

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of Study

Every human being has different way of using language in communicating. Men and women have a difference in which the way they communicate, think, and act. According to Holmes (1992:166) “men and women do not speak exactly in the same way in any communication”. Gender refers to differentiation between men and women’s characters based on society. It is socially constructed. In sociolinguistics, gender identifies how men and women speak the language. Gender explores the behavior of men and women in society. It does not matter that men and women are from different background. Holmes (1992:462) claimed that women and men develop different patterns of language use.

Sociolinguistics studies the way to understand a language form in society. Language and gender are related to sociolinguistic issues. Language and gender are the tendency of language form or pattern considered by men and women as they are socially constructed. They have the differences on how men and women use the language. Every social group has its own language in the way it communicates. Especially for women as the social group, they have their own characteristic of using language. “In the early 1970s, female language was paid attention by the linguist, psychologists and sociologists. Female language was also used to describe the differences due to gender differences in the phenomenon of language” (Qi Pan:1). Gender differences have been investigated for a long time by linguists.

Lakoff (1975) described the differences of the use of language by men and women. Some of classifications of Lakoff’s theory are how women show their linguistic features. Women also use ‘tag’ in their interrogative sentences. Tag is a sentence that uses a declarative statement in

the form of a question. Lakoff also mentioned that women voice is breathier than men. In lexical, Lakoff clarified that women often use words for colour, like 'lavender', 'beige', and 'mauve'. These words are rarely used by men. Then, the use of hedges 'I think..., I guess... and I wonder...'. These hedges are used in situation that only one has legitimation. In another word, if we are afraid to say certain things then we use the hedges.

The phenomenon of language used by men and women can also be found in literary works, such as novels, movies, plays and also song lyrics. Men and women show what they feel through the lyrics of the songs. This song which is written by Demi Lovato can be seen among others from the lyric '*Don't Forget*' by Demi Lovato:

The lyric '**Please** Don't Forget' In the fourth stanza, the writer identifies the word '**please**' as one of the features of women's language. According to Oxford dictionary, the word '**please**' means a wish or desire to do something. The word '**please**' is used by the woman writer to show their superpolite level. In this case, Demi knows how to say the right thing to wish that a boy will never forget her and all the moment they spend together before.

The linguistic phenomenon has got more attention from linguists since nowadays. The discrimination of women becomes little in this modern world because of the equality between men and women is balanced. Otherwise, one of the reasons the theory of Robin Lakoff is women were in second position while men were in first position. As Coates (1998:413) claimed 'women language was described as weak, unassertive, tentative and women were presented as losers and as victims. The writer would like to prove whether the theory of Lakoff in 1975 is still relevant with the theory or any changes have happened in that formation. Here the writer intends to examine the linguistic characteristics of the English song lyrics written by three American women song writers. Demi Lovato, Adele and Taylor Swift are the song writers that are chosen

as the source of data of the analysis because they are the most popular singers and also song writers in America. They are being in new generation. Then, the songs that the writer chooses for this analysis are the best song and the greatest of all time on the chart billboard in the world.

1.2. Research Question

These linguistic features will be analyzed by referring to Lakoff's theory of women's language. This study is intended to answer the following question:

1. What are features of women language used by American women song writers in their lyrics ?

1.3. The Objective of the Research

This study is aimed :

1. To identify features of women language of song lyric written by three American women song writers.

