
Women's Language Features Used by Female Main Character in Pollyanna Novel

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Abstract: *This study focused on analyzing women's linguistic features used by the female main character in a novel entitled Pollyanna. The theory used in this study is Lakoff's (2004) theory about women's language features and the theory of language function proposed by Pearson (1985). Library research method was used to collect the data in this study; the collected data were analyzed by using descriptive qualitative methods based on the women's language features found in Pollyanna novel. It was done by writing a description of the required data and explaining them in the form of paragraph form. This study used an informal method in presenting the data. In order to provide explanations of the data found, all of the collected data classified according to the sub-chapter which are lexical hedge or filler, intensifier, tag question, rising intonation, empty adjective, precise colour term, hypercorrect grammar, super-polite form, avoidance of strong swear word, and emphatic stress. The finding shows that the novel used all of the women's language features with various language functions. The most used feature appeared is empty adjective; it reflects that women tended to use empty adjective to express their emotion through an utterance.*

INTRODUCTION

As a social being, language is a communication tool used in society. Language is a means of communication to express their ideas and feelings. According to Wardhaugh and Fuller (2006), A language is what the members of a particular society speak. In society, language also seems to be differentiated by gender. Gender issues have become intertwined with language issues in the last thirty years, owing to the women's movement.

Language and society are linked to each other. Society cannot exist without language. Sociolinguistics studies the relationship between language and society. In society, each individuals have different characteristics and styles of using language, there are several factors that can affect the different types of using language, such as social status, gender, age, and ethnicity. Gender is one of the factors why people speak differently in society. Women and men have different characteristics and styles of linguistic behaviour. According to Lakoff (2004), women's speech is characterized by some linguistic features such as lexical hedge or filler, tag questions, rising

intonation on declarative, empty adjectives, precise colour terms, intensifiers, hypercorrected grammar, super polite forms, avoiding strong swear words, and emphatic stress.

The characteristics of women's language can be easily found in literary works that took women as the main characters of their works. One of the literary works which provide many characteristics of a person in using language is a novel. One of the novels that feature women as the main characters in a literary work is a novel entitled Pollyanna. The genre of this novel are classics, fiction, children, young adult, historical fiction, middle grade, and historical. Pollyanna is a novel written by Porter, which was originally published in 1913. Eleanor Hodgman Porter was an American novelist who was born in Littleton, New Hampshire on December 19, 1868.

Through the dialogue of the novel, readers can identify if women's language features theory by Lakoff (2004) was applied by female characters of the novel. The first purpose of this study is to identify the characteristics of women's language features that are used in Pollyanna novel, the second purpose is to explain the functions of women's language used in the novel.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

According to Holmes (2013), Sociolinguists study the interaction of language and society. This study discusses the reason people speak differently in different social contexts, what the social functions of language are and how it is used to convey social meaning. Lakoff (2004) mentioned that there are ten female language features which differ women's language feature characteristics, namely lexical hedges, tag questions, rising intonation on declarative, empty adjectives, precise colour terms, intensifiers, hypercorrect grammar, super-polite forms, avoidance of strong swear words and emphatic stress.

1. Lexical Hedges or Fillers

According to Lakoff (2004), lexical hedges show a signal lack of confidence expressions such as *sort of* and *kind of*. Meanwhile, fillers including, *well*, *um*, *you see*, and *you know*, are "meaningless particles" that enable women to think about what they want to say.

2. Tag Question

Adding a tag question at the end of a statement does not change the statement, but it does seek agreement. For example, *She's very diligent, isn't she?*

3. Rising Intonation

Lakoff (1975) discovered a wide range of variations in women's intonation patterns due to their use of syntactic rules. Only women in English have a distinct sentence intonation pattern that appears and is used as a declarative answer to a question but with the rising inflection of a "yes or no" question and is markedly cautious. Even if the speaker is the only one who has the necessary information, the effect is that the speaker is looking for confirmation.

4. Empty Adjective

Based on the language they used, women have a variety of perspectives on the subject. Women utilize "empty" words to express their sentiments about something in a specific situation. In English, there are several adjectives that have a specific meaning and are also used to express approval or appreciation for something, such as *adorable*, *charming*, *sweet*, *lovely*, *divine*, *gorgeous*, and *cute*.

5. Precise Colour Term

When delivering a speech, men and women use different linguistic forms. The use of adjectives demonstrates the differences between linguistic forms. According to Lakoff (2004), women have their own language for naming colours. They can tell the difference between colour names like *magenta*, *dusty pink*, *lavender*, and *mauve* more clearly than men.

6. Intensifiers

Intensifiers include *so*, *very*, *enough*, *quiet*, and *just* as features of women's language. When women use hedging to express uncertainty, women also use intensifiers in their language to encourage their addressees to take them seriously and to strengthen the meaning.

