



A Sociolinguistics Analysis of Cross-Gender Interaction in the Movie “10 Things I hate About You” Based on Deborah Tannen’s Theory

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Abstrak: This research analyzed the existence of conflict in the interaction between men and women characters in the movie “10 Things I Hate About you.” The analysis was based on Deborah Tannen’s theory of men and women language. In Deborah Tannen’s book entitled “You Just Don’t Understand” published in 1990, discussing theory about language and gender. The aims of this study is to describe Deborah Tannen’s theory applied by the characters in the movie “10 Things I hate about you”. To complete this research, researcher used qualitative research design. The data was taken from conversation between men and women character in the movie. To collect the data researcher used documentation method. The researcher finds that there are six conflicts exist in interaction occur between men and women characters in the movie. There are status vs. support, independence vs. intimacy, advice vs. understanding, information vs. feelings, orders vs. proposals, and conflict vs. compromise.

Kata kunci: Language, Gender, Movie, Interaction, Conflict



INTRODUCTION

Sociolinguistics is a study that discusses the relationship between language and society. The language used daily in society, both spoken and written, is studied in the field of sociolinguistics. Language will never be separated in the social sphere. Humans as social beings always communicate with other people and need language as a means of communication. Without language, people will encounter some problems at work activities with others. As stated by Hudson in Wardhaugh (2010:10-12), sociolinguistics is the study of language in relation to society. Sociolinguistics also deals with how a language is used, so it (language) could do its function well. According to Coulmas in Wardhaugh (2010:12-13) Sociolinguistics examines how social structure affects the way people speak, and how language variations and usage patterns correlate with social characteristics such as class, gender, and age. This means that sociolinguistics studies how people use language in social interactions. It is now clear that the role of sociolinguistics is to shape languages that function in society, in other words to bring language into society as a means of communication. In short, sociolinguistics analyzes the use of language and its relationships that involve social and cultural aspects. So society needs to understand the role of language in social interaction. Sociolinguistics is the branch of linguistics that deals with the relationship between languages Society as a subject of research.

When using a language there are several factors that determine how it is used to communication with others. These factors were explained by Dell Hymes (1977:55), they are speakers (sender, addressors, spokesman), listeners (recipient, addressee, performer), instrument, perspective, format of message, topics for conversations and speech events. Communication is an act of conveying and receiving messages. According to Andrew E. Sikula (2017: 145), communication is the process of transferring information, understanding, and understanding from someone, a place, or something to something, place or someone else. Communication occurs between two or more people. This is a basic human need as social being who need socialization with other people. Some forms of communication include verbal, written, non-verbal, and visual. Communication between two or more people orally, also known as conversation. In a conversation the people involved will discuss all the topics the message wants to convey and hope that the person being spoken to will receive the intended message.

In communication or conversation that occurs between fellow women, fellow men, or even men and women, the topics and styles of speech are of course different for men and women. Especially if communication interaction occurs between man and woman, both have different language styles and ways of speaking. Richmond and Robertson at Pearson (1985:44) found that societal stereotypes about supporters and opponents of women's movements influence interpersonal communication between men and women. When it comes to communication and gender in conversation, almost everyone has an opinion about the differences in how men and women communicate (Pearson, 1985:176).

The relationship between language and gender can be seen from how a language is used. As in the interactions between men and women, there will be differences in style of language and topics that arise. For this reason, the relationship between language and gender is an interesting matter to discuss. "Gender" was used instead of the word sex. According to Pearson (1985:9) Sex can refer to physiological, functional, or psychological depictions of people characterized as male or female. Pearson (1985:11) stated, it (gender) is traditionally defined as a set of two or more categories, such as feminine, masculine, and neutral, and words are classified based on psychological aspects, associations, liveliness and other characteristics. According to Trudgill (2000:79) Gender differentiation in language occurs because language as a social phenomenon is closely related to social attitudes. Men and women are socially different in that society prescribes different social roles for men and expects different patterns of behavior.

One of the theories that study about language and gender is from Deborah Tannen in her book entitled *You Just Don't Understand* published in 1990. Tannen summarized her book in the form of article that states about series of conflict between the way how men and women

communicate. There are six series of conflict namely status vs. support, independence vs. intimacy, advice vs. understanding, information vs. feelings, orders vs. proposals, and conflict vs. compromise. Each series have explanation about the nature that influence men and women use language for communicate.

In this current study, focusing on the difference how the way men and women communicate according to six-conflict from Deborah Tannen's theory in the movie. Movie is used as means of entertainment that presents visuals and language. Language in the movie can be analyzed and study, one of them is in the analysis of relationship between language and gender. Especially if the movie involves a lot of interaction between men and women character, so it can be analyze how the language used between men and women character in the movie.

