



**AN ANALYSIS OF WOMEN'S LANGUAGE  
FEATURES USED BY TINA FEY IN HER BOOK  
*BOSSYPANTS***

**A THESIS**

**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
S-1 Degree Majoring Linguistics in the English Department  
Faculty of Humanities Diponegoro University**

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## **PRONOUNCEMENT**

The researcher honestly confirms that this thesis, entitled *An Analysis of Women's Language Features Used by Tina Fey in Her Book Bossypants*, is written by herself without taking any works from other researchers in any university, in diploma degree, S-1, S-2, and S-3 degrees. The researcher also ascertains that she does not take any material from other works except the references mentioned.

Semarang, 10<sup>th</sup> December 2022



Khusna Amalia

## **MOTTO AND DEDICATION**

*So verily, with the hardship, there is relief.*

- **Qs. Insyirah : 5**

*This thesis is dedicated to  
my beloved parents  
and those whom I love the most*

**APPROVAL**

**AN ANALYSIS OF WOMEN'S LANGUAGE FEATURES USED  
BY TINAFEY IN HER BOOK *BOSSYPANTS***

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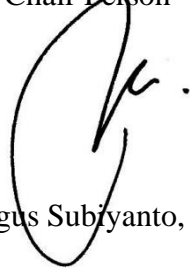
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Khusna Amalia

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## ABSTRACT

There are differences between the language used by man and woman. These differences have been researched and led to theories about woman's language features. The linguist who is famous for pioneering this theory is Robin Lakoff. The goal of this research is to identify Lakoff women's language features (1975) and explain the deviation of Lakoff's theory by examining the function of strong swear words in *Bossypants* (2011). *Bossypants* is an autobiography written by Tina Fey, an American female comedian. The story of her life working in a male-dominated environment is told interestingly through her book. To analyze the functions of strong swear words in this book, the researcher uses Andersson and Trudgill's theory (1990). The type of this research is qualitative research thus the data was collected by close reading and note-taking methods. Then a deductive-inferential approach was used to analyzed them. The result shows that there are seven out of nine woman's language features identified from 296 data. Those features are intensifiers (49,32%), emphatic stress (24,32%), lexical hedges and fillers (17,56%), empty adjectives (5,40%), hypercorrect grammar (1,68%), avoidance of strong swear words (1,01%), and precise color terms (0,68%). Meanwhile, the feature of question tags and super polite forms are not found. The researcher also found that Tina Fey utters twelve strong swear words which are believed to be mostly used by men. Those strong swear words have four functions which are auxiliary (6), expletive (4), humorous (1), and abusive (1). This study concludes that the use of language can be affected by the perspective of gender in society which caused Lakoff women's language to be inapplicable in the current language.

*Keywords: Sociolinguistics, Women's Language Features, Swear Words Function, Female Comedian, Bossypants.*

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

A human does an activity called communication in making relationships with others. The tool that is used to communicate is called language. Language has a definition as a system consisting of sounds or signs and rules that have been agreed upon by a certain group of humans. Paulston (1986) stated that language reflects social conditions and human relations (as cited in Santoso, 2006). Therefore, language can be used as a means of identifying an individual or a community.

The way that humans do in expressing their ideas will always be influenced by the situation and conditions around them. The study of this connection is called sociolinguistics. Sociolinguistics is a branch of linguistics discipline and is included in the macro-linguistics category because it highlights the link between language and social factors which are factors outside the language. According to Holmes (2013), sociolinguistics is the study that explains why humans talk differently in different social conditions. The social function of language and the ways people express or construct their social identity through language are topics in sociolinguistics.

In society, there is a concept or a construction in which man and woman are differentiated by their role. This social construction is called gender. Gender is formed from what we do, not something that we have or something we are born with. (West & Zimmerman, 1987). Thus, it is different from sex which talks about the physical differences between woman and man. Meanwhile, gender has a

concern about the masculinity and femininity of a person. In society, a woman tends to be expected to have the feminine side and her role is as a mother who takes care of her children at home. Whereas, man should have the masculinity side with his role as the head of the family and the breadwinner. These gender differences between men and women are also represented through language. Regarding (Holmes, 2013), there are differences in the way women and men talk. They do not speak in exactly the same way. The difference that is strongly believed is that women's language is more courteous than men's and the two genders assert speech functions distinctively.

The relation between language and gender has been studied for decades. In 1975, a woman linguist named Robin Lakoff was interested in seeing this field and published a writing entitled *Language and Woman's Place*. Lakoff (1975) states that there are several linguistic features which characterize women. Precise color words, super polite form, raising intonation on declaratives, empty adjectives, hedge or filler, intensifier, hyper-correct grammar, emphatic stress, strong swear words avoidance, and tag question are the ten features of women's language constructed by Robin Lakoff (1975).

Along with the development of society, women's language theory formulated by Lakoff experienced deviations. One of the frictions in the application of women's language is seen in nowadays language, as in the book *Bossypants* written by Tina Fey. Based on Coates (2004), Lakoff hypothesized that men utter stronger expletives such as *shit* and *damn*. While women tend to be polite by using weaker expletives such as *oh dear* and *my god*, which signifies the avoidance of strong

swear words. However, Tina Fey uses several strong swear words to express her emotions in her autobiography book.

Swear words that are considered strong in Lakoff's theory are swear words in general that are defined by most linguists. Referring to Allan (cited in Wulandari, 2017), swear words are words that are considered offensive, shocking, or indecent when used in a particular context. Even though it is considered rude and impolite, swear words are not only used to offend other people's feelings but also as a tool to show emotion. Hence, Andersson and Trudgill (1990) classified swear words based on their function into expletive, abusive, humorous, and auxiliary groups.

Furthermore, this research aims at investigating what women's language characteristics are used by Tina Fey based on Lakoff's theory (1975) and the function of strong swear words based on Andersson and Trudgill's (1990) swear words theory in Fey's autobiography, *Bossypants* (2011). The researcher chooses Tina Fey because of her social environment which is dominated by men and it is depicted through her autobiographical book. Fey is a female comedian, actor, writer, and also producer from the USA. She made history by being the first female writer in a famous TV comedy series, *Saturday Night Live*. Having been influenced by comedy since childhood, Fey has a humorous and friendly personality. She also has a feminist side where she is aware of male domination in her society. This influenced Fey in writing and describing her life in her book *Bossypants*.

In understanding and discovering the woman's language features used by Tina Fey, the researcher uses *Bossypants*, a literary work in the form of an autobiography. An autobiography is a type of biography that tells the story of the writer's life in

which the first-person point of view is used. In addition, there are two main reasons that make *Bossypants* is justified for being selected as data: First, this autobiography book, *Bossypants*, contains linguistic features of women's language and strong swear words, especially in chapters 1 to 6 of this book which it tells about Tina Fey's life from childhood to adolescence. Second, since this book is an autobiography, it provides the availability of more data in which Tina writes her life story using the first-person perspective.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

Based on the research background, the researcher formulates two research questions:

1. What are Lakoff's women's language features uttered by Tina Fey in chapters 1 to 6 of *Bossypants*?
2. What are the functions of strong swear words uttered by Tina Fey in the data?

## **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

Following the questions of this research, the purpose of the study is intended,

1. To identify the features of women's language uttered by Tina Fey in her book, *Bossypants* based on Lakoff's theory.
2. To explain the function of strong swears words uttered by Tina Fey in the data based on Andersson and Trudgill's theory.