7. Hypercorrect Grammar

Women are more likely to use standard forms, whereas men are more likely to use vernacular. One of the examples provided is the omission of the letter "g" in the word "goin" which is omitted more frequently by males than females (Lakoff, 1975).

8. Super-polite forms

Women demonstrate their use of super polite form in their speech in a variety of ways. It is including less assertive, making indirect requests, using euphemisms, and hypercorrecting grammar. Super-polite forms include words such as *excuse me*, *thank you* and *please*.

9. Avoidance of Strong Swear Words

According to Lakoff (1975), women used expletives or avoided strong swear words to express how strongly they felt about something. In other words, cursing or swearing is a very masculine habit, and using a swear word is synonymous with typical masculine speech.

10. Emphatic stress

Emphatic stress is a boosting device used to emphasize the meaning of a statement. The speaker uses tones to emphasize words like *fabulous*, *very*, *best*, and *enough*. According to Lakoff (2004), speaking in italics is a type of guidance that tells someone how to react.

Women's language features used for several functions. According to Pearson's (1985) theory about language function, there are five main functions of language features, including:

- a. To express uncertainty
- b. To get response
- c. To soften an utterance
- d. To starts a discussion
- e. To express feeling or opinion

RESEARCH METHOD

A research method is a procedure and technique used to collect, select, process, and analyze data in order to answer the research questions. In scientific research, there are four mandatory steps that must be carried out, which are: determining the data source, method and technique of collecting data, method and technique of analyzing data, method and technique of presenting data.

1. Data Source

The data source of this study was taken from the dialogue uttered by the main female characters of a novel entitled Pollyanna. Pollyanna (1913) is considered a classic of children's literature. Pollyanna has been adopted several times for film. The 1920 version starring Mary Pickford and Disney's 1960 version starring child actress Hayley Mills, who won a special Oscar for the role, are among the most well-known. The main character named Pollyanna Whittier is an eleven-year-old orphan who moves to the fictional town of Beldingsville, Vermont, to live with her wealthy but stern and cold spinster Aunt Polly Harrington.

2. Method and Technique of Collecting Data

Library research method was used to collect the data in this study. There were several steps to collect the data, which were: read the whole novel, identify the required context of the study related to the topic, highlight the collected data, and put them in one file.

3. Method and Technique of Analysing Data

In this study, the collected data were analyzed by using descriptive qualitative methods based on the women's language features found in Pollyanna novel. It was done by writing a description of the required data and explaining them in the form of paragraph form, elaborating the data with the main and supporting theory used for this study.

4. Method and Technique of Presenting Data Analysis

This study used an informal method in presenting the data. In order to provide explanations of the data found, all of the collected data classified according to the sub-chapter which are lexical hedge or filler, intensifier, tag question, rising intonation, empty adjective, precise colour term, hypercorrect grammar, super-polite form, avoidance of strong swear word, and emphatic stress; It was explained in the form of paragraphs which were explained by sentences in detail.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The collected data shows there are ten features of women's language features used by the main characters of Pollyanna novel; in other word, the novel provides all women's language features through the female character's utterances.

1. Lexical hedge or filler

According to Lakoff (2014), lexical hedges show a signal lacking expression such as "sort of" and "kind of". Meanwhile, fillers including "well", "um", "you see", and "you know" are "meaningless particles" that enable women to think about what they want to say. Here are some utterances considered lexical hedges or fillers found:

- a. "Nice? *Well*, that isn't exactly the word I should use," rejoined Miss Polly, stiffly.
- b. "*Oh, yes*; and I've been wondering all the way here what you looked like," cried the little girl, dancing on her toes, and sweeping the embarrassed Nancy from head to foot, with her eyes.
- c. "...Glass—it broke, *you know*. And I cried. But I'm glad now we didn't have any of those nice things, 'cause I shall like Aunt Polly's all the better—not being used to 'em, you see..."
- d. "Yes. *You see* I'd wanted a doll, and father had written them so; but when the barrel came the lady wrote that..."
- e. "*Humph! Well*, I guess you could love 'Clarissa Mabelle' just as well" retorted Nancy.

Based on the data above, words such as "Well" and "You see" are categorized as lexical hedges. Meanwhile word such "Humph" is categorized as filler. The language function appeared in each utterance are vary; as for the first utterance's language function is to express uncertainty, the second and fifth utterance's filler are used to express feeling or opinion, the third and fourth utterance's language function are to start discussion.

2. Tag Question

A tag question is a brief grammatical unit used to express uncertainty or to demand confirmation. It is usually composed of a statement followed by what appears to be a question. In reality, this "question" part states what the original statement already implies. Tag questions can also be used to express modesty or politeness.