Based on the overview above, this study aims to analyze Deborah Tannen's theory of language and gender is still applied on the interaction occur between men and women characters in the movie "10 Things I hate about you" that released in 1999. Since movie have become entertainment that many people watch, so the researcher interest to analysis the conversation in the interaction of men and women characters in the movie. In the movie *10 Things I Hate About You* shows about the life of school teenager in the America. So there are many interactions between men and women character that will analyze based on Deborah Tannen's theory.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To complete this research, researchers use qualitative research method. Qualitative methods present a different approach to quantitative research methods. Despite the fact that there are several identical processes, qualitative methods rely on textual data and images. It also has unique steps in data analysis and manifold design (Creswell, 2013, p.291). Building on the previous statement, qualitative research is a method that uses techniques such as conversation and note-taking to collect data and turn it into descriptions. Source of data of this study is an American movie teenager entitled *10 Things I Hate About You*. This study applied documenting to collect the data. The data collected is in the form of dialogue sentences that occur between male and female characters. The steps of data collection as follows:

- 2.1 Watch and listening intensively conversation in the movie *10 Things I Hate About You*
- 2.2 Highlight the dialogs that represent Deborah Tannen's theory
- 2.3 Write down the dialog and arrange it according to the type of contrast that states by Deborah Tannen.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The aim of this research what have been stated above is to analyze Deborah Tannen's theory about language and gender in the interaction occur between men and women in the movie 10 things I hate about you. The sample of this research is the men and women character in the movie. There are 4 men characters and 2 women characters. In the interaction occur between men and women character was analyzed based on Deborah Tannen's theory of the six-contrast between men and women language, as follows:

3.1 Status vs. Support

The men, in conversation, are trying to show status that they are more valuable than others, they do not like others dominant than them. Men mostly spend their time in a competitive world. While women looking for networks and connections where they can share, minimize disagreement, and ultimately get support from public. In short, women seek support for their opinions, ideas and suggestions. In the interaction occur in the movie between men and women characters it shows the differences of maintaining status and seeking for support. The following is one of the dialogs that show about Status.

A: *Yesterday, I was their God*

B: *What happened?*

From the dialog the man character said “Yesterday, I was their God”. The word "God" here, is not the real meaning, but the meaning of the most influential and respected person by others. It means that, he telling about his status as the most influential person in his gang and himself feeling more dominance in his gang. It prove that the man character want to show that they are dominate than others. They want to be knows as an influential person that important for others. In the following is a dialog that shows about Support, which spoke by the woman character.

A: *I want you to trust me to make my own choices....*

In the dialog above, the woman character said “I want you to trust me to make my own choices....”. The context is she has an argument whit her father, and she expressed her own choice. But her father seems doesn’t like her choices. Based on the dialog, it means she shows that she really needs support from her father about her decision. Regardless of whether her father would agree with her choice or not, she wanted to seek sympathy and support by talking to her father like that so that her father would melt down and agree with her decision.

3.2 Independence vs. Intimacy

Independence is means of build status. They mostly inclined more on independence. Men love to hear about problems and will give suggestions, so they will respond with solutions. Women tend to maintain closeness and support, and always try to maintain intimacy. Through intimacy they want to reduce differences and develop relationships to be more intimate and friendly. Even women like to talk about problems to maintain relationships with others. So like, she talks about her problems and the others talk about theirs to her, and they connect and get close. The following is dialog that shows about Independence.

A: *Well, let’s think about this.*

It can be seen in the dialog above, the man character in the scene said “Well, let’s think about this” to his friend, because before that, his friend need help to do something. Then the man character seems like he want to help his friend. But he has not any idea yet, so he said “Well let’s think about this”, it proves that he will help or give his friend any solutions for his friend’s problem. It’s different with woman that will maintain closeness. The following is dialog that shows about Intimacy.

A: *And you’d do that for me?*

B: *Hell, yes!*

The woman character in the scene said “and you’d do that for me?” to the man. She want to build intimacy and want to close with the man by ask like that. The context is the woman character need helps to find a man for her sister. Then she asks to the man character, but not to the point. It proves that she needs to be friendly and close to the others. She thinks about seek support and be intimate first than to the point on the solution.

3.3 Advice vs. Understanding

Advice is refers to men speech, and Understanding refers to women speech. Men are more focused on problem solving. When men have some problem, with their own self, or with their friend, they will immediately think about how to solve the problem. Even though, the solutions seem hard for them. They like to give advice or will do all the things he can do. While women want to be understand. They like to seek emotional support, not solutions. When they talk or telling others about their problem, they actually do not really need the solutions. But they only

seek about understanding from others. Most of women when they talk about their problem, they just want to be heard. The following is dialog that shows about Advice.

A: *I mean, we could pay him,*

In the scene above, the men characters face some problems. Then one of them said “I mean, we could pay him.” He said like that as solutions for the problem they face. Even though he does not wasn't too sure about the solution, and he looked like he was struggling with his own. But it was one thing he could do to solve the problem they were in. It proves that men will focus on problem solving and things that they can do than talk about feelings. Then the following is dialog that show about Understanding.

