

# Women's Language Features in Making Request in Pride and Prejudice Movie

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**Abstract.** Women are the creatures that are required to speak more politely than men. The phenomenon is in line with the gender perspective where men and women are different socially. Then, they are also treated unsimilarly. The use of women's language features will support the politeness of the women's statement. Therefore, it can represent their social status in society. Besides, there must be certain functions of women's language features, especially when making the request. A request is an act of asking something and asking someone to do something. This article aims to describe the functions of women's language features when making requests depicted in the movie *Pride and Prejudice*. The data were taken from a high rating movie titled *Pride and Prejudice* 2005. The movie filmed five sisters from an English family who deal with marriage, morality, and misconception issues. All requests from women's utterances became the data. The observational method with the non-participant technique was used to collect the data. The result of the analysis was presented narratively. After analyzing the data, it is found that there are two functions used by the women characters in *Pride and Prejudice* movie in making requests indicating their language features. They are 1) hedging devices and 2) boosting devices.

**Keywords:** functions of women's language features, request, women's language features utterances

## 1 Introduction

Language is a set of symbols in the form of written, spoken, and signed, which are used by humans to communicate with each other. As social creatures, both men and women use language to communicate. However, several differences occur when both men and women are communicating, even though they use the same language. It means that both men and women use language differently in their speech. That is why women used women's language features when doing communication.

Anjani (2009) [17], found there are three reasons of why women decided to use women's language features. The first one is because women are the guardian or role of the society, women is more status conscious than men, and women are categorized as subordinate group in society. Holmes [1] stated that men tend to focus on the context of the talk. Meanwhile, women focus on how the talk affects the feelings of others. It can be seen in the following utterances 1-2 how women talk by considering the feeling of others:

1. *Can I wear your spotted muslin? Oh please, Jane*
2. *Well, tell me quickly, my love*

Utterances 1-2 are used when the speaker is asking the hearer to do something for her. The speaker seems not to want to hurt the feeling of the hearer because of her request. Then the speaker adds a word to soften her request, to make the request polite to be heard. A request is an illocutionary act whereby the speaker conveys to the hearer that they want the hearer to perform an act that is for the speaker's benefit [4] [5]. We can see the following utterances 3-4:

3. *It's cold in here*
4. *You must finish the exam!*

In the sentence above, the speaker uses speech acts of requests. In utterance 3, the speaker makes the request in an implicit way. The speaker was indirectly telling the hearer to give her a blanket since the weather is cold. On the other hand, the hearer needs to figure out the speaker's intention with a lack of transparency in the utterances uttered by the speaker [6][7]. Meanwhile, in sentence 4, the speaker makes the request in an explicit way. The speaker was directly telling the hearer to finish her exam. If not, the hearer will receive the consequence of it. When making the request, women apparently tend to use women's language features to soften their request or strengthen their request. For example:

5. *You know, he must marry one of them*
6. *I'm so sorry, how is my sister?*

Utterances 5-6 mean asking someone to do something and asking for something. In sentence 5, the speaker softens her request to make the hearer fulfilled her request. In sentence 6, the speaker strengthens her request to make the hearer take her apology seriously and to take her request seriously. This paper aims at describing the functions of women's language feature in request in *Pride and Prejudice* movie. The women characters in *Pride and Prejudice* movies tend to use women's language features when making requests. The functions of women's language features is described with the reason for using women's language features in request.

## 2 Functions of Women's Language Features

Holmes [1] and [2] said women are more polite than men, and men tend to be more to the point when doing communication. Women's language features is defined as the different choice in the frequency of lexical items and grammars between men's and women's speech that characterize women's language [1][3]. Moreover, women are regarded as more expressive, friendly, and have a large stock of words when communicating.

