

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

A Memoir: Educated (2018) portrayed the metamorphosis of the author's way of thinking and her journey in finding her true identity through education despite the intervention of her conservative family. Conservative thinking followed by the author's family is that women do not have the same power as male members resulting in discrimination and subordination experienced by women members in the family. The manifestation of this inequality reflected on the role of women who can only be housewives and stay home under man's control. Furthermore, the social condition experienced by Tara's family contradicts the values of equality that the United States has been promoting which shows that patriarchal practices still persist in society, even in liberal countries (Jadoon et al., 2020).

In patriarchal practices, sexism is used as a tool to create and maintain gender inequality and discrimination (Mills, 2008). Even in daily life, words are spoken explicitly or implicitly to suppress the other gender and to show domination, such as catcalling, gender gaslighting, slut-shaming, and victim blaming. Based on that, this research aims to analyse the existence of patriarchy in modern society through language represented by the Westover family. Moreover, several previous studies have briefly examined sexism. Fitriyah (2023) studies on the novel *Queen Alexine* (2021) revealed sexist utterances giving rise to the women stereotype. The study found that women who have a role as leaders are still labelled as less skilled

in a patriarchal society. Another study is on a series “*The Queen Gambit*” (2020) found covert sexism is mostly used to degrade women through implicit assumption in a patriarchal society (Dewi & Pratama, 2023). These previous studies of sexist language primarily highlight the classification of overt and covert sexism to portray patriarchal values. However, this research focuses on the Westover family’s utterances that contain sexism towards women in a family by comparing male and female sexist language to present the usage of male domination and the internalization of sexism values to perpetuate the values toward women. Additionally, this research is intended to contribute to sociolinguistic study by presenting language used to reflect sexism values in family interactions. It is necessary to present how language is used as a tool to show domination and subordinate women by identifying, categorizing, and comparing sexist language reflected by male and female members of the Westover family in *Educated* (2018).

1.2 Research questions

Based on the significance of the study, the study attempts to answer following questions below:

1. What are types of sexism utterances of the Westover family?
2. How do sexist utterances reflect sexism values in the Westover family?

1.3 Objectives

This research aims to explore and comprehend the use of sexist utterance in literary works in the form of memoirs. Furthermore, this research is significant

for the following objective:

- a. To identify the types of sexist utterances used by the Westover's family in *A memoir: Educated* by Tara Westover (2018).
- b. To explain the differences in the use of sexist utterances between male and female members of the Westover family in reinforcing sexism values.

1.4 Previous Studies

Sexism has been investigated on various objects, ranging from movies, magazines, novels, and school textbooks, yet no research discusses the same object "*Educated*" (2018). Furthermore, these are previous studies using Mills' sexist language theory in different literary works. Adawiyah and Laili (2024), study sexism in Disney-Pixar animated film "*Brave*" (2012) focusing on Mills' overt sexist language classification and critical Van Dijk discourse analysis (2015) at the microstructure level which examines the small meaning of a text. The study results that an independence theme movie "*Brave*" (2012) contains overt sexism reflecting the women's traditional roles and gender stereotypes. Another study, Dewi and Pratama (2023) analyse sexist language in the Netflix drama series "*The Queen's Gambit*" (2020) by combining Mills' sexism classification theory and Hymes' context of the situation theory. The research discovered covert sexism was used more frequently, accounting for 54% of cases, while overt sexism accounted for 46%.

The next study analysing sexist language in the movie, Kaur et al. (2023) discuss the representation of women in the Regency era reflected in *Bridgerton* (2020) television series through sexist language. The research classified utterances

into overt sexism and covert sexism from season one and season two by applying Mills' theory framework. The findings indicate that 78% of sexism is covert sexism used to discriminate against women by both men and women themselves during the regency era. Similarly, Maulani (2024) studies male superiority in the *Blonde* (2022) movie, highlights the personal life and entertainment career of Marilyn Monroe, using Mill's theory. The method used is qualitative by analysing data using Stuart Hall's (1997) approach in the movie dialogue. This study found that in the 1950s, the setting of this film, the influence of feminism was very low, as evidenced by the frequent use of sexist remarks by men to belittle women reflected in the movie.

