

Chapter I : Introduction

Background of Research

Language is a very important tool for everyone in communicating. Without language people will find it difficult to socialize with others, for example if we are going abroad, we need the ability of speaking English to be able to communicate with people there. There are many facilities that we can use to learn English language, whether we can take the English course or studying in English department. One of the universities in Gorontalo provides English language as one of the majors that is Gorontalo state university. The students in this English department learn English language as the first foreign language, but the researcher will just focus on female students only.

Woman as described by Hornby (1989) in Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary is an adult female human being or female sex. It is believed that females are talkative and like gossiping. Moreover, it seems that any kind of topic would be an interesting topic to be told and shared, for example women spend a chunk of their day discussing who is dating who, shopping, TV shows, and diets (Pillai, 2014). As stated by Coates (2004,) that "If three women gather together, it will become clamorous".

In the other side Female tends to have more attention in grammar, they will consider with the structure of their sentence before they express it. For them, grammar in language spoken is also important. Holmes (2013) said that in hypercorrect grammar people consistent use of standard verb forms. So from the

case above, it can be included as one of the female language features is called hypercorrect grammar.

Even though Holmes (2003) said that one of female's features is hyper correct grammar, in fact that sometimes female students also speak ungrammatical sentence based on the result of this research from the observation in the classroom. It is happening because students just focusing on how they speak English as good as possible without considering the grammar. Furthermore there are some factors that influenced such as nervous, less of practice or lack of vocabulary. Students choose to use English without pay attention on the grammar first, because it is better than just spend all the time in the front of class with silent.

Moreover, another language features are hedges and filler. Sometimes female and male students are not realizing if they produce hedges. Female are also claimed to have less confidence to talk than male because female are powerless. Lakoff (1973) argues that female is generally lacking status in society because they are more subordinate than male. Therefore, female are more aware of the way they talk by hedging and boosting their utterance to attract the addressee's attention.

Hedges is a word or phrase that shows people uncertain during the conversation or when they are not sure, hedges are created. Lakoff (1973) names several words and phrases, *such as maybe, sort of, you know, and I mean*, for example of hedges in conversation that the researcher finds on the field like you know, you have something on your hair. The hedges are not only to describe the

uncertain but also can make the conversation less direct. From that sentence we can just say you have something on your hair. Holmes (2003) includes pauses and hesitations like *eehm,,,,*, *umm,,,,*, and *eeh,,,,*, in the category of hedges as “pause fillers”. Some of female’s features also that have been identified based on Lakoff (1973) females tend to use super polite forms for example would you please...*I’d really appreciate it if....*, and empty adjective such as, *charming, sweet, adorable*.

Actually this phenomenon has been discussed and debated for several years ago. This research refers to sociolinguistic; sociolinguistic is a part of linguistic that research about language and society. Sociolinguistic have several focus research and one of them is Language and Gender. The relation between language and gender has become one of the major issue in sociolinguistic since early 1970s. According to Fachun Zang (2010) in his journal, there is no doubt that studies in this field will do good for male and female to understand each other, providing basis for establishing harmonious interpersonal relationship. Gender is not determined biologically, as a result of sexual characteristics of male and female, but it is constructed socially. What’s more, gender roles are learned and can be affected by factors such as education or economics. To be brief, while an individual’s sex does not change, his or her gender roles are socially determined and can change over time.

Regarding the general stereotypes of women above, the researcher is interested to conducting the research about language features especially for female students in English Department based on lakoff theory that female’s speech was characterized by 10 language features. There are *lexical hedges, tag question,*

rising intonation, empty adjective, precise color, intensifier, hypercorrect grammar, super polite forms, avoidance of strong swear word and emphatic stress.

The important thing from this research is the researcher only wants to proof or to apply the theory from Robin Lakoff about the Ten Language Features of Female on the female student in English department. The researcher chooses this topic to find what kind of language features used by female students in English department. So the researcher carries out this research entitled “The stereotype of Language Features used by Female Students in English Department”.

Research Question

The researcher gives some aspect to make this research more specific. The specific aspect of this research is:

What are the stereotypes of language features used by female students in English Department?

Objective of research

In writing this research, the researcher has objectives of the research follows:

To describe the stereotypes of language features used by female students in English Department

Focus of Research

In this research the researcher intends to explain more about the research which is analyzed by the researcher. To make clear the researcher will not discuss all of the area of research, there will be only some of point to explain. Here the researcher emphasizes about language features on female students based on Lakoff's (1973) theory about female language features those are lexical hedges, tag question, rising intonation, empty adjective, precise color, intensifier, hypercorrect grammar, super polite forms, avoidance of strong swear word and emphatic stress that used by students in English Department at fourth semester.

Benefit of the Research

Theoretically, the researcher hopes that the results of this research can give some knowledge to students who will take on the same topic in this research about what language features are and the features that used by female students in the English department as well as the factors of using the language features by female student in English department. This research is also expected can provide some contribution in the development of learning sociolinguistic in theoretically.

Practically, this research is expected to gives an inspiration to the lecturer to find and use appropriate methods to students in the classroom especially on learning speaking. The last is the research can be used as consideration to open up people mind and their judgment about gender especially in the different language features on males and females based on scientific reason.