

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Many kinds of researches show that the topic of language and gender is one of the most exciting issues to discuss. According to WHO (2020), gender refers to the roles, behaviors, activities, attributes, and opportunities that are considered suitable by society for women and men. Holmes (2013) believed socio-cultural behavior, which includes speech, is what based gender. Speech and social behavior will usually continue to interact, and when talking about gender issues, it is related to men and women. Furthermore, studying men's and women's talk has been the obsession of sociolinguistics research. Language is a product of the different ways of speaking that is used according to social contexts. Language is a powerful influence that affects the way people see in society, such as the way we think and behave. That also gives reasons for why and how women and men speak differently (J. Holmes 2006).

Nowadays, women use their standard language more than men. Hence, the vocabulary of women is distinct from that of men. Holmes (2013) stated that women prefer to use standards forms of speech in contrast to men who prefer more vernacular forms. The differences in the way they use language also can be seen based on their linguistic attitudes in society. Wolfram (1969), quoted in Vasko (2007) notes that women are more sensitive than men to social evaluation and assessment of linguistic characteristics, which is why they tend to choose more socially prestigious speech forms. According to Lakoff (1975) via Coates

(2013), women tend to be more polite than men. Women can gain higher status by using standard forms in comparable situations, hence why they speak politely. Holmes (1995) points out that women have used more standard forms for four reasons. It includes the desire to appeal to the social class and its associated status, women's status as a subordinate group, the role of women in society, and the function of speech that expresses masculinity. Moreover, in a specific situation, women are expected to use standard forms and speak with politeness depending on their society. Women are always seen as better influencers because they use more innovative language in their linguistic features.

Women's and men's different linguistic attitude reflects on their social status and power differences. The differences in linguistic attitudes used by women and men affect the portrayal of their different roles in society. In society, men's hierarchy is usually seen as higher as and more powerful than women's. People expect women to work as secretaries, for example, while men work as managers and executives. We often consider men to be more focused and task-oriented in their jobs, whereas women are more involved and worried about their interaction with others at jobs. Women are often seen to have a function as household workers, mothers, and their assigned place is at home. Meanwhile, the role of men is to provide and protect their families and be at their workplaces. Therefore, because of their perceived inferiority, women have to face disadvantages when placed in the workplace (Holmes, 2013).

Merchant (2012) points out that the gap between the "new" women, who struggle to fulfill their personalities and the older generation shows women's right

movement's first wave, which lasts until 1920. Elizabeth Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Lecretia Mott, and Lucy Stone are some of the most significant leaders of feminism in the United States during its first wave. Around this time, women started to understand that getting a job and raising a family was not necessarily incompatible, and thus they continue to question the conventional role of women. Women began to get tertiary education at public universities. Each leader of the women's rights movement contributes to the status and role of in several ways. One outcome of the women's rights movement is the right to vote, which gave women political equality. In some cases, the aim was not only for women to have equality but also for freedom. This freedom provides a voice to the gender of women as distinct and separate from that of men, demonstrating that women and men are two different classes who perceive, interact, impact and rule in various ways.

On the grounds of this phenomenon, it demonstrates that women have gained some of the gender equality that they are striving for, granting them the same privileges of power and influence than men have. The ability of women to receive some of the gender equality they demand gives women the strength that they need to struggle for more freedom and fairness in the society where they are treated only as less than men.

Increased self-confidence drove women to abandon their role as domestic workers and mothers, as well as the portrayal of men who as heads of the household working for their families. Women and men have their own language in society. Women tend to use more standard form than men, and men use more

vernacular language (Holmes 2013). Their language differences determine their position of status or roles in society. However, how gender is expressed typically entails the inclusion of women in a language, which is why it became an important topic. The decision to choose any features in women's speech carries profound meaning in the conversation, depending on the social context. For example, the conversation between women and men was seen to reflect that of other relationships in society.