## **1.4 Previous Studies**

Women's Language has been an interesting topic to study. Several researchers have addressed this topic by conducting studies on various objects. One of the research objects that are interesting to be studied is the female leader such as in

Amanda's research (2017) entitled *"An Analysis of The Use of Women's Language Features by Hilary Clinton in Presidential Debates"*. She examined women's language features on a powerful politician woman. This research has concluded that there are seven women's language characteristics employed by Hillary Clinton. As a woman politician who is running for president, she has an image as a woman who is confident with her status and role that represent woman leadership. The absence of some women's language features is affected by Hillary's certainty and the topic of discussion. Furthermore, in 2018, Handyanta also conducted research on a woman with big influences in the USA through his work entitled *"Lakoff's Women's Language Features used by Michelle Obama in the next generation of woman video"*. Mixed methods and discourse analysis are used in this research. The result shows that the most used is lexical hedges or fillers and the least used is emphatic stress. The women's language used by Mrs. Obama is representing her social status as the first lady.

On the other side, there are some studies that have Indonesian people and public figures as the research object. First, Pebrianti (2013) conducted a study of women's language features used by Indonesian female bloggers. Eight features of women's speech are discovered from ninety-seven postings by the female bloggers. The most frequent feature that emerges in the data is the intensifier. Lack of confidence in conversation is claimed by most respondents as the reason of their application of women's language features. In contrast, only a few of the respondents state that their reason of using these features is influenced by the fact that women have higher levels of vocabulary than men. Second, Lubis and Bahri (2020), examined this topic

on three Indonesian female television hosts who are Najwa Shihab, Marry Riana, and Feni Rose. There are nine women features uttered by them. For Najwa Shihab and Feni Rose, the dominant feature is hedges or fillers as they need little time to think of what they want to talk. While for Marry Riana, the most used is intensifier because she often expresses her feelings using hyperbole and emphasizes her utterances. Third, Apridaningrum (2018) also talks about women's language characteristics used by an Indonesian public figure. She wanted to know the woman language characteristics applied by Sarah Sechan in her talk show. By using the qualitative data method and Lakoff's theory, she analyzed the data and found nine features are applied. The most frequent feature is empty adjectives while precise color term is found to be zero because of the talk show theme.

Besides being studied on public figures, the usage of female language features has also been studied on characters in movies. One of these studies is *"An analysis of women's language features used by MIA In the princess diaries movie"* written by Murti (2018). In this study, Murti found 8 characteristics of Lakoff's theory. The language use of Mia character is affected by her gender which refers to how a 15-year-old girl deals with her social life with the reputation of a princess. Furthermore, Oktapiani, Natsir, and Setyowati (2017) also have conducted similar studies with film characters. Their research with the title *"Women's Language Features Found in Female Character's Utterances in The Devil Wears Prada Movie"* goals to identify women's speech features and the language functions served by female characters using Jakobsen's theory. Nine out of ten features are found and intensifier is the most used feature because the characters want to emphasize their speech in



depth to attract the attention of recipients. Furthermore, a women's language study with a movie as the object is also conducted by Fata, Daud, and Maulya from the University of Syiah Kuala in their research "*How can she barn so firmly, so diligently? A Sociolinguistics Analysis of Women Language Used on The Main Character of Jane Eyre*"(2016). The results show that six features of women's language emerge in this novel. This study figured out that Jane Eyre spoke straightly in the context of Jane as a superior, and Jane as an inferior.

Moreover, women's language characteristics can also be found in men's characters. First, a study entitled "*Linguistic Features of Women's Speech Used by Men in Characters of Pride and Prejudice and Zombies (2016) Movie*" by Rullyanti and Dohona (2018). By using descriptive qualitative as the methodology, the researchers wanted to know the women's language features used by men and concluded that the dominant kind of the features is hyper-correct grammar and the function of booster devices is the function that is used the most. Second, a study entitled "*Women Language Used by The Main Characters of Mockingjay Movie*" written by Aini (2016) as her thesis. The design used in this study was qualitative descriptive. The finding presents that there are five out of ten kinds of features uttered by the male main character. Meanwhile, the female used six types of them. The avoidance of strong expletives, hyper-correct grammar, and empty adjectives do not emerge. The use of women's speech features is related to the social condition in their society.

From the previous studies about women's language, the use of several features can show the speaker's confidence and social status or reputation in society.

Therefore, there are many studies on women's language with female figures who have leadership sides or male characters as the research objects. However, women's language in female comedians is still rarely studied. Thus, the researcher of this study discusses women's language features where the research object is a female comedian, Tina Fey, in her autobiography entitled *Bossypants*. Other than that, in this field, it is difficult to find research that highlights the deviations of Lakoff women's language by presenting the use of strong swear words by women. Hence, the writer wants to discuss the deviation by examining the functions of strong swear words uttered by Tina Fey in her book *Bossypants*. In addition, the object of research on women's language in written form is still very limited.

### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

The Sociolinguistics discipline is the focus of the scope of this study since it discusses a phenomenon found in society, especially in women's language as seen through the autobiography written by Tina Fey. To avoid broadening the discussion, the researcher limits the study and focuses on the features of women's language and the functions of strong swear words found in Tina Fey's *Bossypants* chapters 1 to 6. To reach the aims of this study, the Lakoff (1975) theory about women's language and Andersson and Trudgill's (1990) theory about swear words are used by the researcher. The researcher also realizes the limitations of the data as the object of this study is only chapters 1 to 6 of the autobiography which tells the story of the writer's early life using the first-person point of view.

## **1.6 Writing Organization**

There are several chapters that construct this research. They are:

### **CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter contains an explanation that leads the reader to the content.

In detail, this chapter includes the Background of the Study, Research Problem, Objectives of the Study, Previous Studies, Scope of the Study, and the Writing Organization.

### **CHAPTER 2 THEORY AND METHOD**

This section contains two parts, namely the Theoretical Framework in which the theories underlying the research would be explained, and Research Methods that describe the data and how the data will be researched.

### **CHAPTER 3 RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The analysis of the data using the theory explained in the theoretical framework is presented in this chapter

### **CHAPTER 4 CONCLUSION**

The conclusion drawn from the analysis in the previous chapter is discussed in this chapter

## CHAPTER II

### THEORY AND METHOD

#### 2.1 Theoretical Framework

This section describes the theories used in conducting this research. The researcher applied theories related to language and gender, women's language characteristics by Lakoff (1975), and the function of swear words by Anderson and Trudgill (1990).

##### 2.1.1 Language and Gender

The notion of the term 'gender' is often confused with the term 'sex'. 'Sex' refers to the categorization of people based on their different biological characteristics. Meanwhile 'gender' refers to an appropriate term to differentiate people based on their socio-cultural behavior, including language (Holmes, 2013). Gender consists of a pattern of relations that develop over time to define male and female, masculinity and femininity, and has been embedded in every aspect of society. What people experience as their individual desire can be within the gender order. Meanwhile, to convey ideas, communicate with others, and even create ideas in their minds, humans use a tool called language. It is a seamless connection that makes language so important to gender and vice versa. (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003).

The study of gender and language has been discussed for years. The publication of *Language and Women's Place* (1975) by Lakoff plays a significant role in the linguistic world in which it encourages other linguists to research the uncharted areas of women's talk. Lakoff (1975) defines a set of linguistic features that are

stated to occur more frequently in women's speech than men's, called Women's Language. The results of the formulation of traits and labeling in women's languages that is different from men's are correlated with differences in social status and power in society. As Lakoff (1975) says that the way of women are expected to speak and the way women are spoken to reflect the powerlessness and marginality. In line with this, Holmes (2013) states that gender differences in language are one aspect of linguistic differences that portray social status or power in society.

