1975:56). In conversation, women usually use less assertive words, make a request, and hypercorrect grammar to show a super polite form. For example, "Would you please repeat the question?", "It is okay if I take this seriously?".

Holmes (2013) in various social circumstances, swear words have many distinct purposes. They could convey irritation, hostility, and insult, for example, or they could convey friendship and support (p, 283). When people are swearing, it can be considered a strong emotional expression. When women say swear words, they are softer in expressing them. Women typically say 'oh, Dear', 'my goodness', or 'oh fudge' to convey strong emotion. (Lakoff, 1975:50)

Holmes 1992 (cited in Tirai, 2020, p 15), emphatic stress can be used in a sentence to compare, connect or illuminate something. In certain situations, women use empathic stress by using words that are used to emphasize utterance or deepen its meaning to be warmly accepted by the addressee. The words like 'very', 'really', and 'quite' are examples of words emphatic stress and example in the sentence "Yesterday's Harry Style concert was VERY exciting!"

III. Research Method

This research employed descriptive qualitative research to analyze the women language used in "Black Widow" movie. Moleong (2005:6) stated that qualitative research is intended to understand phenomena about people in terms of their overall behavior, perceptions, motives, and actions, putting that description into a natural, specific context, and using numerous natural techniques. The main character's utterances in Black Widow Movie served as the source of the research's data. Data about the utterances of the main character were collected through documentation techniques, which are watching the movie multiple times, reading the movie script, and observing the main character's utterances that contained women language.

IV. Results and Discussion

To address the two research questions in this chapter, the researcher will provide and explain the relevant data. From the findings, the researcher found nine of the ten features of women language used by the main character in the Black Widow movie namely lexical hedges or fillers, intensifiers, 'hypercorrect' grammar, 'super polite' forms, avoidance of strong swear words, emphatic stress, tag question, and rising intonation on declarative. The precise color term feature is not used by the main character. The researcher found that 75 of Natasha's utterances used women language features and intensifier is the most dominating feature used in Black Widow movie, with a total 21 of Natasha's utterances

Tabel 1. The Frequency of Women Language's Features by Natasha Romanoff

Women Language Features	Natasha Romanoff's Utterances
Lexical Hedges or fillers	12
Intensifiers	21
Hypercorrect Grammar	5
Super Polite Forms	1
Avoiding of Strong Swear Words	3
Emphatic Stress	19
Tag Question	3
Rising Intonation on Declarative	5
Empty Adjectives	6
Precise Color Terms	0

4.1 Lexical Hedges or Fillers

Data 1

Natasha: Don't do this
Ross: Do what?
Natasha: Come after me. I **mean**, you're embarrassing yourself. It looks desperate.
(Black Widow, 00:17:26,713 --> 00:17:28,757)

The data above was taken during the scene of military officer Ross tried to catch Natasha who was the suspect in killing the king of Wakanda. Natasha tries to tell Ross not to catch her as it would be futile. In Natasha's situation, the words "I mean" are lexical hedges or fillers, when she said "(don't) come after me" to Ross she felt unsure, so she wanted to convince Ross with her next sentence using lexical hedges or fillers, that is "I mean". Natasha used the words" I mean" to guarantee the accuracy of her next sentence "you're embarrassing yourself "so that Ross didn't come to her. The findings of the

previous analysis show that Natasha used lexical hedges or fillers to ensure that her sentences were correct even when she felt unsure.

4.2 Intensifiers

Data 2

Natasha: You can't **just** steal a guy's car.
Yelena; So, you want me to chase him down and un-steal it?
(Black Widow,00:40:02,444 --> 00:40:05,739)

The data above was taken during the scene of Natasha and Yelena (Natasha's sister) try to run away from the enemy, they use a motorbike but they fall and Yelena tries to steal someone else's car to keep running away by pointing a gun at the car owner. The word "just" is a form of intensifier. In Natasha's situation, she said "just" to attract attention for the next word she said, which was "steal". Natasha said the word "just" to attract attention while reassuring her sister not to steal the guy's car. The findings of the previous analysis show that Natasha used an intensifier to attract attention while reassuring her sentence.

