

CHAPTER II

THEORY AND METHOD

2.1. Theoretical Framework

Gendered language refers to linguistic differences associated with gender and society (Holmes, 2013). Coates (2016), Holmes (2013), and Lakoff (1975) argue that feminine language is often more polite, tentative, and indirect due to women's subordinate position in society, which expects women to be polite and gentle. On the other hand, masculine language tends to be more direct, as it is associated with asserting dominance, maintaining control, establishing power and independence through speech (Coates, 2016).

Even though Lakoff's (1975) theory of feminine language features is important for examining how feminine language has long been perceived, this thesis focuses on Coates's (2016) theory of masculine language features to address the limited studies on masculine language features used by both sexes. Furthermore, Juli Baker and Bryce Loski in *Flipped* (2010) frequently show directness and assertiveness in their speech, despite their different genders and the context of the film in the 1950s.

2.1.1. Masculine language features

Traditionally, gendered language is divided into women's and men's language features. However, those divisions are no longer considered appropriate, as gendered language is becoming more flexible and is no longer exclusively

associated with a specific sex due to the fact that it is more socially than biologically constructed (Coates, 2016; Holmes, 2013). In relation to this, Coates (2016), in her book entitled *Women, Men, and Language: A Sociolinguistic Account of Gender Differences in Language*, categorises masculine language features into five features, namely, minimal response, question, command and directive, swearing and taboo language, and compliment.

2.1.1.1. Minimal response

Minimal response is commonly associated with masculine language use, which typically includes brief expressions such as “yeah,” “right,” “mhm,” and similar forms. Furthermore, minimal responses are used to undermine the current speaker and reinforce dominance (Coates, 2016).

2.1.1.2. Question

Although questions are used across genders, masculine language users tend to ask more questions than feminine language users when they are supposedly status equals. This is because questions are used to assert power, control the discourse, and make the addressee respond (Coates, 2016).

2.1.1.3. Command and directive

Coates (2016, p. 94) argued that “directive is a speech act which tries to get someone to do something”. In addition, Goodwin’s (1980, as cited in Coates, 2016) research demonstrates that men and women employ different directives.

Males often use a command with explicit statements to assert their authority, such as “Gimme the wire ... I want the cutters right now.” On the other hand, females frequently use more ‘mitigated’ directives, employing auxiliary verbs such as “maybe,” and using the pronoun “we” to avoid directness, such as “Hey maybe tomorrow we can come up here and see if they got some more.”

2.1.1.4. Swearing and taboo language

Swearing and taboo language use is associated with masculine language, as most American slang is created and used by males (Flexner & Wentworth, 1960, as cited in Coates, 2016). For instance, Lakoff (1975, as cited in Coates, 2016) explained that men expressed their thoughts through swear words such as “damn” and “shit” to express their thoughts, while women tended to use softer expressions such as “oh dear” and “goodness.”

2.1.1.5. Compliment

Compliments are used occasionally in masculine language, although not as frequently as in feminine language (Holmes, 1998, as cited in Coates, 2016). However, Herbert (1998, as cited in Coates, 2016, p. 99) found that men preferred more impersonalised forms (third person) to personalised forms (first or second person), which are more common in feminine language. For instance, phrases like “nice haircut!” and “that coat is really great” illustrate masculine compliment style.

2.1.2. Speech Function

In her book, *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*, Holmes (2013) examines the purposes of language in communication, which she refers to as speech functions. She categorises speech functions into six main categories based on the communicative purposes behind an utterance.

2.1.2.1. Expressive

The expressive function is a speaker-oriented utterance that conveys the speaker's emotions and feelings (Holmes, 2013). It aims to make the interlocutor aware of the speaker's emotional state. An example of an expressive utterance would be "I'm feeling great today."

2.1.2.2. Directive

The directive function influences individuals to perform certain tasks as it attempts to get someone to do something (Holmes, 2013). Furthermore, in English, directives are often expressed politely using interrogative or declarative forms. Instances of directive utterance include "I want you to sit down," and "Won't you sit down?"