However, Coates (2004) categorizes Lakoff's women's language as a 'deficit' approach in which she describes it as powerless and indecisive or deficit. Because of the impression that something is wrong with women's language where women must learn to speak like men if they want to be taken seriously, this approach was opposed. This opposition can be happened because there is different way of how language and gender define in Lakoff theory and Coates theory. Regarding Swann (as quoted in Coates, 2004), there has been a shift in the way 'language' and 'gender' are perceived. People see gender as something that they do and no longer see it as something that is given and language is researched for ambiguity and multiple meanings. Therefore, the view of language and gender can change following developments in situations that occur in society. Because language and gender is the result of cultural construction, women's language constructed by Lakoff may no longer be in line with the nowadays language.

### **2.1.2 Women's Language Features**

In society, women's roles are different from that of men. How women are perceived and treated by society affects the discourse about women. According to Lakoff (1975), the woman's personal identity is linguistically submerged. The women's language is the result of women's social status in a society where women are inferior. In this perspective, the linguistic features of women's language describe them as individuals who are uncertain and less authoritative, and subject to anything. The following is the theory of women's language features that will be discussed. To focus on the object that is in the form of written text, only nine features of women's language will be used in this study.

#### **2.1.2.1 Precise Color Words**

Women seem to talk like a lady that is shown in the choice of lexical items by making far more descriptions in naming color. The color names such as *mauve*, *beige*, *lavender*, *aquamarine* are some of the examples of the precise color terms. This type of color vocabulary is rarely or even never used by men. This is because women are assumed to be incapable of making decisions about important things, they make decisions that are not as crucial as a sop like choosing color name. (Lakoff, 1975).

#### **2.1.2.2 Empty Adjectives**

Lakoff (1975) said that empty adjectives are adjectives that tend to be uttered more by women. These groups of adjectives are used by women to express their subjective judgment with emotions toward something which can be acceptance or admiration. The instances are *fabulous*, *gorgeous*, *charming*, *lovely*, *divine*,

*adorable*, etc. By using these words, women show emotion in their opinion rather than just giving a piece of information.

### **2.1.2.3 Lexical Hedge or Filler**

These are several words that can be grouped into hedges: *you know, well, sort of, I guess, kind of, I think, seems like*, etc. While *umm, hmm, and aah* are grouped as fillers. These phrases or words indicate that the speaker feel unsure about their statements. They avoid stating their idea definitively and leaves the choice open. This thing is considered polite where they are used to fence off a speech to make the opinion seems not direct or harsh. They can take and hold on the turn of the conversation, fill the gap between the conversation, and begin the conversation.

### **2.1.2.4 Intensifiers**

According to Cambridge Dictionary, an intensifier is an adverb or adjective used to strengthen or emphasize the meanings of the following words that can be verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs. In the phrase “*An extremely crowded place*”, the word *extremely* is the intensifier. Kristen Precht (cited in Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003) found that women use these reinforcement forms (*so + adjective* and *so much*) significantly more than men.

### **2.1.2.5 Hyper-Correct Grammar**

The hyper-correct grammar refers to the use of language according to the standard rules. It is believed that the standard forms of language are more likely to be used by women than men. The example for using hyper-correct feature is by using ‘going’ instead of ‘goin’ and avoiding to use *ain’t* or double negative. Besides being considered polite, Holmes (cited in Pebrianti, 2013) thinks that men are

superior than women, so women should use standard forms and try to not offend men.

#### **2.1.2.6 Super Polite Form**

This kind of feature is marked by the choice to use a request sentence instead of an order. Similarly, suggestions would be more polite than giving orders because in giving orders, it is considered that there is an element of obedience where the speaker is higher than the interlocutor. For example, '*will you close the window please?*' is a polite request compared to a command '*close the window!*'.

#### **2.1.2.7 Tag Questions**

This feature is one that signifies the claim that women's language is more polite than men's language. One aspect of politeness is leaving decisions open, not forcing thoughts or views on the other person. For the instance, *Rita is here, isn't she?* This sentence show that the speaker is reluctant to state their statement baldly even though they have a particular answer in mind ('yes' or 'no') (Lakoff, 1975). However, by using tag-question, the speakers give the impression that they are not really sure of themselves, need other person confirmation, and do not even has their own views.

#### **2.1.2.8 Avoidance of strong swear words**

Swear words are bad words used to emphasize what is being said which convey strong emotion and can be a way to insult. Coates (2004) states that male in male conversations use more swear words than female in female conversations, while mixed conversations tend to accommodate both sides. Lakoff (1975) states that the 'weaker' expletives are for women and the 'stronger' ones are for men. The



expressions such as *shit, hell, damn, bloody hell*, tend to be produced more by men, while women prefer to say *oh my god, my goodness*, etc.

#### **2.1.2.9 Emphatic stress**

Emphatic stress has the function of emphasizing a speech. In written text, emphatic stress can be marked by the writing style of uppercase, word or letter repeat, coloring, bold, and italic to differentiate some words which it gives more emphasis. For example, '*That was a **fantastic** experience.* The word *fantastic* that is written in bold is emphatic stress. By giving emphasis, women anticipate that others will not take them seriously. (Lakoff, 1975)

#### **2.1.3 Function of Swear Words**

Swearing has been commonly used in everyday life by both men and women. Andersson and Trudgill (1990) define swearing as 'bad language'. It refers to something taboo or stigmatized in culture, should not be interpreted literally, and can be used to express strong emotion and attitude. In line with Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003), swearing is regarded as an expression of very strong emotions. It can be used in speech to express emotions such as anger, frustration, happiness, and surprise. Furthermore, Anderson and Trudgill (1990) classified swear words based on their pragmatic function into expletive, abusive, humorous, and auxiliary groups.

##### **2.1.3.1 Expletives swearing**

Expletives Swearing is a kind of swear word that is not directed toward others. They are intended to express individual emotions which are the speaker's feelings toward a situation or something. This type of swear word is often uttered

spontaneously as is a habit of the speaker. The swear word *Dammit* and *Oh shit* are the example of this type.

### **2.1.3.2 Abusive swearing**

This kind of swear word is purely used to intimidate, insult or hurt people verbally. In line with Pinker (cited in Wulandari, 2017), abusive swearing is addressed to someone in a derogatory manner whether in an argument, heated debate, or just plain rude behavior. The abusive swearing that is mostly used includes *fuck you, you bastard, son of bitch*.

### **2.1.3.3 Humorous swearing**

This kind of swear word is aimed at other people but not meant to offend them. It takes the abusive form but has a different function and sounds playful, fun, and humorous rather than offensive. Humorous swearing is usually given to those who are close to the speaker. It can be a way of complimenting someone or something, for example, *you are a badass*.

### **2.1.3.4 Auxiliary swearing**

Auxiliary Swearing is not directed towards certain people or situations, this is a way of speaking that has been called "lazy swearing" and "always or often non-empathic." It is a supplemental swearing in which it can describe or replace words by including emotion to emphasize the meaning. The instance of auxiliary swearing is *What the fuck are you saying?*

## **2.2 Research Method**

This section deals with the research method, which demonstrates the type of the research, explains the data, and presents the method to collect and analyse the data.

