LINGUISTIC FEATURES OF WOMEN IN PUBLIC LECTURE SETTINGS

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Abstract

Women and men, in some ways, apply different strategies to convey information in a conversation. Such difference may represent their position or social status in society. This happens because women are considered to have no strength in society, so their viewpoints are often discarded and irrelevant due to the powerless figure of women. However, in today's society, the presence of women who hold important and powerful positions is more widespread and prominent. Hence, this research aims to analyze women's language features based on Lakoff's theory in giving a public lecture '*Hanbando Jongsewa Gellobol Wegyo*' (한반도 정세와 글로벌 외교/ Korean Peninsula Situation and Global Diplomacy) delivered by Minister Kang Kyung Hwa. This research applied a descriptive qualitative method. Data analysis techniques comprised data collection, reduction, presentation, and conclusion. The results revealed that five features appeared more prominently than the others. The five features were lexical hedges or fillers, intensifiers, hypercorrect grammar, super polite forms, and emphatic stress. These features were closely related to Kang's choice of words during a public lecture in her position as the Korean minister of foreign affairs. Such a position made her try to avoid making mistakes in making public statements.

Keywords: Gender; language features; public lecture; women

INTRODUCTION

The study about the relationship between language and gender has existed since 1960, as stated by Coates (1997), Hall & Bucholtz (1995), Johnson & Meinhof (1997), dan Tannen (1994) as cited in Hornberger & McKay (2010, p. 370), which leads to the conclusion that the purpose either man or woman in using the language is to build their identity and to negotiate their social relationships. However, how men and women speak or communicate is quite different, influenced by their social and cultural factors (Holmes, 2013, p. 159). The phenomenon of gender language in use also has been studied by Lakoff. Lakoff (2004) discovered that men's language is usually described as more mature, firm, and straightforward. Meanwhile, women are described with the opposite of men's language, namely, not assertive, so they often use figurative words that are not straightforward, are too careful in speaking, and often use more subtle and polite words. Furthermore, Lakoff stated that the study about men's and women's language shows gender inequality; men are always better than women, and men dominate almost all aspects of life.

However, nowadays, women have gained a better position in society and even have similar opportunities in terms of jobs, social status, and political status. More women are now interested and involved in the world of politics. Political power can be achieved through the means of language. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a strong relationship between language, gender, and power.

This study aimed to discover the women's language features that were used by one of the most powerful women in Korea, Kang Kyung Hwang (Korean Minister of Foreign Affairs, period 2017-2021)

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in the public lecture settings entitled '*Hanbando Jongsewa Gellobol Wegyo'* (한반도 정세와 글로벌 외교/ The situation on the Korean Peninsula and global diplomacy) during her visit to Ewha Woman University in 2018. She is the first female minister under the cabinet of President Moon Jae In. She also had a high position in the United Nations.

