CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 Language and Gender

The study about language and gender in society has always been an interesting issue to be discussed. According to some experts, men and women are different in their linguistic behavior. Men and women are considered to have a different language because they have different linguistic features when they speak. The differences are caused by several factors such as biological and socio-cultural factors.

In biological factors pitch of the voice, for instance, is produced by vibration of the vocal cords can be set to vibrate. Thick and heavy vocal cords vibrate more slowly than lighter ones. Since men tend to develop a larger larynx than women, their voices tend to be pitched lower. By considering the pitch, it is not difficult to determine which voice belongs to, whether it belongs to men or women.

In term of socio-cultural problem, men and women are different in their linguistic behavior. Men and women are raised in different cultures. Just like Lakoff said (cited in Cameron, 1990: p.221-222), little boys and little girls, from the very start, learn two different ways of speaking. Since the mothers are the dominance influences in the lives of most children under the age of 5, probably

both boys and girls first learn 'women's language' as their first language. In society women has important part for their children. First language acquisition comes from their mother. Use standard and polite forms to influence their children language.

The socio-cultural differences between men and women may arise other differences in their linguistic features, especially in terms of lexical, grammatical, and pragmatic problem. In terms of lexical differences (the choice of words), women are considered less assertive (more tentative) in their speech than men. It is said that women use fewer taboo forms and more euphemisms than men. They also considered talk more than men, or conversely that they talk less than men (it depends on the situation, whether it is formal or non-formal).

In formal and non-formal situation women or men will be a dominant once. Actually both of them are depends on the topic discussion. Besides topic discussion, their position is influence their measure to talk. In example when women has a position as a chief of her concern. Here women must speak more active than the other. Some linguists have suggested that women use more standard speech forms than men because they are more status conscious than men.

Women use more standard speech forms as a way of claiming such status. Women are designated the role of modeling correct behavior in the community. Holmes also said that society expects women to speak more correctly and standard than men, especially when they are serving as models for children's speech (1992: p.173).

In terms of pragmatic differences, women are also considered as cooperative conversationalists than men. Men tend to be less responsive to the speech of others and to their conversational needs. Women provide more encouraging feedback to their conversational partners than men do, e.g. using noises such as mm, mhm. The goal is support others opinion. Different from women, men are more competitive and less supportive when talking to others.

The differences between men and women in ways of interacting, according to Holmes (1992: p.330) maybe the result of different socialization and acculturation patterns. Malts and Borker (cited in Van Dijk, 1997: p.130) argued that the subcultures of girls stress cooperativeness and equality, while the subcultures of boys put the emphasis on dominance and competition. Women are expected to produce correct behavior in speaking by using standard form while men use more vernacular form. Moreover, women use more standard form in order to protect her 'face'. It means that women are more status-conscious than men, so they want people to look them as higher status personal than they actually are. They have to speak more carefully and polite in order to avoid offending men. Not only from the language, women and men differ in the topic they are talking about. Women have gossip as one of the characteristic of their relationships, and talks more about feelings.

2.1.2 Lakoff's Theory of Women's Linguistic Features

Robin Lakoff is the first linguist who began the search for the definitive features of women's speech. She introduces the terms 'woman's language' in a 1973 article in *Language and society,* and made it the title of a 1978 book chapter.

Her 1975's book *Language and Women's Place* has been enormously influential and cited by a lot of linguistic who study the search of sex differences in language use for the next two decades.

Talking about linguistic features, Lakoff in her book Language and Woman's Place suggested that men and women have different linguistic behavior which includes the use of some linguistic features. Lakoff (1975) claimed that women's speech was characterized by ten linguistic features such as 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.

Lakoff (Hill,cited in Crawford, 1995: p.24) wrote that her goals in assessing women's language were threefold" to provide diagnostic evidence from language use on gender inequity; to discuss whether anything can be done about gender inequity from the linguistic end of the problem; and to provide, not the final words on sexism and language, but a goal to further research. She expressed the belief that linguistic behavior reflects hidden feeling and attitudes, and is especially useful in reveling them because linguistic data are there, in black and white, or on tape, unambiguous and unavoidable.

There are ten elements of the language that women use, as identified by Robin Lakoff in 1975. Of course, not all women use all of this language all of the time, and some may question the whole. It would be interesting to do a duplicate study now and see how much of this has changed since the 1970s.