Women's language features such as lexical hedges, tag questions, rising intonation, super polite forms, and avoidance of strong swear words can be categorized as hedging devices. Hedging devices may be used to weaken the strength of an assertion. Meanwhile, language features such as intensifier, hypercorrect grammar, emphatic stress, precise color terms, and empty adjectives can be categorized as boosting devices. Boosting devices may be used to boost devices or strength an assertion. We can see the following utterances 7-8:

7. *Please, Papa, don't let her go!*
8. *Prepare yourself for something very dreadful*

In both sentences 7-8 above, the speaker uses women's language features. In utterance 7, the speaker means asking her Papa to do not give her sister permission to go from their house. In this utterance 7 contains hedging devices that she usually uses to weaken the strength of her request. The speaker wants her Papa to fulfill her request. Thus, she uses hedging devices to make her request sounds polite. In utterance 8, the speaker means is requesting the hearer to brace themselves for something horrible that will happen. This utterance contains boosting devices that she usually uses to strengthen her request. On the other hand, the speaker emphasizes the statement to makes sure the hearer's aware of her warning.

### 3 Method

The data were taken from Pride and Prejudice movie based on the novel Pride and Prejudice movie by Jane Austen. Pride and Prejudice which was released in 2005, is a British romantic drama about five sisters from an English family who deals with marriage, morality, and misconception issues. This movie films about a prejudiced girl and a proud man. The girl came from the middle class. Meanwhile, the man came from a high class. At first, they hated each other. However, as time goes by, they know each other. In the end, they have lived their happily married life together.

The observational method with nonparticipants [8] [9] was used to collect the data. The dialogue of women characters in Pride and Prejudice movie in the request that contains women's language features were collected as the data. By using the concept about women's language features [1], the speech act of request [10], and the context [11]. The result of the analysis is presented descriptively.

### 4 Result and Discussion

When making the request, women's characters in Pride and Prejudice movie used two functions of women's language features. They are 1) hedging devices and 2) boosting devices. The occurrence of these functions is presented in Table 1

**Table 1.** The Occurrence of the Functions of Women's Language Features in Request

No	Utterances	Functions
1	<i>You know, he must marry one of them!</i>	Hedging Devices
2	<i>Are you too proud, Mr. Darcy?</i>	Boosting Devices
3	<i>You could invite militia. They're an excellent company</i>	Hedging Devices
4	<i>Do you really believe he liked me, Lizzie?</i>	Boosting Devices

The women's language features in the request were uttered by female characters in Pride and Prejudice in a movie titled Pride and Prejudice, the adaptation of a novel written by Jane Austen. The cover of the movie is in Figure 1.

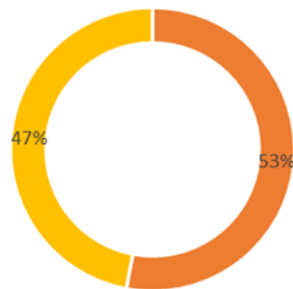


**Fig 1.** Poster of Pride and Prejudice movie

As one of the high rating movies in 2000's, Pride and Prejudice reflected the Victorian-era societies. Therefore, the movie viewer will be carried away to the atmosphere in Victorian era. In the Victorian era, someone who speaks the correct pronunciation will be recognized as a well-educated person. When making a request, they used some functions of women's language features. For example, Good Lord, Miss Elizabeth. Did you walk here? in this statement, Caroline is shocked by Elizabeth's appearance when she comes to her dwelling. Then Caroline uses the expletive to soften the way she uttered her request.

When making requests, female characters use hedging devices and Boosting devices in Pride and Prejudice movies. Those functions are displayed in Figure 2.

### Functions of The Features of Women's Language



■ Boosting device ■ Hedging Device

**Fig 2.** The Functions of the Features of Women's Language

Boosting devices become the most functions used as 53,50% and hedging devices as 46,49%. Boosting devices tend to be used by the female characters in Pride and Prejudice movie to boost or emphasize their request by strengthening the assertion [12]–[14] to catch people's attention. For example, it is too far to walk, Mama. Jane requested her Mama for a vehicle to facilitate her trip. She seems to want to make a strong assertion for her request.

## 5 Conclusion

There must be a certain function of an utterance. It is in line with the women's language features. The features used by the women in communication may mean and function specifically. As the female characters in *Pride and Prejudice* movie, when making a request--an act to ask someone to do something and ask for something, have certain functions. Those functions used are hedging devices and boosting devices. Whatever the way chose, and strategy implied in making the request, the way women and men communicate tends to be different. This should be in line with the role of each creature in society.

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