4.3 Hypercorrect Grammar

Data 3

Natasha**: I'm not** here **trying** to be your friend, but you need to tell me what that is.
Yelena: it's a synthetic gas.
(Black Widow, 00:34:00,874 --> 00:34:03,460)

The data above was taken during the scene of Natasha visited her sister in her place after a long time of not seeing her, she was trying to find information about the chemical drugs through her sister. Natasha correctly pronounced "I'm not," not shortening it to "ain't," when she stated it. Also, Natasha said the word trying was clear with a "g" without shortening the word as "tryin" as most men do. The findings of the previous analysis show that Natasha said her sentence with hypercorrect grammar to weaken her sentence. So, it did not look too harsh when asked her sister for information.

4.4 Super Polite Forms

Data 4

Dreykov: Why are you smiling?
Natasha: Don't take it personal, but, uh... **Thank you** for your cooperation.
(Black Widow, 01:42:59,930--> 01:43:08,564)

The data above was taken during the scene of Natasha met Dreykov who was the leader of the Red Room. At that time Natasha tricked Dreykov by playing weakly in front of him so he could point out his secret database and Natasha succeeded to do it so she smiled and thanked him in a gentle tone, which was just sarcasm. In this situation, the words "thank you" used by Natasha is a super polite form. The super polite form is related to the fact that women are required to show politeness in speaking and must be respectful when talking to other people. Natasha said "Thank you" in a gentle tone to show her respect toward Dreykov. Therefore, the words "thank you" said by Natasha belong to Super Polite Form. The findings of the previous analysis show that Natasha used Super Polite Form to always keep a respectful approach when interacting with other people, no matter who you are talking to.

4.5 Avoidance of Strong Swear Word

Data 5
Alexei: Listen to your mother.
Natasha: **Oh, my God**, this...
(Black Widow, 01:12:40,360 --> 01:12:41,612)

The data above was taken during the scene when all family members gathered in the dining room, Natasha's mother tried to advise Natasha not to bend down while sitting but Natasha denied it. Natasha's father who saw it immediately advised Natasha. In this situation, Natasha was dealing with her parents, so instead of saying 'holy shit' or 'damn' which are strong swear words, Natasha said "Oh, my God" which is not a bad or strong swear word to express her strong emotions. The findings of the previous analysis show that Natasha used Avoidance of Strong Swear Word to impart more force into the expression of the speaker's opinion.

4.6 Emphatic Stress

Data 6
Natasha: "**Don't** touch her! **Don't** touch her!"
(Black Widow, 00:11:35,153 --> 00:11:40,284)

The data above was taken during the scene when Yelena (Natasha's sister) shouted for her father while running to him, but was immediately intercepted by a soldier holding her hand. Natasha who saw that immediately kicked the soldier's hand and took a gun from his pocket and protected his sister behind her back saying "don't touch her!". In Natasha's situation, the word 'don't' is one of the empathic stress. Natasha said "don't" while emphasizing her word to clarify her intentions and actions to the soldiers to protect her sister. The findings of the previous analysis show that Natasha used emphatic stress to emphasize an utterance to be well received by the addressee.

4.7 Tag Question

Data 7
Natasha: "Not so talkative now, **are you?**".
(Black Widow, 01:45:40,090 --> 01:45:42,718)

The data above was taken during the scene when Natasha was in the Red Room, she kicked Dreykov till he could not get up, with her triumphant smile Natasha ridiculed Dreykov for not being able to talk much anymore. Natasha used tag question "are you?" at the end of the sentence because she was not sure about the truth of her statement, which was "Not so talkative now". Because of that, Natasha kicked Dreykov again in the face until Dreykov was completely unable to speak. The findings of the previous analysis show that Natasha used Tag Question to emphasize the topic that is being discussed by the speakers.

4.8 Rising Intonation on Declarative

Data 8
Alexei: "I always thought there was a great deal of mutual respect..."
Natasha: "Wait. You haven't seen either one of us in 20 years and you're gonna ask
me **about you?**"
(Black Widow, 01:06:19,146 --> 01:06:28,572)

The data above was taken during the scene when Natasha and her sister had managed to escape their father by helicopter. While in the middle of the journey, the helicopter they were driving crashed because it ran out of fuel, and they finally had to walk to their destination. While walking Alexei (Natasha's father) suddenly asked Natasha to talk about whether Captain America has ever talked about him and Alexei kept talking about Captain America being his enemy. Natasha used Rising Intonation in her question because she was wondered and annoyed after her dad spoke. So, she raised her voice at the end of her question to give a confirmation to the addressee, which was her dad, even though she already knew the meaning of her dad's utterances. The findings of the previous analysis show that Natasha used rising intonation to provide a confirmation to the addressee when she felt hesitant.