2.1.2.3. Referential

The referential function is used to provide information to the interlocutor (Holmes, 2013). Furthermore, it facilitates the exchange of information and

contributes to the understanding of the conversation. An example of a referential utterance is “At the third stroke it will be three o’clock precisely”

2.1.2.4. Metalinguistic

In accordance with Holmes (2013), the metalinguistic function refers to a statement reflecting upon the language being used. Jakobson (1987) further explains that metalinguistic utterances typically centre on words with complex meanings, and helps clarify the message through the use of synonyms, definitions, paraphrases, or examples. An example of a metalinguistic utterance is “hegemony.”

2.1.2.5. Poetic

According to Holmes (2013), the poetic function emphasises the aesthetic elements of language and is commonly found in various forms such as poetry, mottos, and rhymes. One of the most well-known examples of poetic utterance is the tongue twister, “Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.”

2.1.2.6. Phatic

The phatic function serves to “express solidarity and empathy with others” (Holmes, 2013, p. 275). In other words, a phatic utterance creates a sense of empathy between the speaker and the listener. According to Wardhana and Maharani (2023), in their study of speech functions, the phatic function generally encompasses casual conversations, small talk, and greetings. Thus, the phatic

function helps individuals maintain contact with one another. Instances of phatic utterances would be “Hi,” “How are you?” and “Lovely day isn’t it!”

2.2. Research Method

2.2.1. Type of Research

In this thesis, I used a mixed-methods approach combining qualitative and quantitative methods to analyse the use of masculine language features in *Flipped* (2010). According to Kothari (2004), the qualitative approach is used to investigate human behaviour, and in this thesis, it is applied to identify and interpret the masculine language features and speech functions in the main characters’ utterances. On the other hand, the quantitative approach is used to measure quantity or amount, and in this thesis, it is applied to compare the distribution of masculine language features between the two main characters using the chi-square test.

2.2.2. Research Approach

I employed sociolinguistics approach. Sociolinguistics is a study exploring the relationship between language and society (Coates, 2016). Here, I used two sociolinguistics theories. Firstly, I identify masculine language features used by Juli Baker and Bryce Loski in *Flipped* (2010) using Coates’s (2016) theory of masculine language features. Secondly, Holmes's (2013) theory of speech functions was also applied to explain how speech functions reflect the differences in masculine language feature use. In addition, I also compared the distribution of masculine

language features in the main characters' utterances using a chi-square test to see whether the distribution between the two main characters is statistically significant.

2.2.3. Data and Data Source

The primary data for this thesis consist of the utterances of Juli Baker and Bryce Loski in *Flipped* (2010). The film was watched on Netflix¹, while the subtitles were retrieved from Subdl² to help in the detailed analysis of the utterances. Examples of subtitles are presented below:

Timestamp	Utterance
00:15:52,210 --> 00:15:54,075	Bryce. You guys, come up here with me.
00:50:07,763 --> 00:50:10,459	That's what's weird. I don't think I do. I can't stop thinking about her.

Table 1. Examples of subtitles retrieved from Subdl²

From the subtitles retrieved from Subdl², speakers' names are added to focus only on Juli Baker's and Bryce Loski's utterances, as follows:

Speaker	Timestamp	Utterance
Juli Baker	00:15:52,210 --> 00:15:54,075	Bryce. You guys, come up here with me.
Bryce Loski	00:50:07,763 --> 00:50:10,459	That's what's weird. I don't think I do. I can't stop thinking about her.

Table 2. Subtitles with added speaker information

2.2.4. Population and Sample

The population of this thesis is all utterances spoken by Juli Baker and Bryce Loski in *Flipped* (2010). From the population, purposive sampling is used to get the

¹<https://www.netflix.com/id-en/title/70130442>

²<https://www.subdl.com/s/info/3pJerdwanf/flipped>

relevant utterances that contain Coates's (2016) masculine language features and Holmes's (2013) speech functions.