A: *Can we focus on me for a second, please?*

Women will always seek emotional support it proves in the dialog above. The woman character said “Can we focus on me for a second, please?” The context in the scene is the both women character talk with their father about some problems, and one of them feel that her father only focus on her sister. So she seeks an attention and emotional supports by saying like that. It proves that, women do not really need advice or suggestions for their problems. But they will seek attention even though others will not like their actions in that way.

3.4 Information vs. Feelings

In conversation, men are more interested in facts than emotions. This fact comes up in every conversation where men are involved. Women like to talk about the emotions and feelings then facts. The following is dialog that shows about Information.

A: *You're kidding. Let me ask you, do you like sailing?*

In the scene above the man character ask to the woman character, who is the interlocutor. He said “Let me ask you, do you like sailing?” It can be seen that the man character ask about hobby or things that the woman character likes. He also asking it to the point not complicated. Thus, indicating that he is interested in the information. So it refers to fact that the man character want to know. It proves that the men will talk about fact than emotions or feeling. It's different with women. In the following is dialog that shows about Feelings.

A: *Aren't you punishing me because Mom left?*

From the scene above, the woman character talks with her father. In the scene the woman character has some argument with her father. Instead of talk about fact, the woman character involves emotion in her argument by said “Aren't you punishing me because Mom left?” She asks her father about that, even though they are not talk about that topic. Just because she annoyed at his father, she engages emotions and feelings by asking questions that are off topic. It proves that women will always involve feelings and emotions in their conversation. They do not care about the real topic in the conversations they always talk about their feelings. Women will also like to talk about feelings even though it will take a lot of time

3.5 Orders vs. Proposals

Orders is refers to men speech, while proposals refers to women speech. Women often suggest that people do things in indirect ways - “let's”, “why don't we?” or “wouldn't it be good, if we...?”, women feel comfortable to propose others to do things she wants. While, men thinks that Proposal is complicated and confusing. Some of them must have used Proposal too, but they would rather listen than talk about Proposal. They prefer to speak directly, either when ordering or asking for something, or even just talking informally with other people. The following is the dialog that shows about Orders.

A: *What I think you need to do, is you need to hire a guy who'll go out with her.*

In the scene above the man character said to the interlocutor “What I think you need to do is you need to hire a guy who'll go out with her.” It can be seen that he gives advice in the form of an order. It proves that the man character in the scene doesn't like to beat around the bush, and give orders directly. Then the following is dialog that shows about Proposal.

A: *Why don't you try being nice?*

In the scene above the woman character with said to other character, who is her sister. She said “why don't you try being nice?” Because she felt that her sister was not being nice to everyone at school, especially men. So she tries to persuade her older sister to be nicer. But there it looks more like asking than persuade. It proves that the woman character speaks indirectly and convoluted.

3.6 Conflict vs. Compromise

Some women refuse to openly go against other people's wishes to avoid arguments. But in some cases, it is far more effective for women to assert themselves, even at the risk of conflict. Men tend to openly refuse to show their status and value to others. They don't feel empowered to deal with conflict. Men would often reject them voluntarily. At the same time women would not reject them at the time but later complain about them. Women try to find the safe side while men prefer to argue. The following is dialog that shows about Conflict.

A: Move on.

B: ***No, no. You're wrong about her.***

In the scene above, the man character with blue shirt said to the man character with green shirt “Move on”. Then the man character with green shirt replying “No, no. You're wrong about her.” In this dialog, what is highlighted is what was said by the man character with green shirt. It shows that he openly refuse about his friend advice. So it proves that when men got advice, they would immediately reject it if they didn't like it or didn't agree. Then the following is dialog that shows about Compromise.

A: *You forget, I don't care what people think.*

In the scene above, the woman character said to her sister “You forget, I don't care what people think.” The context is her sister gives her some advice, but she is not directly rejecting it explicitly but by saying “You forget, I don't care what people think.” It proves that women will say anything else in a subtle way to decline an advice or suggestion they don't like.

CONCLUSION

The finding shows that the six conflicts from Deborah Tannen's theory are applied in the conversation in the movie. The men character when interacting with his friend or with women, they seems to maintaining their status as a man, showing superiority, and try to always dominate. They also like to find solutions for the problem they face, like to giving advice, like to talk about fact than emotions or feeling. While the women character seems to always seek for support or sympathy. They like to talk about emotions or feelings and they try to establish connection and intimacy with other.

The application of six conflict of Deborah Tannen's theory in the movie it shows that language and gender has relationship, and gender can affect how the way language used. Deborah Tannen (1990) points out that by understanding the impact of gender on language we can close the gap between men and women and achieve true understanding.

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