- a. "*Oh, doesn't she?* I'm so sorry! I don't see how she can help liking ice - cream.
- b. "Why, Nancy, Nancy—what is it?" she cried; then, fearfully: '*This wasn't—YOUR room, was it?*'"
- c. "Yes sir," beamed Pollyanna. "I say, *it's a nice day, isn't it?*"

- d. "O dear! then *you'll see my freckles, won't you?*" she sighed.
- e. "*It isn't so nice to - day, is it?*" she called blithesomely. "I'm glad it doesn't rain always, anyhow!"

Based on the data above, tag question is used for several language function. As for the first, second, and fourth utterance's language function is to show uncertainty. Meanwhile the third and fifth utterance's language function is to start discussion.

3. Rising Intonation

Declarative sentences in some variants of English can end with a rising pitch similar to that found in yes-or-no questions. The rising intonation feature is considered especially common among younger speakers and women. Even if the speaker is the only one who has the necessary information, the effect is expecting confirmation.

- a. "No, only when I love folks so I just can't help it! I saw you from my window, Aunt Polly, and I got to thinking how you WEREN'T a Ladies' Aider, and *you were my really truly aunt*; and you looked so good I just had to come down and hug you!"
- b. "That will do, Pollyanna. *I really do not wish* to discuss Dr. Chilton—or his feelings," reproved Miss Polly, decisively.
- c. "Light hair, red - checked gingham dress, and straw hat"—all she knows, *indeed!* Well, I'd be ashamed ter own it up, that I would, I would—and her my onliest niece..."
- d. "Aunt Polly, Aunt Polly, WERE you the woman's hand and heart he wanted so long ago? *You were—I know you were...*"

Based on the utterances above, there are several language functions appeared in each utterance. The first, second, and fourth utterance's language function is to express feelings. Meanwhile, the third utterance's function is to express opinion.

4. Empty Adjective

Based on the language they used, women have a variety of perspectives on the subject. Women utilize "empty" words to express their sentiments about something in a specific situation. In English, there are several adjectives that have a specific meaning and are also used to express approval or appreciation for something, such as adorable, charming, sweet, lovely, divine, gorgeous, and cute.

- a. "*Handsome!* Miss Polly!"
- b. "I've got a brand - new one. The Ladies' Aid bought it for me—and wasn't it *lovely* of them."
- c. "Oh, Aunt Polly, I never saw anything *so perfectly lovely* and interesting in my life. I'm so glad you gave me..."
- d. The next day she saw him again. "Tisn't quite so nice as yesterday, but *it's pretty nice*," she called out cheerfully.
- e. "Me! — *pretty!*" scoffed the woman, bitterly.
- f. "*Lovely!*" scorned the woman, flinging the shawl to one side and attacking her hair with shaking fingers.

Based on the data above, all utterance's language function is to express feeling or opinion about something.

5. Precise Colour Term

According to Lakoff (2004), women have their own language for naming colours. They can tell the difference between colour names like magenta, dusty pink, lavender, and mauve more clearly than men.

- a. "...Oh, and I ought to explain about the *red gingham and the black velvet basque with*

white spots on the elbows.”

- b. “...raising her eyes to the patches of *vivid blue* between the *sunlit green* of the tree -tops. “Anyhow, if they were up here...”
- c. “I like *red pinks better than pink ones*; but then, it’ll fade, anyhow, before night, so what’s the difference!”

The language function of every utterance above are vary; the first and second utterance’s language function is to start discussion. Meanwhile, the third utterance’s function is to express opinion.

6. Intensifiers

Lakoff (1975) categorized intensifiers as part of hedging, where it weakens the feelings of the speaker in the language. Intensifiers include so, very, enough, quiet, and just as features of women’s language.

- a. “I—*just*—wish—I could—dig—out the corners—of—her—soul!”
- b. “Oh, I’m *so* glad, GLAD, GLAD to see you,” cried an eager voice in her ear.
- c. “I’m *very* sorry, Pollyanna, to have been obliged so soon to send you into the kitchen to eat bread and milk.”
- d. “Pollyanna, you ARE *the most* extraordinary child!...”
- e. “Oh, but your eyes are *so* big and dark, and your hair’s all dark, too, and curly,” cooed Pollyanna.

Based on the data above, every utterance appeared have same language functions which are to express feeling or opinion about something.

7. Hypercorrect Grammar

Hypercorrection occurs when someone tries to avoid making a grammatical error but overcompensates and thus makes another grammatical error. The use of "you and I" when "you and me" would be correct is a classic example of hypercorrection.

- a. “Nancy, *where did those flies come from?*”
- b. “*You have been to school*, of course, Pollyanna?”
- c. “*They were just beginning to teach me that this summer, but I hadn’t got far. They were more divided up on that than they were on the sewing...*”
- d. “I’m so glad now that the screens didn’t come,” she murmured, blinking up at the stars; “else *I couldn’t have had this!*”
- e. “It’s like this. Just before you come, Mr. Tom told me *Miss Polly had had a lover* once. I didn’t believe it...”