Lakoff raised the most popular theory about the difference between men's and women's language (2004) in his book *Language and Woman's Place*. Lakoff (in Holmes, 2013) categorized women's language features into ten categories, namely: 1) lexical hedges or fillers (could, might, may, or, I think, I guess, sort of; 2) tag question ("John is here, isn't he?"); 3) rising intonation on declarative; 4) empty adjectives; 5) precise color terms; 6) intensifiers; 7) hypercorrect grammar; 8) superpolite forms; 9) avoidance of strong swear words; and 10) emphatic stress.
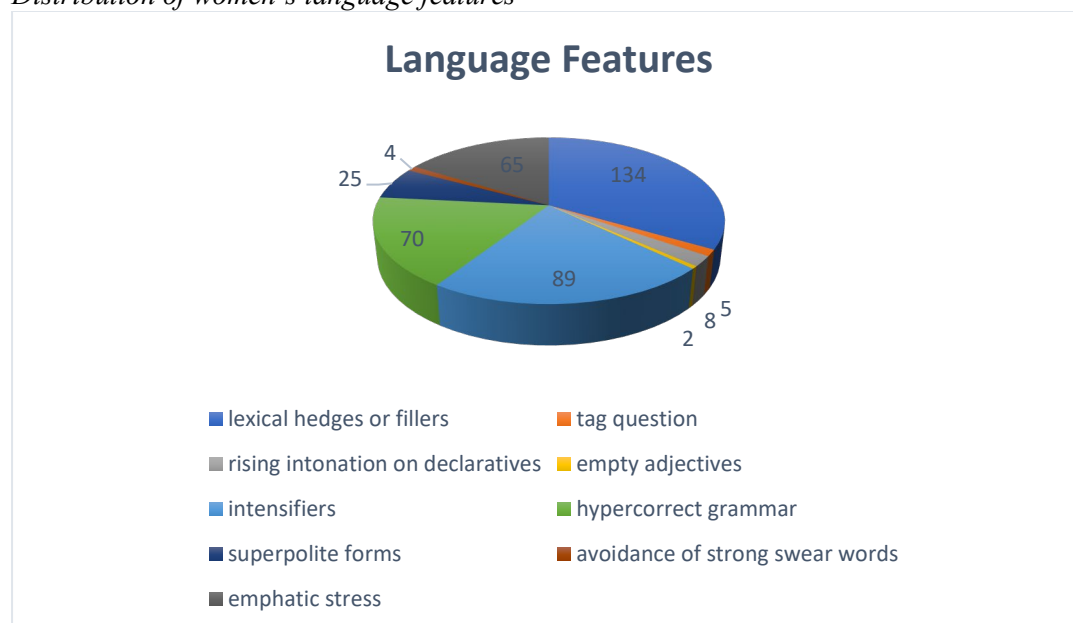
METHODS

This study is descriptive qualitative research. The data is taken from Kang Kyung Hwa's speech that was uploaded in the Ewha Womans University's YouTube on 11 April 2018 (duration 1:00:03) entitled "*[ihwayeodae] gang-gyeonghwa oegyobu jang-gwan teuggang, 'hanbando jeongsewa geullobeol wegyo*'" "[이화여대] 강경화 외교부 장관 특강, '한반도 정세와 글로벌 외교"/["Ewha Womans University] Special Lecture by Minister of Foreign Affairs Kang Kyung-Hwa, '*Situation on the Korean Peninsula and Global Diplomacy*'". Miles and Huberman's theory (2014) is used to analyze the data through data reduction, data presentation, conclusion, and verification. The speech was categorized into Lakoff 's language features, and each feature was further described using CDA.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The total data in Kang Kyung Hwa's speech are 402, and only nine out of ten language features of Lakoff appear in the speech. However, the result shows that four out of nine language features are dominantly present in the data, namely 134 data on lexical hedges or fillers, 89 data on intensifiers, 70 data on hypercorrect grammar, and 65 data on emphatic stress. The data can be seen in the following diagram:

Figure 1
Distribution of women's language features

Lexical Hedges or Fillers (LH)

Lakoff (in Holmes, 2013, p. 304) stated that the use of hedges, such as, well, you know, seems, I think, perhaps, you see, sort of, or the use of fillers, such as, ah, uh, um by women is indicated as uncertainty, to appear more polite, to make the speaker believe in the statements she makes so that it can attract the attention of the listener, and to be an opening for statements and questions. Using fillers as the pause is the thinking process to avoid making mistakes in the speech. This is the most dominant feature throughout the speech (134 data). Here are three examples of using lexical hedges or fillers in Kang's speech.

1) Data No. 61 / 00.15.51

외교는 (ES) 상대의 마음을 얻는 일이라고 **생각합니다 (LH).**

oegyoneun (ES) sangdaeui ma-eum-eul eodneun il-ilago **saeng-gaghabnida (LH).**
"I think (LH) that diplomacy is about winning the hearts of others."

The context of the sentence in data 61 is when Kang Kyung Hwa explained the definition of the right diplomacy according to her own opinion. She used the lexical hedges feature **"생각합니다"** **saeng-gaghabnida or** *"I think"* to appear more polite

2) Data No. 68 / 00.19.14

그래서 **그.. (LH)** 저대표성의 문제를 해결하는 데 있어서는일단 **그.. (LH)** 임명권자에 그러한 끊임없는 정치적 의지, 그리고 그것을 뒷받침해 줄 수 있는 정책적인 그런 조치들이 많이 필요하다고 **생각합니다 (LH).**

geulaeseo **geu.. (LH)** jeodaepyoseong-ui munjeleul haegyeolhaneun de iss-eoseoneun ildan **geu.. (LH)** immyeong-gwonja-e geuleohan kkeunh-im-eobsneun jeongchijeog uiji, geuligo geugeos-eul dwisbadchimhae jul su issneun jeongchaegjeog-in geuleon jochideul-i manh-i pil-yohadago **saeng-gaghabnida (LH).**
"So**..uh.. (LH)** In order to solve the problem of low representation, **I think (LH)** that **..uh.. (LH)** the appointee needs such constant political will and a lot of such policy measures to support it".