2.1.3 Types of Women's Linguistic Features

1. Lexical hedges or fillers

Hedging provides a way out, should disagreement occur, qualifying statements with non-absolute language. Filler is a phrase which could appear anywhere in a sentence and which could be deleted from the sentence which no change in content. E.g. you know, sort of, well, you see.

According to Lakoff (Cameron, 1990: p.237), one would expect 'you know' to be randomly scattered throughout women's speech, since its usage is supposed to reflect the general insecurity of the speaker.

2. Tag questions

Lakoff (cited in Cameron, 1990: p.229) wrote that a tag question, in its usage as well as its syntactic shape (in English) in midway between outright statement and a yes-no question (midway between a statement and an outright statement) it is less assertive than the former, but more confident than the latter.

Added to the end of a statement do not change the statement, although they do seek agreement. E.g. she's very nice, <u>isn't she</u>; as cited in Cameron (1990: p.229) and Crawford (1995:p.24), Lakoff said that in some situations, tag question would be a perfectly legitimate sentence form. So, for example, if the speaker has seen something only indistinctly, and has reason to believe that her/his addressee had a better view, the speaker can say: "I had my glasses off. He was out of third, wasn't he?"

Sometimes, we find a tag question used in cases in which the speaker knows as well as the addressee what the answer must be, and doesn't need confirmation. In discussing personal feelings or opinions, only the speaker normally has any way of knowing the correct answer.

3. Rising intonation on declaratives

Sentences are increased through the use of intonation that emphasizes and exaggerates emotional. Rising intonation on declaratives is statement, but using the intonation used for question, rising at the end of the statement, such as:

1.   That sound like a <u>good</u> thing to do?

2.   It's <u>really</u> good?

Rising intonation on declaratives is not only has the form of declaratives answer to question, but also has the rising inflection typical of *yes* or *no* question and seem like being especially hesitant. According to Lakoff, "the effect is one were seeking confirmation, at the same time the speaker may be the only one that has the requisite information. The features is probably part a fact that women's speech sounds much more polite than men's. polite here means leaving a decision open, not imposing mind, views, or claims on any else.

4.'Empty' adjectives

Are applied to soften and add friendly elements to the sentence, although they are doing not add any particularly meaningful content. There are adjective set that seems to be used by women (women restricted words) such as *adorable,*

charming, sweet, lovely, divine, and cute. Women use empty adjectives more than men, if a man uses the women's adjectives he will damage his reputation.

5. Precise color terms

Women's language shows up in all level of the grammar of English (Lakoff 1975: p.8) . Precise color terms deal with women specific use to mention more specially. We find in differences in the choice and frequency of lexical items, as like in the situations in which certain syntactic rules are performed, in intentional and other super segmental patterns. Specific used to mention some colors more specifically (indicate feminist). E.g. magenta, aquamarine, lavender.

The discrimination of color is relevant for women rather than for men happened since women are not expected to make decision on important matters, such as what kinds of job to hold they are relegated the noncrucial decisions as a sop. When we say the name of color that usually used by women, one might will conclude he was imitating a woman sarcastically or as a homosexual or an interior decorator.

6. Intensifiers

Intensifier such as so, just, very and quite indicates more characteristic of women's language than men. Is also said that "women much more often than men break off without finishing their sentence, because they start talking without thought out what they are going to say" look at the following sentence

1.   I feel so unhappy!

2.   Today is a very busy day.

7. 'Hypercorrect' grammar

It is the consistent use of standard verb forms. Hypercorrect grammar is involver avoidance of coarse language. More frequent apologizing and the usage of super polite forms are additional features e.g. consistent use of standard verb forms;

8. 'Superpolite' forms, e.g. indirect requests,euphemisms;

Lakoff argue that in the same sense a request may be a polite command; it does not need obedience overtly, but suggest something to be done as a favor to the speaker (as cited in Cameron, 1990; p.231). the more practices in a sentence reinforce the notion it is a request rather than an order, the politer the result. Look at the sentences bellow:

a.   Close the door

b.   Please close the door

c.   Will you close the door?

d.   Will you please close the door?

e.   Won't you close the door?

Sentence *a* is direct order, sentence *b*_and *c* are the example of simple request, while sentence *d* and *e* in compound request.

