

ABSTRACT

KRISWANTI, EMILIA GIFTA. (2025). **A Strategic Adaptation Through Language: Women's Language Features in Georgia Byrd's Utterances in *Last Holiday***. Yogyakarta: Department of English Letters, Faculty of Letters, Universitas Sanata Dharma.

This study investigates the strategic adaptation of language through the use of women's language features in Georgia Byrd's utterances in *Last Holiday*. The study focuses on how Georgia Byrd, a working-class woman, uses women's language features as proposed by Robin Lakoff (1973), and how these features vary across different contexts based on Janet Holmes' (2013) sociolinguistic framework, to adjust and adapt to different social situations, particularly as she enters unfamiliar, elite social environments she has never encountered before.

The urgency of this study lies in its focus on how individuals navigate changes in social standing and gendered communication by examining how women's language features function not merely as signs of powerlessness, but as strategic tools for social adaptation. This study hypothesizes that Georgia Byrd uses women's language features strategically to reduce social distance and manage power imbalances in different settings. Therefore, this study adopts a qualitative descriptive approach grounded in sociolinguistics to analyse how Georgia Byrd's speech reflects strategic adaptation through language.

The study addresses two research questions: (1) What types of women's language features are used by Georgia Byrd in the film *Last Holiday*? and (2) Why does she use these features differently across varying social contexts? To answer these questions, the researcher adopts a sociolinguistic approach, uses a qualitative descriptive method and the document analysis technique to collect and analyse data. The researcher identified 101 identified women's language features based on Robin Lakoff's (1973) taxonomy. To analyse the Georgia Byrd's speech across contexts, the study applies Janet Holmes' (2013) sociolinguistic framework, examining social factors such as participants, setting, topic, and function.

The findings show that Georgia Byrd's dominant strategy is the use of lexical hedges (60.40%), which she employs to soften her statements and carefully manage conversations. The next most common features are emphatic stress (14.85%) and superpolite forms (9.90%), used to alternately boost emotion and preserve politeness. Other identified features like intensifiers (5.94%), rising intonation (3.96%), empty adjectives (1.98%), tag questions (1.98%), and the avoidance of swear words (0.99%) occur less frequently. Notably, her language shows a complete absence of hypercorrect grammar and specific color terms due to Georgia's casual speech style and the movie's limitations.

Keywords: *Women's Language Features, Robin Lakoff Theory, Janet Holmes' Sociolinguistic Framework, Strategic Language Adaptation*

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Penelitian ini mengkaji adaptasi strategis bahasa Georgia Byrd dalam film *Last Holiday*, khususnya penggunaan fitur bahasa perempuan. Fokusnya adalah bagaimana Georgia Byrd, seorang pekerja biasa, menggunakan fitur bahasa perempuan (Lakoff, 1973) dan variasinya di berbagai konteks sosial (Holmes, 2013), terutama saat ia memasuki lingkungan elite yang baru.

Urgensi studi ini adalah menunjukkan bahwa fitur bahasa perempuan bukan hanya tanda ketidakberdayaan, melainkan alat strategis untuk adaptasi sosial. Hipotesisnya, Georgia Byrd menggunakan fitur-fitur ini untuk mengurangi jarak sosial dan mengelola ketidakseimbangan kekuasaan. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif sociolinguistik untuk menganalisis tuturan Georgia Byrd.

Dua pertanyaan penelitian yang diajukan adalah: (1) Jenis fitur bahasa perempuan apa yang digunakan Georgia Byrd? dan (2) Mengapa ia menggunakannya secara berbeda di berbagai konteks? Dengan pendekatan sociolinguistik dan metode deskriptif kualitatif, data dianalisis menggunakan teknik analisis dokumen. Dari 101 fitur bahasa perempuan yang teridentifikasi (Lakoff, 1973), analisis tuturan Georgia Byrd di berbagai konteks menggunakan kerangka Holmes (2013), memperhatikan partisipan, latar, topik, dan fungsi.

Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa strategi dominan Georgia Byrd adalah penggunaan lexical hedges (60.40%) untuk melembutkan pernyataan dan mengelola percakapan. Fitur umum berikutnya adalah penekanan empatik (14.85%) dan bentuk super-sopan (9.90%), yang digunakan untuk meningkatkan emosi dan menjaga kesopanan. Fitur lain seperti intensifiers (5.94%), intonasi menaik (3.96%), kata sifat kosong (1.98%), tag questions (1.98%), dan penghindaran kata-kata kasar (0.99%) jarang muncul. Menariknya, tidak ditemukan tata bahasa hiperkorek atau istilah warna spesifik, yang disebabkan oleh gaya bicara kasual Georgia dan batasan film.

Keywords: *Women's Language Feature, Robin Lakoff Theory, Janet Holmes' Sociolinguistic Framework, Strategic Language Adaptation*