While the previous studies on sexist language largely focus on movies, Fitriyah (2024) analyses sexist utterances and gender stereotyping on noblewomen in the novel *Queen Alexine* (2020). Sara Mills' critical discourse is used to analyse overt and covert sexism reinforces gender stereotypes to the female characters. The result found that 73% of utterances are categorized as covert sexism to address women who have influence in the kingdom. The next study, Noh et al. (2022) discusses sexist language of the main character in *Mrs Dalloway* (1992) using Mills' theory. By classifying analysing the data into overt and covert sexist language, the researcher discovered four types overt sexism and two types of covert sexism presenting that language is used as a tool to contribute to unfair treatment and prejudice towards women compared to men.

Focusing on gender-specific terms based on Mills' classification, Romadhon (2020) studies sexist language on Walt Disney's *Beauty*

and the Beast (2017) Live-Action remake by using Mills' feminist stylistic framework. The research used a qualitative method to observe Walt Disney progressiveness reflected on the characters' utterances. The research found that 56% male-specific terms tend to show positive meaning and 44% female specific terms tend to be sexually negative words proving that Walt Disney is not progressive.

In addition, the subject of this study has been extensively examined through a literary approach, particularly focused on gender studies. Fatahuddin & Abdullah (2023) study women's resistance and gender inequality experienced by women in Idaho in the *Educated* (2018) by using feminist theories. Van Dijk's theory is used to analyse speech through text, social cognition and social background. The research found existentialist feminism is mostly exposed among other feminism theories, radical feminism and liberal feminism, in *Educated* (2018).

Another study, Jadoon et al. (2020) analyses patriarchal influence and women's struggle for identity in the west by applying Simone de Beauvoir (1949) and Judith Butler (1999) theoretical framework. By applying Van Dijk's critical discourse, the research reveals a contradiction of western gender equality ideals and Westover patriarchal values in the United States, which was shown by Tara's persistence of fulfilling her goals in her memoir. Lastly, Amarta (2023) studies deconstruction to Mormon beliefs in the novel *Educated* (2018) by applying Cixous' Poststructuralist feminist theory. The research discovered that the main character "Tara" deconstructs Mormon beliefs through writing her story and

presenting her rejections toward her patriarchal values in her family as a form of resistance.

Based on the previous studies mentioned above, most of them highlight the classification of sexism focusing on how one of the most dominant classifications reflects patriarchal values in societies. Yet, the comparison between male and female sexist utterances has not been used to present interplay of sexism values. Furthermore, previous studies on *Educated* (2018) have been analysed through feminist and cultural approaches that give understanding of gender roles, resistance, and personal development, making it a rich subject for analysing issues of gender. Therefore, by applying Mills' theory, this research will fill the gap in current studies of *Educated* (2018), which primarily focused on gender studies.

1.5 Scope of the Study

The research focuses on the sociolinguistic discipline discussing sexist language used by members of the Westover family. Sara Mills' theory is used to study language as a tool to maintain patriarchy in the Westover family. The scope of this study is limited to the Westover family' utterances in "*A Memoir: Educated*" by Tara Westover (2018). Limiting the scope allows the study to understand how a family becomes an important group in shaping strong patriarchal values in an individual's mind reflected on the Westover family.

1.6 Writing Organization

This research is presented in four chapters through the following organization:

CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains six sections, including the Background of the Study, Research Questions, Objectives, Previous Studies, the Scope of the Study, and the Writing Organization.

CHAPTER 2 : THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter provides two sections, namely the Theoretical Framework to outline the theory applied and Research Methods to show the steps of data collection and analysis.

CHAPTER 3 : RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the findings of the data and analysis based on the theoretical framework to address research questions.

CHAPTER 4 : CONCLUSION

This chapter contains the summary of the analysis and suggestions for future researchers.

REFERENCES

APPENDIX