The context of the sentence in data 68 is when Kang Kyung Hwa discussed the low proportion of women involved in public matters such as politics and their role in the world's position. She used lexical hedges *hedges* **"생각합니다" saeng-gaghabnida or** *"I think"* to make the listener believe to her statement and *fillers* **"그.."geu or "uh"** to avoid making mistakes**.**

3) Data No. 88 / 00.27.00

그리고 그 독특함에는 그야말로 (INT) 그냥 어떤 순수함이있고 **어… (LH)** 그렇게 그런 게 이제 세계 여러 나라한테국민들한테 appeal 하는 게 아닌가 (RID) 그래서 저도 솔직히 한류가 맨 처음에 들 땐 "**아 (LH)** 이거 일시적인거다이거 유행처럼 사라질 거다 이렇게 생각했는데 **이.. (LH)** 저기 지속 가능한 우리만의 그런 어떤 독특함이 그 안에 분명히 (INT) 담겨있는 **것 같습니다 (LH).**

geuligo geu dogteugham-eneun geuyamallo (INT) geunyang eotteon sunsuham-i issgo **eo… (LH)** geuleohge geuleon ge ije segye yeoleo nalahante gugmindeulhante appeal haneun ge aninga (RID) geulaeseo jeodo soljighi hanlyuga maen cheoeum-e deul ttaen **"a… (LH)** igeo ilsijeog-ingeoda igeo yuhaengcheoleom salajil geoda ileohge saeng-gaghaessneunde **i.. (LH)** jeogi jisog ganeunghan uliman-ui geuleon eotteon dogteugham-i geu an-e bunmyeonghi (INT) damgyeoissneun **geos gatseubnida (LH).**
"And in its uniqueness, there is just a certain innocence and **uh… (LH)** Isn't that kind of thing now appealing to the people of many countries around the world (RID) So, to be honest, when I first heard the Korean Wave, I was like, **"Ah (LH)** This is temporary, this is going to disappear like a fad, but I thought this**.. (LH)** There **seems (LH)** to be a certain (INT) uniqueness of us

that is sustainable there."

The context of the sentence in data 88 is when Kang Kyung Hwa talked about the uniqueness of K-Pop and Korean Wave where Korean cultures are spread throughout the world. She used *lexical hedges or fillers* "것 같습니다" **geos gatseubnida** or *"seems"* to dan *fillers* "어…eo", "아..a", dan "이..i" to find the correct words/terms.

Intensifiers (INT)
The function of intensifiers features is to strengthen the meaning of the sentence (Holmes, 2013, p. 329). Pan (2011, p. 1016) stated that women use intensifiers such as so, much, quite, vastly,etc. This study found that there are 89 data that contains Intensifiers features. The example is as follows:
   1) Data No. 49 / 00.12.57

   그러나 그 어디를 보아도 진정한 성 평등에 세상은 아직도 갈 길이 멀고 장애물들을 극복하기 위한 노력들이 **끊임없이 (INT)** 경주 되고 있습니다.

   geuleona geu eodileul boado jinjeonghan seong pyeongdeung-e sesang-eun ajigdo gal gil-i meolgo jang-aemuldeul-eul geugboghagi wihan nolyeogdeul-i **kkeunh-im-eobs-i (INT)** gyeongju doego issseubnida.
   "However, no matter where you look, the world still has a long way to go for true gender equality, and efforts are **constantly (INT)** being made to overcome obstacles".

The context of the sentence in data 49 is when Kang Kyung Hwa talked about gender equality. She used *intensifiers* "끊임없이" **kkeunh-im-eobs-i** or **constantly** to strengthen her intention for the gender equality.