### **2.2.1 Types of Research**

Qualitative research is used to understand and explain the collected data in the form of words rather than numbers. The collected data of this study comes from phrases or words produced by Tina Fey in her literature entitled *Bossypants*. To solve the research problem, the researcher describes the collected, analyzed, and interpreted data in this study systematically which are related to the features of women's language and strong swearing. Thus, the type of this research is qualitative research.

### **2.2.2 Data, Population, Sample, and Sampling Technique**

The conducted research in this study is reliant on a data set derived from chapters 1 to 6 of *Bossypants* by Tina Fey. Moreover, this data is grouped as primary data as it is obtained directly from the research object. The data is in the form of words and phrases which indicate the features of women's language or strong swear words proposed by Lakoff's theory (1975). To support the primary data and to give more understanding of the topic that is studied, the researcher used secondary data. The secondary data covers journals, articles, and scientific studies that discuss the use of women's language features.

The population in this study is all texts in the book *Bossypants*. Meanwhile, the sample in this study is the words or phrases that contain women's language features or strong swear words produced by Tina Fey in chapters 1 to 6 or in other words

page 3 to 55 from 275 pages of *Bossypants*. In collecting samples as data in this research, a purposive sampling method is used. Hence, the sample is determined by deliberately taking samples of the population that have specific characteristics by adjusting to the objectives of the study.

### **2.2.3 Method of Collecting Data**

In this study, the first step that the researcher does to collect the data is reading the book *Bossypants* by using the close reading technique in order that the researcher can understand the content of the book well. In the second step, the researcher uses note-taking as a method of collecting data where the researcher takes notes of the utterances that has particular woman's language features and swear words. To help in note-taking method, the researcher uses tables to collect the samples from the population which is adjusted to Lakoff's theory.

### **2.2.4 Method of Analyzing Data**

In analyzing data for this study, the researcher uses the deductive-inferential technique. According to Hyde (2000), deductive reasoning is a theory-testing process that seeks to see if an established theory applies to specific instances. Meanwhile, inferential method is used to draw the inferences about a population that are based on information gathered from sample of the population. Thus, the deductive-inferential method is a method of analyzing data by drawing conclusions from matching data with the existing theories. The conclusions obtained are then generalized to the population. Therefore, in answering the problems of this study, the researcher takes the following steps:

1. Identifying and categorizing women's language features and strong swear words produced by Tina Fey in chapters 1 to 6 of *Bossypants*.
2. Counting the samples that contain the women's language features and strong swear words to support the data presentation
3. Analyzing and giving explanations of the result data by using the theories that support women's language and the function of swear words.
4. Drawing conclusion of the results and discussion.

## CHAPTER III

### RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 Biography of Tina Fey

Elizabeth Stamatina Fey or commonly known as Tina Fey is a famous female comedian, actress, and writer in the United State of America. Fey was born in Pennsylvania in 1970 and raised by her parents, Jeane and Donald. When she was in 11th grade she joined a theater group called Summer Showtime. In the environment surrounded by gay friends, Fey has her own views of gender and gay people. In addition, as she entered her teenage years, she realized that women are judged by their bodies and it seems that nobody is capable of satisfying the ideal standard of society.

Fey attended the University of Virginia and got to know the world of comedy by working for the touring theater company of The Second City. Fey loved her work there, but she could not stand the sexist treatment in the company. Their producers believe that women cannot produce more comedic material than men and that the audiences prefer male performers.

From the Second City, in 1997, Tina Fey was hired to write for *Saturday Night Live*, a popular comedy show on TV. After a few years, Tina Fey made history by becoming the first female head writer in the show. Tina also made her screen debut as a comedian, created a serial comedy named *30 Rocks*, and produced a film, *Mean Girls*. Working in a male-dominated industry, Fey has faced discrimination and double standards because of her gender.

In short, Tina Fey is a successful woman in the comedy industry where men dominate the field. Despite being in a male-dominated environment, Fey had power and control in her position as a chief writer at *SNL* and the producer of *30 Rock* at that time and became a public figure who is aware of the inferiority of women in society. In writing her autobiography, *Bossypants* (2011), Fey applies humor throughout her book to explain her views and situations. Therefore informal language is used and Fey does not hesitate to utter swear words in describing how she truly feels.

### 3.2 Findings

In this part, the researcher presents the finding data that are gained from the book *Bossypants* that adjusted to the characteristics of women's language and strong swear words.

#### 3.2.1 Women's Language Features

This research focuses on the use of women's language features by Tina Fey in her autobiographical book, *Bossypants*. The data findings were discussed by using the theory of women's language by Lakoff (1975). The researcher collected the utterances of Tina Fey in *Bossypants* into a table and classified them into the nine appropriate women's language features.

*Table 1. Frequency of Women's Language Features in chapter 1-6 of Bossypants*

| No. | Women's Language Feature | Number of Utterances | Percentage |
|-----|--------------------------|----------------------|------------|
| 1   | Intensifiers             | 146                  | 49,32%     |
| 2   | Empathic Stress          | 72                   | 24,32%     |

|              |                                |            |                |
|--------------|--------------------------------|------------|----------------|
| 3            | Lexical Hedges or Fillers      | 52         | 17,56%         |
| 4            | Empty Adjective                | 16         | 5,40%          |
| 5            | Hyper-correct Grammar          | 5          | 1,68%          |
| 6            | Avoidance of Strong Swear Word | 3          | 1,01%          |
| 7            | Precise Colour Term            | 2          | 0,68%          |
| 8            | Tag question                   | 0          | 0%             |
| 9            | Super Polite Form              | 0          | 0%             |
| <b>TOTAL</b> |                                | <b>296</b> | <b>100,00%</b> |

According to the data in Table 1, The researcher discovered seven of nine women's language features that were discussed, in 296 utterances produced by Tina Fey in the first six chapters of *Bossypants*. The feature of tag questions and super polite form do not emerge in this primer data. In addition, the frequency of precise color term features was only 0,68 % of the total data or as much as 2 utterances. The other women's language characteristics identified are intensifiers (49,32%), emphatic stress (24,32%), lexical hedges or fillers (17,56%), empty adjectives (5,4%), hyper-correct grammar (1,68%), avoidance of strong swear word (1,01%), and precise color term (0,68%).

The data shows that intensifiers and emphatic stress are the dominant features that appear in the collected data. According to Lakoff cited in Holmes (2013), the feature of intensifiers and emphatic stress have the same function as booster devices in which these features may reinforce someone's utterances. Furthermore, Tina Fey does not use the tag question and super polite form in delivering her story. The lack of a tag question feature and super polite form are influenced by the topic of the



story, Fey’s confidence in her utterances, and the limited conversation in autobiographical book.

### 3.2.2 Strong Swear Words

One of the most interesting frictions of the theory of Lakoff in this data is the use of swear words that are considered as strong. Lakoff’s theory stated that women are more likely to mention weaker swearing to avoid strong swear words and stronger swearing is used more by men (1975). Meanwhile, in this data, the researcher found that Fey uses strong expletives and weak expletives depending on the situations in her stories. In analyzing the strong swear words that emerged, the researcher used the theory of Andersson and Trudgill (1990). Regarding Andersson and Trudgill (1990), the swear word can be defined as something that is used to express strong emotions and attitudes. They provide four functions of swear words which are auxiliary, expletives, abusive and humorous.