Based on the data above, the language function of every utterance used to start discussion with the interlocutor.

8. Super-polite form

According to Lakoff (1975), women demonstrate their use of super polite form in their speech in a variety of ways. It is including less assertive, making an indirect request, using euphemisms, and hypercorrecting grammar. Women's speech is more polite than men's, which is fitting given that women protect morality and civility. Super-polite forms include words such as *excuse me*, *thank you*, and *please*.

- a. “*Dear Madam:*—I regret to inform you that the Rev. John Whittier died two weeks ago...”
- b. “*How do you do?*” began Pollyanna politely. “I’m from Miss Polly Harrington, and *I’d like to see Mrs. Snow, please.*”

Based on the data above, the language function of super-polite form is to start a discussion with the interlocutor.

9. Avoidance of Strong Swear Word

According to Lakoff (1975), women used expletives or avoided strong swear words to express how strongly they felt about something.

- a. “*My stars and stockings!*” gasped Nancy, hurrying on again. ‘I’d like ter know what yer aunt would say ter that!’”
- b. “Well, *goodness me!* I can’t see anythin’ ter be glad about—gettin’ a pair of crutches when you wanted a doll!”
- c. “*Goosey!* Why, just be glad because you don’t— NEED —’EM!” exulted Pollyanna.
- d. “*Dear me!* jelly?” murmured a fretful voice.
- e. “Sakes alive, Miss Pollyanna,” she gasped.
- f. “Oh, *goody!* That’ll be a hard one — won’t it? I’ve got to go, now...”

The language function of every utterance above are to soften an utterance and to express feeling or opinion about something.

10. Emphatic Stress

Emphatic stress is a boosting device used to emphasize the meaning of a statement. The speaker uses tones to emphasize words like *fabulous*, *very*, *best*, and *enough*.

1. “...*What a pretty street!* I knew ‘twas going to be pretty; father told me — ”
2. “... Just as it is when the PRETTY hair -ribbons come in the barrels after a lot of faded - out brown ones. My! but isn’t *this a perfectly beautiful house?*”
3. “I’ve had *such a beautiful* time, so far,” she sighed.
4. “*What a most extraordinary* child!” Then she frowned.

Based on the data shown above, the language function of each utterance are to express feelings or opinions about something.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, a novel entitled Pollyanna which was written by Porter in 1912 portrays a female character as the main character of the story; which is a good point to develop this thesis, based on the data showed from the previous chapter, it can be concluded that a novel entitled Pollyanna has ten out of ten features of women’s language features stated by Lakoff (2014), it includes lexical hedge or filler, tag question, rising intonation on declarative, empty adjectives, precise colour term, intensifiers, hypercorrected grammar, super polite forms, avoiding strong swear words, and emphatic stress. The most used feature in Pollyanna novel is empty adjective. Words such as: charming, sweet, lovely, divine, gorgeous, and cute; those adjectives are known as empty adjectives because they only refer to the word emotional reactions to certain facts. Women tended to use empty adjective to express their emotion through an utterance.

Lexical hedge or filler is also commonly used in Pollyanna novel. It is used to pause for a breath or to give someone time to think about the next word a person will deliver; this novel provides evidences of several lexical hedges used by the female characters; such as the word “Well” and “You see”. The next commonly used feature of women’s language found is avoidance of strong swear word; it is used to express how strongly they felt about something; according to the data utterances such as “Goodness me” or “Goosey” are often used by the female character of the novel Pollyanna.

Rising Intonation is also used in this novel to highlight or express something through an utterance; in this novel, rising intonation is mostly used to confirm a statement. Basically, rising intonation is expecting a “yes or no” answer from someone. Precise colour term is a word or phrase that refers to a particular colour. The colour term could refer to how people perceive that colour.

Intensifiers are used to encourage their addressees to take them seriously and to strengthen the meaning. Hypercorrect grammar is used when someone tries to avoid making a grammatical error so that the message of the utterance will be completely conveyed. Super-polite form is used to show politeness through an utterance to someone; it is also used to show respect to the interlocutor. The last women's language feature, which is emphatic stress, used to gain agreement in persuading the audience by using a word that adds strength to the overall meaning.

The female characters of this novel used all of the features that have different language functions, it depends on what context of situation happened in each dialogue. It relates to sociolinguistics theory which mentioned that people use language in various social contexts reveals a wealth of information about how language works, as well as about social relationships in a community and how people convey and construct aspects of their social identity through language. It can be happened because women are identic for their friendliness and warmth, and as a result, they can easily express their emotions to others. Women want to be able to control their emotions in order to build relationships with others. They may use strong stress and tag questions to communicate their views or opinions and to capture the speaker's attention (Pearson, 1985).

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