9. Avoidance of strong swear words

Swear word is commonly used by men. Swearing is not only related to gender but also social class. It is kind of interjection that can express the extreme

intensify. E.g. fudge, my goodness; and 'Oh, dear!'. It has been widely considered as an expression of very strong emotion (Eckert, 2003; p.181). It is view as potent language and can indeed sometimes achieve impressive effect. The choice of particle is to show how strong one allows oneself to feel about something, so that the strength of an emotion of an emotion conveyed in a sentence corresponds to the strength of the particle.

10. Emphatic stress

Tend to use words which are used to emphasize the utterance of strengthen the meaning of an utterance. E.g. it was a BRILLIANT performance.(Holmes 2001: p.286).

2.2 Language in Stand-up Comedy

Stand-up comedy is the term for a special genre of comedy. In which the performer, who is called the stand-up comedian, stands on the stage and speak directly, to the audience. In generally, stand-up comedians are individual performers who plant themselves in front their listeners with their microphones and start telling a succession of funny stories, one-listeners or short jokes, and anecdotes, which are often called "bits", in order to make their audience laugh.

Language that they use is almost being spontaneous language. The first concerns features of speech as would occur in unscripted, informal talk (Ross, 2003: p.99). Because of that they cannot be controlled what they have been said. Ross in her book *The Language of Humour* mention the features of spontaneous speech, there will be more filler, like 'sort of', ellipsis (shortened forms of words),

redundancyx and back-tracking (the repetition of words), and sympathetic circularity (phrase like 'isn't that right?').

2.3 The Synopsis of Precious Movie

Director Lee Daniels's Precious: Based on the Novel Push by Sapphire is one of the most celebrated films of the year – and one of the few to address vitally important social issues across a wide variety of audiences. It is a vibrant, honest, and resoundingly hopeful film about the human capacity to grow and overcome even the most seemingly insurmountable circumstances.

A powerful drama of hope against all odds, Precious touches on the compelling, real-life issues of urban educational failure, generational poverty, and abuse and neglect. It tells the story of 16-year-old Claireece Precious Jones, growing up on the unforgiving streets of 1987 Harlem – brutalized by her parents, underserved by her failing school, and pregnant for the second time by her father. All but abandoned by the people and systems that are supposed to protect and nurture her, Precious finds a lifeline when she enrolls in an alternative school, where she learns to read, write, and trust her own voice. As Precious discovers her own potential and worth, she is able to break the chains of her circumstances, and pursue her vision of a better future, for herself and for her children. Precious features a powerhouse cast that includes Mo'Nique, Paula Patton, Mariah Carey, Sherri Shepherd, Lenny Kravitz, and acclaimed newcomer Gabourey "Gabby" Sidibe in the title role.

Precious can be used as a canvas to explore brutal, but urgent issues facing our society. Through the story and extraordinary character of Precious, we witness

hope in the face of hopelessness, courage in the most frightening of circumstances, and a sense of purpose when one is taught to be worthless. Precious is a window into the harsh realities we face in our communities and we can't let our fears keep us from committing to make a difference. It is our responsibility to move forward on collective mission to affect positive change for each and every one touched by the film.

2.4 Related Studies

The study about women's speech features has been done by Fitria (2014) thesis undergraduate of University of Islamic study Sunan Ampel Surabaya. The researcher analyzes women linguistic features in a drama. In her thesis *A Study Of Women's Speech Features Of A Main Character in Iron Lady Movie Used by Phyllida Lloyd* find out nine features of women's linguistic features. There are lexical hedges or fillers, tag question, rising intonation on declaratives, empty adjectives, intensifiers, hypercorrect grammar, super polite form, avoidance of strong swear words, and emphatic stress. But there is one speech features which is not used by Margaret, that is specialized vocabulary (precise colors term).

Another research about women's linguistic features has been done by Aifi (2014) who compare two dramas and analysis the feminine and unfeminine women language. Most of them focus to analysis the planned language when women do a conversation. Her thesis titlled "*Women's Linguistic Features by Sarah in Drama Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf and Martha in Drama The Lover*". This thesis find out nine Women's linguistic features there are lexical hedges or fillers, tag question, precise color terms, rising intonation on

declaratives, empty adjectives, intensifiers, super polite form, avoidance of strong swear words, and emphatic stress. Hyper correct grammar is not found in this data analysis. Hedges and filler is becomes the dominant characteristic that is found on there, and intensifier to be a second frequent features.