*Table 2. The Function of Strong Swear Words used by Fey in chapters 1-6 of Bossypants*

| No           | Functions of Swear Words | Number of Utterances | Percentage  |
|--------------|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| 1            | Auxiliary                | 6                    | 50 %        |
| 2            | Humorous                 | 4                    | 33,33 %     |
| 3            | Expletives               | 1                    | 8,33 %      |
| 4            | Abusive                  | 1                    | 8,33 %      |
| <b>TOTAL</b> |                          | <b>12</b>            | <b>100%</b> |

Based on Table 2, the researcher found that there are 12 utterances containing strong swear words. This shows that the use of strong swear words has a significant difference from the use of avoidance strong swear words which are only discovered

in three utterances (see Table 3.2.1.). Moreover, the strong swear words used by Fey in the data have different functions regarding the theory of swear words by Andersson and Trudgill (1990). There are four (4) swear words that function as humorous, six (6) as auxiliary, one (1) as expletives, and one (1) as abusive. The auxiliary function of the swear words has the most percentage in the data with 50 % of the total. In addition, the humorous function was predicted to exist because Fey is a comedian and her story is presented with humor in it.

Furthermore, the use of strong swears words by Fey in *Bossypants* is influenced by her men-dominated environment in the comedy industry where it is believed that strong swear words are used more by men than by women. Because her environment is surrounded by men, Fey feels that it is natural for women to use strong swear words. In addition, the emergence of strong swear words in this study data represents the deviation of Lakoff women's language feature (1975) which proves that the view on the language used by women can change over time. The researcher assumes that this is related to the differences in the gender views in which Lakoff (1975) considers women as marginal, subordinate, and inferior compared to men, whereas in nowadays society, women and men are seen as equal and have the same opportunities in giving opinions in the society. This provides an understanding that the view of gender and language in society is related and can be changed through the years.

### **3.3 Discussion**

The research questions that underlie the analysis of this study are what features used by Tina Fey in the first six chapters of *Bossypants* are and the functions of

strong swear words that emerged in the data. To answer those questions, in this section, the result data will be discussed.

### **3.3.1 The Use of Women's Language Features**

The women's language features used by Fey are discussed from the most dominant features to the least features and then the absent features in the finding data.

#### **3.3.1.1 Intensifiers**

Intensifier is a word, especially an adjective or an adverb that makes the meaning of another word stronger. The examples of intensifier words are *really, so, very, only, just, never, etc.* Holmes (2013) opines that an intensifier is included in boosting device, as opposed to hedging that is used to weaken a statement, the boosting device can be used to strengthen it. From the data obtained, the Intensifier is the dominant characteristic used by Fey in her book. The occurrence of the intensifier feature dominates the results by a percentage of almost half of the total data (49,3%).

The researcher categorized the intensifiers features based on their function in the sentences. From 146 utterances that contain intensifiers, 102 of them are function as adverb of degree, 25 as adverb of frequency, 12 as adjective, and 7 as adverb of manner. Therefore, there are four function of intensifiers and the most frequent function of intensifiers in the data is adverb of degree. These four functions of intensifiers are discussed in the next passages.

First, the intensifiers identified as adverbs of degree produced by Fey are *really, pretty, very, only, just, not, so, too, definitely, totally, etc.* This adverb of degree is

used to show the intensity or degree of something. Below is the example of intensifier *very*.

[1] Brendan was a **very** dramatic boy who would say things to me like “Did you ever think that maybe the man that did that to your face did it to mark you so he could find you later in life?” (p.34)

In quotation [1] to emphasize the intensity of Brendan’s personality. Fey uses an intensifier *very* in describing her friend, Brendan. In that passage, the intensifier *very* modified the adjective word ‘dramatic’ where she portrays Brendan as someone who had exaggerated or overly emotional reactions towards something. Fey wants to intensify how dramatic Brendan is. She also gives an example of Brendan’s version of his response to her story of the wound on her face.

Second, the intensifiers identified as adverbs of frequency are *always*, *already*, *never*, *endlessly*. This adverb of frequency as intensifiers is used to describe how intense an action happens. Below is the example of intensifier *always*.

[2] My daughter has a reversible doll: Sleeping Beauty on one side and Snow White on the other. I would **always** set it on her bed with the Snow White side out and she would toddle up to it and flip the skirt over to Sleeping Beauty. (p.22)

In this case, Fey uses the word *always* to make the reader understand the consistency of her action in that sentence. She wants to reinforce how often she did the thing where she put the Snow White version of the doll on her daughter’s bed. While her daughter prefers the Sleeping Beauty version because of its blonde hair which it indicates a mindset of ‘white supremacy’. This situation reflects how Fey teaches her daughter about loving everyone no matter their hair color or their races, by repeatedly setting an example.

Third, the intensifiers identified as adjective are *whole, big, all, wonderful, entire, incredible*. Adjective is used to modify or describe a noun in a sentence. Below is the example of adjective intensifier *big*.

[3] My brother is eight years older than I am. I was a **big** surprise. (p.7)

In this excerpt [3], Fey tells about how she was born is a surprising thing that no one expect because of the age gap between her brother and Fey. The word *big* function as adjective and modify the noun surprise while it also intensifies the meaning. By using *big*, Fey wants to emphasize how surprising her birth is for her family.

Fourth, the intensifiers identified as adverb of manner are *immediately, honestly, clearly, intently, freshly, brutally, and stunningly*. Adverb of manner is used to tell how the way something happens. Below is the example of intensifier that function as adverb of manner.

[4] he saw two black gentlemen approaching from far away... The guys looked at him **intently**, then one turned to the other and said, "That is one boss, bold, bladed motherfucker." (p.48)

In this quotation, Fey tells a story about her father who was in an airport parking lot picking up Fey's mother, and two black men approached him and looked at him intently. Since *intently* is an adverb of manner, this word modifies the verb in the sentence which is *looked*. Therefore, by using *intently*, Fey emphasizes how the way these two black men looking at her father.

The use of the Intensifier feature by Tina Fey in *Bossypants* is related to the contents of the book which contains Fey's own experiences and opinions so that Fey is assured in what she said and wants to strengthen her statements. The

Intensifiers features are used to express Fey's opinions in describing or recounting something so that the reader can get the intensity of the statements. The researcher argues that Fey uses intensifiers as a way to convince the readers to believe the strong statements in her story.

### 3.3.1.2 Emphatic stress

Emphatic stress is used by giving certain pressure to emphasize the speaker's emotions. In written text, as quoted from Pebrianti (2013), women may apply italic writing, coloring, bold, repeating, capital letters, or typing with a longer letter to emphasize their utterances. Emphatic emphasis is used to reinforce a sentence, and to make sure the reader or audience understands the meaning or emotion that is being conveyed. This feature is also found in the book *Bossypants*. Giving some words more emphasis, Fey writes some words in different ways as in the instance below.

[5] My scar was a miniature form of celebrity. Kids knew who I was because of it. Lots of people liked to claim they were there when it happened. I was *there*. I *saw it*. Crazy Mike did **it!** (p.9)

The excerpt [5] is an example of italic writing and using exclamation mark in emphasizing Fey's utterance. Fey tells about how famous she was among her friends when she was a kid because of the wound on her face. In telling the story, she imitates some children who claimed to be involved when the incident occurred, in fact, they did not. Fey emphasizes the words *there* and *saw it* by italic writing and *did it* by adding an exclamation mark. She wants the readers to imagine how the kids said these words by emphasizing them and to understand that the sentences

have implied meaning which is lies told by kids. It makes her story more expressive and fun to read.