2.2.5. Method of Data Collection

In this thesis, I used the documentation method to collect data from the dialogues in *Flipped* (2010). Several steps were conducted, as follows:

1. I watched the film on Netflix¹, using the closed caption to ensure that no dialogue was missed.
2. Open-access subtitles were obtained from Subdl².
3. The obtained subtitles were formatted in Microsoft Excel for note-taking.
4. The formatted subtitles were sorted based on utterances performed by Juli Baker and Bryce Loski, specifically those that contain Coates's (2016) masculine language features and Holmes's (2013) speech functions.
5. During the repeated watching, I took detailed notes using codes representing a specific feature/function. The codes are presented below:

Coates's masculine language features	
MR	Minimal response
QU	Question
CD	Command and directive
STL	Swearing and taboo language
CO	Compliment

Table 3. Codes for Coates's masculine language features

Holmes's speech functions	
EX	Expressive
DI	Directive
RE	Referential
ML	Metalinguistic
PO	Poetic
PH	Phatic

Table 4. Codes for Holmes's speech functions

2.2.6. Method of Data Analysis

The data in this thesis were analysed through several steps. The steps were divided based on the two research questions, as follows:

2.2.6.1. Analysis for Research Question 1

1. Utterances containing masculine language features based on Coates's (2016) categorisation were sorted and coded based on codes in Table 3.

For instance:

Speaker	Timestamp	Utterance	Masculine language features	Code
Juli Baker	00:15:46,304 --> 00:15:48,465	Go ahead. Cut me down.	Command and directive	CD
Bryce Loski	01:09:28,723 --> 01:09:29,747	Bullshit.	Swearing and taboo language	STL

Table 5. Example of categorising and coding masculine language features

2. The results were summarised in a table showing the frequency of each feature, as seen below:

Coates's masculine language features	Occurrence
Minimal response	
Question	
Command and directive	
Swearing and taboo language	
Compliment	
Total occurrence	

Table 6. Hypothetical table showing masculine language features used by the main characters in *Flipped* (2010)

2.2.6.2. Analysis of Research Question 2

1. The communicative purposes behind each utterance containing masculine language features were analysed and coded based on

Holmes's (2013) speech functions using the codes in Table 4. For instance:

Speaker	Timestamp	Utterance	Speech functions	Code
Juli Baker	00:15:46,304 --> 00:15:48,465	Go ahead. Cut me down.	Directive	DI
Bryce Loski	01:09:28,723 --> 01:09:29,747	Bullshit.	Expressive	EX

Table 7. Example of categorising and coding speech functions

2. The results of both coding processes were grouped thematically. Each masculine language feature was paired with its corresponding speech function(s). For instance:

Speaker	Time-stamp	Utterance	Masculine language features	Speech functions	Code
Juli Baker	00:15:46,304 --> 00:15:48,465	Go ahead. Cut me down.	Command and directive	Directive	CD, DI
Bryce Loski	01:09:28,723 --> 01:09:29,747	Bullshit.	Swearing and taboo language	Expressive	STL, EX

Table 8. Example of thematically categorising and coding on masculine language features and speech functions

3. The results were presented in tables showing the dominant speech functions, as seen below:

Holmes's speech functions	Occurrence	Dominant masculine feature(s) used by Juli Baker	Coates's language feature used by Juli Baker
Expressive			

Directive		
Referential		
Metalinguistic		
Poetic		
Phatic		
Total occurrence		

Table 9. Hypothetical table showing Holmes's speech functions used by Juli Baker

Holmes's speech functions	Occurrence	Dominant masculine feature(s) used by Bryce Loski	Coates's language
Expressive			
Directive			
Referential			
Metalinguistic			
Poetic			
Phatic			
Total occurrence			

Table 10. Hypothetical table showing Holmes's speech functions used by Bryce Loski

4. A comparative analysis using a chi-square test³ was conducted to find out whether the distribution of masculine language features between Juli Baker and Bryce Loski differed significantly. The comparison shows:
- which features Juli Baker and Bryce shared,
 - which features differed between them, and,
 - how frequently each feature appeared in their utterances.

Coates's masculine language features	Uttered by Juli Baker	Uttered by Bryce Loski	Total
Minimal response			

³<https://www.socscistatistics.com/tests/chisquare2/calculator/>

Question			
Command and directive			
Swearing and taboo language			
Compliment			
Total			

Table 11. Hypothetical table showing a comparison of the occurrences of masculine language features by Juli Baker and Bryce Loski

5. Finally, the chi-square test results were interpreted simultaneously with the speech functions analysis and the characters' backgrounds to explain how these factors reflect the differences in masculine language features use between Juli Baker and Bryce Loski.