

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I will draw some conclusion based on my findings in the previous chapter. By using sociolinguistic approach, I realize that observing the way people use language in different contexts can give information about how language works, the relationship between the speaker and the listener, and how they indicate their social identity through their language, including their gender, profession, and educational status.

From the two films, I find that men and women obviously have different ways of talking. What is more, the major female characters in both films show some deviations from the conventional women's language. They use some masculine speech styles in their speech.

While analyzing the films, I find some similarities between the two films. Both of the main female characters are governmental officers who are surrounded by male colleagues. The nature of their duties requires them to speak briefly, clearly, and effectively. This influences their speech style and it results in the deviation of what Hart calls 'women's language'. The analysis shows that the main

female characters deviate from feminine speech styles more frequently than conforming them.

Both characters, Gracie Hart and Jordan O'Neil, do not often use 'empty' adjectives but prefer to use ordinary adjectives which they use in daily conversation. Although the 'empty' adjectives may have the same meaning as the ordinary ones, sometimes they have a slightly different meaning and may yield different connotation. Moreover, they hardly use the emphatic stress, and especially not on the adjectives. They mainly stress the nouns or the verbs, not the adjectives. Due to the fact that they rarely stress any words, they also rarely use intensifiers which are used to strengthen the meaning of the word; thus, I do not find any deviation of the use of intensifiers. In addition, I find that O'Neil even does not use emphatic stress and intensifier in her utterances.

In both of the main female characters' utterances, I find that they seldom use 'superpolite' forms which appear in the form of indirect requests or euphemisms. On the contrary, they mostly prefer using direct requests and never use any euphemisms. As a consequence, I conclude that the nature of their professions requires them to speak briefly, clearly, effectively, and straight to the point. What is more, their speech is also influenced by their professional environment which is dominated by male colleagues who are used to using slang or colloquial expressions. The use of slang can be seen from *chip-faced* or *hooyah*.

Out of Lakoff's ten special features of feminine speech styles, I find that the main female characters do not use the precise color terms nor tag questions. They mostly sound assertive and confident. That is why I believe they do not need

to use the tag questions to request for confirmation of their statements and seldom use lexical hedges. Their self-confidence is also expressed in their use of falling intonation.

In my discussion, I deliberately avoid to discuss the use of 'hypercorrect' grammar, because there is no clear information about what it actually is. I have tried to search in many sources, but they have different interpretations and examples. Therefore, I decide not to discuss 'hypercorrect' grammar.

I also find that the main female characters cannot avoid the use of swearwords when they get annoyed, angry, or surprised. However, the choice of swearwords can be different, depending on the situation. This can be seen from Hart's swearwords. When she is still a female FBI agent, she uses *bastards* or *asshole*, but when, when she becomes a beauty pageant contestant, she changes her swearword into *Jesus Christ*, an expression which she uses when she is surprised.

Besides these similarities, the two films also have some differences. At the beginning of Miss Congeniality, the main female character, Gracie Hart, deviates from Lakoff's theory about the special features of feminine speech style. Then she changes her speech style in order to work undercover as a beauty pageant contestant and catch a terrorist. Besides the fact that the nature of her duties means that she is required to speak clearly and briefly, Hart lives in an environment which does not consider her as being a woman. Even her attitude is more like that of a man's. That is why she has a different speech style and is used to speaking spontaneously, especially when she is in a hurry or is facing a critical situation.

Different from Miss Congeniality, at the beginning of G.I. Jane the main female character, Jordan O'Neil, a topographic analyst, has speech style that conform to Lakoff's feminine speech styles and conventional women's language. She uses the deviated style of women's language after she becomes the first female soldier to counter the male soldiers' prejudice that women are both physically and mentally weaker than men. She even uses very strong swearwords, such as *suck my dick*, and gains new respect from the male soldiers by using such language.

In analyzing the reason for the two female characters' use of certain speech styles, I use Holmes' four social factors, which consist of participants, setting, topic, and function. These social factors normally play important roles in a person's language choice. After analyzing the films, I find that there are two most dominant social factors in the female leading characters' language choice. They are participant and function.

In these two films, the participant factor affects most of the speaker's speech style. Hart and O'Neil use different speech styles when they talk to their superior than when they talk to their friends. Yet, they change their speech style when they talk to everybody by time their relationship getting closer. Function, in addition, is also the most influential factor in the characters' language choice. I believe that both women want to show something through their utterances.

Setting plays quite an important role in their language choice as well. It can be seen from Hart, who uses the 'superpolite' form when she talks in front of many viewers on the stage when she is working undercover as Miss New Jersey in

the beauty pageant. O'Neil also speaks with the 'superpolite' form when she talks to Harper, her boyfriend, at the office.

However, topic does not affect too much why the female main characters choose the certain speech styles.

In my opinion, Lakoff's theory about the special features in 'women's language' can express women's speech style in general. However, on the grounds that their professions are commonly done by men and that they are surrounded by men, the speech styles of the main female characters in both films are strongly influenced.

In my opinion, it is not only the social factors mentioned by Holmes which affect a speaker's language choice. I believe that the speaker's psychological state plays a very significant role in his or her language choice, such as feeling nervous, angry, or upset. This is what I often find in the films. I relate this with one of Holmes' four social factors, namely function.