[6] After a tender, playacted non-French kiss, Brendan suddenly “**came out**” to me. (p.36)

Another example of the writing way as a feature of emphatic stress is quoting phrases as in the excerpt [6]. In this sentence, Fey emphasizes the phrase *came out* by quoting it. The quotes around a certain word or phrase are to imply something without saying it directly. The implied meaning of ‘came out’ in this sentence that Fey wanted the reader to understand is the revealing of someone’s sexuality or gender identity.

[7] It took me years to realize, **Oh**, that’s just his face. (p.46)

Besides using quotation marks and italic writing, Fey also uses interjections in carrying her emotion in the story. In excerpt [7] Fey is talking about his father's face which always has a stern expression that made her think his father would scold her. She realizes that the expression is indeed her father's face after all those years and shows surprise with the exclamation of *oh*. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, people use *oh* as a discourse marker to respond to new information or to indicate that he or she has just discovered something surprising. Using an interjection, Fey wants to emphasize her surprise emotion in her sentence. If she does not use the interjection, ‘*It took me years to realize that's just his face*’, the sentence will feel less emotional and impressed there is no surprise in her story.

In *Bossypants*, the researcher found emphatic stress features in the form of italic writing, the repetition of words, capital letters, exclamation marks, quotations, and interjections to emphasize the writer’s opinions and emotions and to mark some

phrases that have implied meaning. In addition, the researcher believes that Fey tends to use emphatic stress to be expressive in showing her emotion and feelings and make the readers understand her messages through the story.

### 3.3.1.3 Lexical Hedges or Fillers

Women's words tend to be considered provisional which is associated with the appearance of fillers and hedges. Lakoff (1975) said that women use more hedges because of the mindset that it is bad or not ladylike to assert themselves strongly. Quoted from Coates (2004), hedges are linguistic forms that express the speaker's certainty or uncertainty about the idea under discussion. Meanwhile, Holmes (2013) said that the exact function of pragmatic particles such as *anyway*, *well*, *you know*, *you see*, *you know*, *of course*, and *I think*, are difficult to define since it varies with context. Some researchers described hedges or fillers as 'boosters' when they have an assertive function or as tools to weaken the force of a statement.

In this study, Lexical Hedges and Fillers are found as much as 16,09% of the total data. These features are found in various situations and contexts of the sentences. Some of them are indicating doubt, whereas some of them are showing the sureness of the utterances of Tina Fey. First, the lexical hedges and fillers used by Fey indicate the uncertainty in her sentences are *I may*, *maybe*, *I guess*, *well*, *I think*, and *probably*. One of the examples is provided in the next paragraph.

[8] **I may** have only been seven or eight, but I knew that this sucked. The standard of beauty was set. (p.21)

Fey uses *I may* to express uncertainty in her statements. She is unsure about the exact age when she understood that there was a horrible beauty standard for



women. Although she is unsure about her age, she wants to give the readers a depiction of a little girl around of age. The unsureness in this sentence supports the storyline that this story happened a long time ago so Fey had already forgotten about the details.

Second, the lexical hedges are used in the context where Fey has confidence in her statements. *I'm sure*, *I'm pretty sure*, and *I believe* are the lexical hedges that signal certainty that are found in the data. In the same way, the fillers that emerge in the same context are *of course*, and *you see*. Next is an example of one of these.

[9] **I'm sure** there were one or two straight boys there, too, and I imagine they did incredibly well with the one or two straight girls. (p.40)

In [9] Fey talks about a male-only college dormitory filled with gay people and believes not all of the men in that college dormitory are gay. The use of *I'm sure* is for hedging the personal opinion of the writer but it also shows the certainty in her sentence. In that sentence, the statement of '*there were one or two straight boys there*' is an assumption but Fey is confident about the truth of it.

Moreover, in the data, the feature of lexical hedges and fillers are also marked with the particle such as *hmmm*, *kind of*, and *like*. The pause fillers like *umm*, *uh*, and *hmm* usually appear in a speech where the speaker needs a little time to think. However, the data analyzed in this study is a written text in which the fillers that were found are not used to give a pause to think because the writer got more time to think about what to write. Therefore, the researcher concluded that the use of fillers *hmmm*, *kind of*, *like* and *you know* in the book tends to soften the utterances produced by Tina Fey, as proved in the instance below.

[10] ... when my friend Ricky asked me, “Did they ever catch the black guy that did that to you?” **Hmmm.** It was not a black guy, Ricky, and I never said it was. (p.8)

In this context, Ricky, a friend of Fey, questions the perpetrator who injured the little Fey’s face and assumes that the perpetrator must be a black person. Fey responds to the question by giving pause fillers to make her statement smoother to convey because the topics discussed showed racial stereotypes that are quite sensitive to talk about. In her utterance, Fey seems certain and there is no doubt in her statement because she knows that what she said is a fact.

As Holmes demonstrates that hedges are multifunctional (cited in Coates: 2004), the use of the hedges in *Bossypants* not only indicates doubt and confidence in Fey’s utterances but also softens her sentences. Regarding the result data, Fey uses hedges to assert her sentences and to show certainty in her opinions which are marked with lexical hedges: *I’m pretty sure, I’m sure, and I believe*; and fillers: *of course* and *you see*. Fey uses these hedges and fillers as intensifiers in the context of giving her strong opinions and fact about something. In a different context, Fey shows her doubt with hedges: *I may, maybe, I guess, well, I think, and probably*. Fey also uses the fillers to soften sentences that may offend certain people in her story which is marked with *you know, hmmm, like* and *kind of*. This is in contrast with Lakoff’s (1975) theory where she claims that women’s use of hedges is related to a lack of confidence.

#### **3.3.1.4 Empty Adjectives**

There is a set of adjectives that the usage will reflect the user’s admiration or approval for something. These adjectives are called empty adjectives which have

the meaning that they only relate to the emotional reaction rather than certain information. Some of these adjectives such as *great*, *cool*, and *neat* are neutral where both males and females can use them. However, there are empty adjectives that are women only or usually used by women rather than men because of the feminine impression, such as *charming*, *adorable*, *sweet*, *divine*, *lovely*, and *cute*. If men use this kind of adjective, it tends to be damaging their reputation. (Lakoff, 1975). There were some empty adjectives found in the autobiographical book *Bossypants* by Tina Fey. The evidence can be seen in the following.

[11] A **sweet**, quiet girl with short curly hair and a face as Irish as a scone, Patty seemed to be the only person at the party who didn't realize what Brendan's deal was. (p.35)

Fey uses the word *sweet* in her sentence while describing a girl named Patty who was Brendan's girlfriend. Based on Collins Dictionary, describing someone as *sweet* means that they are pleasant, kind, and gentle towards other people. The use of the empty adjective *sweet* reflects Fey's emotion towards Patty. She likes Patty's personality so she describes her as a kind and plain person by using the word *sweet*.

Other empty adjectives employed by Fey in her autobiographical book are *great*, *good*, *terrific*, *beautiful*, and *awesome*. The function of an empty adjective is to express the speaker's emotion about something or someone. Fey uses empty adjectives to make her judgment of something not only informative but also more objective by relating her emotions. Lakoff (1975) suggests that the speaker's approbation or admiration can be indicated with empty adjectives.

Regarding Lakoff (1975), the application of empty adjectives is not attached to 'femininity', rather it indicates the 'uninvolvement' and 'out of power' in which

women are categorized into this group. Yet, Fey is a public figure who has power in society and her words can influence many people. Therefore, the use of empty adjectives only describes her emotions towards something and does not signify “out of power” in society as Lakoff said.