Hypercorrect Grammar (HG)
Holmes (2013, p. 167) mentions that women are more likely to use better or more correct linguistic standards than men because women are more sensitive to linguistic norms, known as a hypercorrection. The hypercorrect grammar feature found 70 data. The example is as follows:
   1) Data No. 19 / 00.03.48

   그리고 여성 지위 향상에 **앞상..앞장서온 (HG)** 이화여자대학교에서(SF)

   geuligo yeoseong jiwi hyangsang-e **apsang..apjangseoon (HG)** ihwayeojadaehaggyoeseo (SF)
   "And at Ewha Womans University (SF), who has been **in front …at the forefront** (HG) of improving the status of women".

The context of the sentence in data 19 is when Kang Kyung Hwa explains that she is very happy to be a speaker at Ewha Womans University, a university that leads and raises women's status. The above utterance contains a hypercorrect grammar feature, namely when Kang has a slip of the tongue and corrects the word he wants to speak with the original standard, namely **"앞장서온apjangseoon,"** which means **"leading"**.

Emphatic Stress (ES*)*
Talbot (2020, p. 48) argues that Lakoff defines emphatic stress when the tone of a woman's reach is greater when speaking. The speaker uses this feature to emphasize his statement so that the listener can receive the message sent by the speaker. Emphatic stress features were found as many as 65 data. The example is as follows:
   1) Data No. 15 / 00.03.10

   음.. (LH) 문재인 대통령의 정부는 국민 외교를 **대외 외교만큼 (ES)** 중요시하고 있습니다.
   eum.. (LH) munjaein daetonglyeong-ui jeongbuneun gugmin oegyoleul **daeoe oegyomankeum (ES)** jung-yosihago issseubnida.

Well... (LH) President Moon Jae-in's government values **national diplomacy (ES)** as much as foreign diplomacy.

The context of the sentence in data 15 is when Kang Kyung Hwa explained President Moon Jae In's opinion about the importance of national and foreign diplomacy. Kang emphasized her intonation on the word **"대외 외교만큼 *daeoe oegyomankeum*""** which means **"national diplomacy".** These data findings are in accordance with Lakoff's theory that empathic stress is when a woman's tone of voice is greater when speaking.

The lexical hedges or filler feature is the most common feature found in this study with 134 data. The lexical hedges or filler features found in this study are dominated by pause fillers uh, um, ah such as 그, 으, 아, 뭐, and 아 (geu, eu, a, mwo, a - That, uh, ah, what, ah). Then for hedges dominated by 생각합니다 *saeng-gaghabnida* which means "I think" and 것 같다 *geos gatda* which means "it seems". The Feature Lexical hedges or fillers are the most widely used by Kang because this feature serves to give Kang time to think so that Kang can fill in the blanks when thinking and avoid mistakes when making statements.

The intensifiers feature is the second most common feature in this study with 89 data. The intensifiers feature can be found in this study such as 정말, 굉장히, 그야말로, 특히, 참, 매우, 아주, 가장, 훨씬, 많이, 점점, 끊임없이, 분명히, 공히 and 상당히 (as *jeongmal, goengjanghi, geuyamallo, teughi, cham, maeu, aju, gajang, hwolssin, manh-i, jeomjeom, kkeunh-im-eobs-i, bunmyeonghi, gonghi* and *sangdanghi* - as really, really, really, especially, really, very, very, most, much, much, increasingly, constantly, obviously, both and considerably). Kang uses this feature most of the time because Kang wants to strengthen her statement. So, it seems that Kang is confident in the statements she makes.

This study's third most common feature with 70 data is the hypercorrect grammar feature. The hypercorrect grammar feature can be found when Kang wants to correct her mistakes when slipping her tongue. Kang used this feature because Kang was aware of her position and status as Minister of Foreign Affairs, who was a speaker at a public lecture which required her to speak according to standard rules in a formal setting.

The feature of empathic stress is the fourth most found in this study with 65 data. The empathic stress feature can be found when Kang emphasizes or raises the pitch of her range on a word. Kang uses this feature because Kang wants to emphasize her speech and ensure that listeners can receive the message that Kang wants to convey.

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