The relationship between the child and the parent is one of the examples. Coates, in her book *Women, Men and Language* (2013), states that women's linguistic attitudes are used by society in the way they teach using general language and how general language treats women. Language treats women can be seen through several phenomena. One of them is from childhood, women are taught to speak politely like 'lady', meaning they have a good linguistic attitude to talk like women in general, like speaking in a soft tone or not using abusive language. The using of linguistic attitude in women's speech can be seen in gender and conversational strategies by Coates (2013) which can be used for analyzed women's linguistic features.

Thus, the writer is interested in conducting a study examining the relationship between language and gender. The writer also intends to explore how the linguistic features used by women reflect their language, especially in the community, when they talk to their friends, family, or strangers based on social factors. This study also investigate what is the most frequent of women's linguistic features used by one main and four supporting female characters in the

conversation. Furthermore, by studying the women's linguistic features, the writer hopes for women to find gender equality from the results of this study with seeing the phenomena related to social factors that is increasingly developing during this modern age.

There are several ways to conduct the study of women's linguistic features. The writer chooses to analyze a character in a movie. Movies can teach its viewers how to talk and how to think. The writer uses a qualitative method, which is appropriate for studying things in natural settings and interpreting the meaning that people perceive in certain phenomena. Kozloff (2000) stated that dialogue or conversation is often the first place we must understand how to reflect social prejudice. Therefore, the writer chooses a romantic-comedy movie entitled *Crazy Rich Asians* (2018) to be analyzed. Specifically, the writer analyzes the main and supporting female character as the objects of the analysis. Warner Bros. Pictures *Crazy Rich Asians* (2018) released on 15 August 2018 has received many awards. Many of which include the 76th Golden Globe Awards nominate this movie for Best Motion Picture – Musical or Comedy.

The use of linguistics features in gender conversational strategies used by women's language can be seen in the *Crazy Rich Asians* movie. According to Castillo (2018), *Crazy Rich Asian* movie is directed by famous director Jon M. Chu, is the first Hollywood film in which the majority of actors are Asian or Asian–American. *Crazy Rich Asians* movie shows the culture of one of the wealthiest Asian- Singaporean with old believes that parents know best. However, *Crazy Rich Asians* movie also tells the story about powerful women, such as

Eleanor Young and Astrid. Eleanor Young is portrayed to be someone who cannot tolerate Asian discrimination. Eleanor uses her money and wealth as a weapon to face anti-Asian bigotry back since Nick was a child. For Astrid, she took full advantage of her economic position against her cheating husband, which was empowering moves for many women.

The theory of Lakoff (1975) as cited in Holmes (2013) is an essential study of the different use of language between women and men. Lakoff suggested that ten linguistic features can be the characteristic of the speech uttered by women. The principle of Lakoff (1975) is the oldest hypothesis of women's language. Many scholars have offered various viewpoints on women's language. It has led to a reconstruction of the theory, one of which is the Coates theory (2013) in her book *Women, Men, and Language* in gender and conversational strategies. According to Coates (2013), gender and conversational strategies explore the way of women and men characteristically on different strategies in conversational interaction. Therefore, this study is focus on women's language through linguistic features in gender and conversational strategies. Coates (2013) mentions there are seven features which are used for analyzed women's linguistic features, such as, minimal responses, hedges, tag questions, questions, commands and directives, swearing and taboo language, and compliments. This theory used to analyze the women's linguistic features in *Crazy Rich Asians* movie.

Several studies were conducted previous to this research, which explored the usage of women's linguistic features. Megasari (2017) did a study entitled *An Analysis of Women's Linguistics Features used by Rita O'Grady in "Made in*

Dagenham" Movie by Lakoff (1975). It investigated linguistic features used by women that Rita O'Grady used and their frequencies throughout *Made in Dagenham* movie and the social factors possibly affecting Rita O'Grady's use of women's linguistic features throughout *Made in Dagenham* movie. The study found that there are eight spoken women's linguistic features. It also investigated the frequencies of linguistic features of women used by the female character along with the social factors which affect the use of those linguistic features.