### 3.3.1.5 Hyper-Correct Grammar

This feature is identified by using grammar language correctly which includes avoiding harsh language, apologies, and using the correct verb form. According to Lakoff (1975), women are not expected to speak roughly so women like to use language correctly as the standard form. The use of the feature of hyper-correct grammar in *Bossypants* is 1,68 % out of the total data. The following is an instance of the hyper-correct grammar that is found in *Bossypants*.

[12] Don Fey is a Goldwater Republican, which is his only option. If you're Don Fey, you can't look at Joe Biden and be like, yes, I want to be led by this gentleman with the capped teeth... You certainly aren't interested in the “unresolved father issues” that rendered Bill Clinton unable to keep his fly closed. Don Fey **is not going to** put up with that. (p.49)

[13] Instead of trying to fit an impossible ideal, I took a personal inventory of all my healthy body parts for which **I am** grateful ... I **would not trade** any of these features for anybody else's. (p.25)

In quotation [12] Fey talks about her father, Don Fey, who is a Goldwater Republican. A Goldwater Republican is someone who believes in traditional conservative values of a smaller, constitutionally bound government. They support foreign policy but are indifferent to social issues and religious issues. Fey wants to emphasize her sentence about her father who could not stand social issues linked to politics. She uses the verb *is not going to* in standard form instead of used *isn't* or *ain't* and *gonna* or *goin' to*. By not abbreviating the verb in the sentence, Fey shows the intensifier *not* which emphasizes her utterance.

As well as in the excerpt [13], Fey also uses the standard form of the verb in her utterance by employing *would not* instead of *wouldn't* and *I am* instead of *I'm*. The use of this hyper-correct grammar also makes her negative sentence has more pressure with the use of intensifier *not*. In this excerpt [13], Fey wants to emphasize the important meaning of her sentence which she does not want to change her body parts because she is grateful for them even though they do not look perfect.

Even though the use of this feature is related to politeness, Fey uses hyper-correct grammar to show the intensity of her sentence and make the reader aware of the important meaning of her sentences. This is also unrelated to what Lakoff (1975) said that this feature is often used by women because generally women are seen as having a role as preservers of culture and literacy. On the other hand, since the data is in written form, it is considered to be more grammatically correct rather than in the spoken language. Hence, the use of this feature in the book *Bossypants* is unavoidable.

### **3.3.1.6 Avoidance of Strong Swear Word**

How women speak is influenced by how women are treated by society. Lakoff (1975) states that people tend to tolerate a man's anger yet people cannot accept the same tirade from a woman. Women tend to avoid strong swear words, so they usually choose expletive words such as, *oh dear*, *oh fudge*, *oh goodness* rather than using *shit* and *damn*. Regarding Holmes (2013), swear words have many different functions in different social contexts. They may express aggression, annoyance, and humiliation or they may express friendliness and solidarity.

In this study, Fey uses strong swear words and the avoidance of strong swear words in her book *Bossypants*. The researcher found that the use of strong expletives is more than the use of weak expletives. The weak expletive or the avoidance of strong swear words that appeared in the data are *Jesus*, *God Bless*, and *Oh, My God*. Next is one of the examples of the avoidance of strong swear words.

[14] In the background, scone-face Patty was quietly giving people coasters. **Jesus**, she was really not getting it. (p.37 )

In that situation, Patty is completely clueless about her boyfriend who is implicitly announcing himself as gay at the party which everyone, except Patty, knows about. Fey can not believe that Patty was actually so innocent and do not understand the situation and instead hands out coasters to people at the party. Fey uses *Jesus* as an expletive at the beginning of the sentence which can be interpreted as a statement of disbelief. In that context, the emotion that Fey wants to show is not strong enough, but she wants to emphasize her disbelieving emotion in the utterance to make the readers understand the context. Hence, the weaker expletive is used rather than the stronger one.

On the other hand, Fey also employs stronger expletives in her book. The strong expletives that were found are *shit*, *suck my dick*, *fuck*, *ass*, *bullshit*, *goddamn*, and *kickass*. The swear words appeared in this data are not in line with Lakoff's hypothesis (1975) in which women tend to avoid strong swear words and prefer to use weaker expletives. The researcher found that Fey both avoids and used strong swearing. Nevertheless, the frequency of strong swear words was found as many as twelve (12) utterances which is more than the weak expletive. The researcher assumed that her environment in the comedy industry that is dominated by men

influences Fey in using strong swear words. As proposed by Lakoff (1975) that the 'stronger' expletives are reserved for men. The fact that Fey is surrounded by more men makes it undeniable that she can also absorb men's language by using more harsh words than avoiding them when expressing strong emotions.

### 3.3.1.7 Precise Colour Term

Compared to men, women have more vocabulary about color. Those color words are aquamarine (greenish-blue color), mauve (a pale purple color), turquoise (cyanish-green color), mustard (a dull or dark yellow color), etc. According to Lakoff (1975), this kind of word is rarely or never used by men because defining color words is considered irrelevant to the real world and trivial. However, this vocabulary of color is usually used in some particular fields such as interior design. This characteristic was found in the data of this study in as many as two utterances.

[15] I slipped on my **pumpkin-coloured** swing coat with the Sojourner Truth button on it and headed to their grim location in Rogers Park. All the windows were covered, and you had to be buzzed in through two different doors. This place was not kidding around. (p.17)

[16] She's got that greasy-looking bowl cut and they make her wear **suntan** pantyhose under her football jersey nightshirt. (p.21)

In the example [15] Fey goes for her first gynecological check-up at Planned Parenthood, wearing a pumpkin-colored swing coat. The pumpkin color refers to the orange color of the pumpkin fruit. In this part, Fey explains the clothes she is wearing with the specific color word to give details of her cloth in that gloomy situation so the readers can imagine properly the situation that she faces. While in the example [16] Fey uses specific color terms in describing Joyce DeWitt's clothing which appeared in an American sitcom, *Three's Company*. In that example,

Fey wants to describe how bad Joyce's appearance on television which does not fulfill women's beauty standards at that time.

The use of the specific color term in the book *Bossypants* is to support the depiction of the situation in the story. According to Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003), the primary significance of color probably lies in its connections. In the data, the precise color terms are discovered in the clothing area or fashion. This feature is used by Fey to make a detailed depiction of the situation in her story.

### **3.3.1.8 Tag Question**

A tag question is to gain agreement from the interlocutor by adding a question in a statement. Tags may also be used as confrontational and coercive devices. The force in the use of the question tag is considered to be in the middle between a straight statement and a yes-no question. Lakoff (1975) says that women are the main users of tags and by using tags, they express their uncertainty.

In the data of this study, there is no tag question feature appeared. It leads to the confidence of Tina Fey in her book. In addition, tag question is also used to invite someone in a conversation. Meanwhile, *Bossypants* is an autobiographical book which the story is told in narrative discourse where the number of conversations is very limited. Thus, the feature of tag question that is usually used in a conversation is not found in this data.

### **3.3.1.9 Super Polite Form**

Women have an awareness that the way they speak is an indication of their image in society. The fact that society considers them polite is also approved by them. Consequently, they have their own way to make their speech sound more



polite and in line with the views of the community. To show politeness in their speech, women tend to use *would* or *could* to make requests rather than direct orders.

The researcher found zero utterances produced by Fey that contain super polite forms. This could be related to the use of informal language in the book which reduces the distance between the writer and the readers. Furthermore, there is no context or situation where Fey needs to show more politeness in her utterances.