4.9 Empty Adjectives
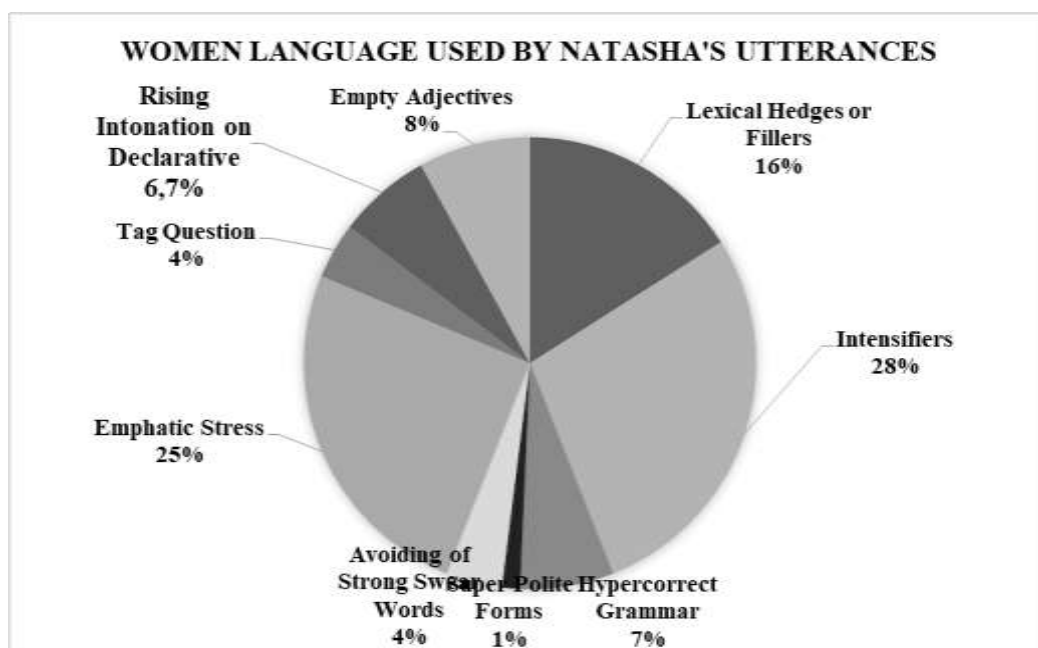**Data 9**
Dreykov: "How was the family reunion?"
Natasha: "Oh, it was awful.'
Natasha: They were **clingy** and too emotional, and **needy**.
(Black Widow, 01:28:18,966 --> 01:28:26,098)

The data above was taken during the scene when Natasha came to the Red Room to meet Dreykov. Natasha came disguised as her mother Melina so that the widows in the Red Room would not suspect her arrival, as Natasha arrived at the Dreykov room, Dreykov welcomed her by asking "how was the family reunion?". Natasha answered Dreykov's question by using the empty adjectives feature, which are "clingy" and "needy", these words used only by women. She used empty adjectives in her utterance to show emotional feelings toward her family to Dreykov. The findings of the previous analysis show that Natasha used empty adjectives in her utterance to express the emotional reaction to the speaker's opinion.

V. Conclusion

WOMEN LANGUAGE USED BY NATASHA'S UTTERANCES

- Rising Intonation on Declarative 6,7%
- Empty Adjectives 8%
- Lexical Hedges or Fillers 16%
- Tag Question 4%
- Intensifiers 28%
- Emphatic Stress 25%
- Avoiding of Strong Swear Words 4%
- Super Polite Forms 1%
- Hypercorrect Grammar 7%

From the findings and discussion of this research, it can be concluded that there are only nine of ten features of women language found in Natasha's utterances, those features are lexical hedges or fillers (16%), intensifiers (28%),'hypercorrect' grammar (6,7%), 'super polite' forms (1,3%), avoidance of strong swear words (4%), emphatic stress (25,3%), tag question (4%), rising Intonation on declarative (6,7%) and empty adjectives (8%). The dominating feature of the women language used by Natasha's utterance is intensifiers. Natasha often used intensifiers feature because she wanted to get the other person's attention, while assuring them that they were really understand and listening to what Natasha was always saying. Meanwhile, Precise color terms, a feature of women's language were nonexistent. Because Natasha never spoke about colors in her utterances.

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