Another research was done by Sidabutar (2017), called *Comparison of Linguistic Features Used by The Main Characters in Ghostbusters 1984 and Ghostbusters 2016*. The theories of Lakoff (1975) about linguistic variations between women and men were taken into consideration as the core principle of this study. Coates' (1996) theory was also used as a supporting theory. She looked and contrasted the linguistic features of the conversation between the male leads of *Ghostbusters 1984* and female leads of *Ghostbusters 2016*. The study states that nine out of ten linguistic features were found in the 1984 *Ghostbusters* and 2016 *Ghostbusters*

Last, Murti's *An Analysis of Women's Language Features Used by Mia in The Princess Diaries Movie* (2018) examines the linguistic features of women. She studied the woman language features on the bases of Lakoff's theory used in *The Princess Diaries* film by the main character, Mia, along with the function of each of the features Mia used in *The Princess Diaries* film. The study believes that eight out of the ten linguistic features were used in the movie. She also identified the five functions of women's linguistic features that Mia used.

This study is similar to previous studies in terms of the main topic used in the research. Among those three previous studies, none of them discusses gender roles. Those several studies focus more on types, yet little research is conducted addressing women's language features and the function used in women's linguistic features. However, the object used by the writer is different from the other studies. This study aims to analyze the women's linguistic features used by the one main character, Rachel Chu, and four supporting female characters, which are Eleanor Sung-Young, Astrid Leong-Teo, Amanda "Mandy" Ling and Goh Peik Lin. The theory used in this study is proposed by Coates (2013) in gender and conversational strategies used for analyze women's linguistic features relate to the social factors by Holmes (2013). This study also investigates the most frequent of women's linguistic features used by one main and four supporting female characters in *Crazy Rich Asian* movie (2018).

1.2 Research Problems

Based on the background of the study, the research questions are formulated as follows:

1. What are the women's linguistic features used by the main and supporting female characters in the *Crazy Rich Asian* movie based on Coates' (2013)?
2. What is the most frequent linguistic features used by main and supporting female characters *Crazy Rich Asian* movie?

1.3 Objectives of the study

- 1 To identify the women's linguistic features used by the main and supporting female characters in the *Crazy Rich Asian* film based on Coates' (2013).
- 2 To investigate the most frequent linguistic features used by main and supporting female characters in *Crazy Rich Asians* movie.

1.4 Significance of the study

The writer expects to contribute significantly, both theoretically and practically. This study aims to identify the linguistic characteristics of women used by the main and supporting female characters in *Crazy Rich Asians* (2018). Moreover, this study seeks to find out the most frequent of women's linguistic features used by the one main and four supporting female characters. Also, the writer intends to explore women's linguistic features by Coates' (2013). First, in terms of theoretical function, it is hoped that this study will enrich the literature of sociolinguistic on the types of women's linguistic features in gender conversational strategies by Coates (2013). The writer also hopes that this study will be beneficial for the next researchers who are interested in conducting the study with the same topic as a reference. Second, the practical significance of this study is that the result of this study can be used by women nowadays as a reference and source of knowledge about language and gender in society, especially in the women's language.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

1. Language and Gender : Gender is appropriate for distinguishing people, including speech, from their socio - cultural behaviors. Women and men have their own linguistic forms in their own linguistic behavior (J. Holmes 2013)
2. Women's Linguistic Features : The aspect of speech in characteristics of women's language in conversational interaction following the aspects of linguistic features in conversational practice (Coates 2013)
3. Social Factor : Language choices apply to the users of the language, such as the speakers, social environment, context, and function of the interaction in the conversation (J. Holmes 2013)
4. *Crazy Rich Asian* : The romantic comedy movie based on a bestseller novel, which tells the story of New Yorker, Rachel Chu,

who goes to Singapore, meeting her
boyfriend's wealthy family (IMDb
2018)