### **3.3.2 The Function of Strong Swear Words**

The second question in this study discusses the function of strong swear words used by Tina Fey in *Bossypants* chapter one to six. In answering this question, the researcher analyzed the emergence of strong swear words according to Andersson-Trudgill's (1990) theory.

#### **3.3.2.1 Expletives**

Andersson and Trudgill (1990) opine that the expletive function type of swear word is a swear word that is spoken without being directed to others, yet only expressing personal feelings. This type of swear word function is generally experienced by speakers reflexively and is a kind of exclamatory interjection. In this research, the strong swear word that is identified as expletive swearing was found in one utterance.

[17] Richie Ashburn not being in the baseball hall of fame yet? **Bullshit.**  
(p.51)

Above is evidence of Fey's swearing utterance that functions as an expletive. Fey uses the swear word *bullshit* to express her denial of a statement. Fey knows that the name Richie Ashburn, a famous old baseball player, would already be in the baseball hall of fame, so she utters the swear word *bullshit* as an interjection

that did not refer to anyone. Regarding Collins Dictionary, *bullshit* can be defined as nonsense, lies, or exaggeration, and it is used to express disagreement. Fey uses the swear word *bullshit* because it can express the strong emotions of disbelief that she was feeling.

### **3.3.2.2 Abusive**

In contrast to expletive swearing which is directed to nobody, abusive swearing is used intended for a certain person. As its name, this function type of swear word is aim to abuse or harm the hearer. In this data study, abusive swearing appeared in one utterance produced by Fey.

[18] Anyway, I was walking home alone from school and I was wearing a dress. A dude drove by and yelled, "Nice tits." Embarrassed and enraged, I screamed after him, "**Suck my dick.**" Sure, it didn't make any sense, but at least I didn't hold in my anger. (p.15)

Based on the data above, when Fey is going home from school, she gets a cat-calling from a man who drove by. To respond to that, she utters the swear word *suck my dick* which is considered as a strong insult and has the meaning of 'screw you'. This strong swear word is directed at the man and Fey has no hesitation in saying it. As Fey says in that passage, she uses that swear word to release her anger.

### **3.3.2.3 Humorous**

The swearing type of humorous is often heard as abusive swearing, but it has the opposite function. The swear word that indicates as humorous swearing is also directed to certain people but is used to joke or make a playful situation in the speaker's speech. From twelve data of strong swear words, the researcher found that four data are identified as humorous swearing. The example is discussed next.

[19] That's Don Fey. He's just a **badass**. He was a code breaker in Korea. He was a fireman in Philadelphia. He's a skilled watercolorist. He's written two mystery novels. (p.48)

In the excerpt [19], Fey uses the swear word *badass* to describe Don Fey who is her father. The word *badass* is indeed considered a harsh word but not an insult but rather a funny and normal compliment. Regarding Collins Dictionary, *badass* can be used to describe something very good or impressive. Fey thinks that her father is an impressive human being who can do many marvelous things, so she labels her father as a *badass*.

#### 3.3.2.4 Auxiliary

Auxiliary swearing is used as just an auxiliary which is not as a joke or even an insult to people or an expletive. It is also used to give more emphasis in speech. This emphasis is specifically seen in the speaker's choice to use swear words in place of certain words in an utterance. The use of swear words is also influenced by feelings or emotions that are not always specific to the other person but also an event. From the data, the researcher identified six of them as auxiliary swearing. An example of this type of function can be seen below.

[20] Almost everyone first realized they were becoming a grown woman when some dude did something nasty to them. "I was walking home from ballet and a guy in a car yelled, 'Lick me!'" "I was babysitting my younger cousins when a guy drove by and yelled, 'Nice ass.'" ... It was mostly men yelling **shit** from cars. (p.15)

The use of the word *shit* which appears in Fey's utterance, in the excerpt [20], functions as a substitute for the cat-calling words uttered by men. Fey's decision to change vocabulary using swear words here is because she wants to express and

emphasize the expression of annoyance that she felt. The replacement of vocabulary here can strengthen or emphasize the expression that the speaker feels.

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the researcher presents the conclusions obtained from conducting the research that has been described in the previous chapter. First, after analyzing the data from *Bossypants* by Tina Fey using Lakoff's (1975) theory of Women's Language Features, the writer found that there are seven out of nine women's language features uttered by Fey. Based on the most used to the least used features, those seven features are intensifiers (146 utterances), emphatic stress (72 utterances), lexical hedges and fillers (52 utterances), empty adjectives (16 utterances), hyper-correct grammar (5 utterances), avoidance of strong swear words (3 utterances), and precise color terms (2 utterances). While the two absent features of women's language are the question tag and super polite form. In short, there are 296 total data identified as women's language features.

Other than that, the most dominant feature is intensifiers which appear in almost half of the total data. The use of intensifiers as boosters or strengthen sentences is related to the confidence of Tina Fey in delivering her story which is about her life and came from herself. On the other side, the question tag and super polite form features are not discovered in the data. The researcher assumed that the confidence in Tina Fey in her story also lead to the absence of question tag features. Meanwhile, the absence of the super polite form feature is affected by the context and the use of informal language in the book.

In addition, the other features found in the data show their distinctions with Lakoff's (1975) theory. The emphatic stress which is the second dominant feature

is used to emphasize words to express Fey's emotions and also used to mark words that have implied meaning. Next, the lexical hedges or fillers uttered by Fey has different function based on the context of the sentences. They can indicate doubt or certainty and can soften the utterances of Tina Fey. Then, although the empty adjectives appear in the data and indicate Fey's emotion towards something, this does not signify the "out of power" in society, because Fey is a well-known public figure who has the power to influence society through her works. In addition, the finding of hyper-correct grammar is unpreventable because the form of the data object is in the written text. The precise color term is also found in Fey utterances to be used to describe things in a particular field which is clothes color. Then, even though Tina Fey uses weak expletives which indicated the avoidance of strong swears words, the researcher also found the application of strong swears words in her book.

Second, the use of strong swear words is one the obvious evidence from the contrast of the women's language features. The researcher identified the words that are categorized as strong swear words and discovered twelve (12) strong swear words uttered by Tina Fey in the data. These swear words were classified into four functions of swear words by Andersson and Trudgill (1990). There are four (4) strong swear words has function as humorous, six (6) as auxiliary, one (1) as expletives, and one (1) as abusive. Mostly the use of strong swear words functions as an auxiliary which means that they are used to emphasize Fey's utterances and contain Fey's emotions. While the humorous function of swear words was predicted

to exist because Fey is a comedian and was a comedy writer in a TV show. Therefore, she uses humor in conveying her story in *Bossypants*,

In the end, the application of Lakoff's (1975) women's language features in analyzing nowadays literature, which is *Bossypants* (2011) in this study, shows the divergence in language use. Moreover, the researcher believes that these divergences are influenced by the confidence of Tina Fey and also the perspective on language use in society. The difference in language perspective can be seen from the application of strong swear words by women. In Lakoff's era, it is considered inappropriate, whereas nowadays both women and men can use strong swear words to express their feelings and it is considered a normal thing even used by women. In addition, this matter is also related to the different views of gender roles. At that time, most women were only in charge of taking care of the household and were considered incapable of doing work outside the home. While Tina Fey has a brilliant career in the entertainment industry and she even became the first head writer on a comedy TV Show in the USA. It can be summarized that the Lakoff standard of women's language (1975) is inapplicable in today's language because there is a change of gender roles in society which caused the transition in language use.

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