# Lexical Hedges And Intensifiers Used By The Female Characters In *Encanto* Movie

**Ni Putu Ayu Reina Dewi[1], Novita Mulyana[2], Ketut Santi Indriani[3]**

[1,2,3] Udayana University

E-mail: reinaayu20@gmail.com[1], novitamulyana@unud.ac.id[2],
kt.santi.indriani@unud.ac.id[3]

**Abstrak**

Penelitian yang bertajuk Lexical Hedges and Intensifiers Used by the Female Characters in Encanto Movie ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi penggunaan dua bahasa perempuan yaitu lexical hedges dan intensifiers berdasarkan teori Lakoff serta mendeskripsikan fungsi bahasa-bahasa perempuan yang terdapat dalam film Encanto. pada teori Pearson. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif. Data dikumpulkan dan dihasilkan dari film berupa ucapan dan percakapan yang diungkapkan oleh tokoh perempuan dalam Encanto. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan metode dokumentasi dan teknik pencatatan. Penelitian ini menyajikan data dengan menggunakan metode informal, dimana hasil analisis disajikan dengan menggunakan kata-kata atau informasi deskripsi, dan dimaksudkan untuk membantu pembaca memahami topik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan terdapat 23 lindung nilai dan 10 penguat yang digunakan oleh tokoh perempuan dalam tuturannya. Fungsi setiap jenis fitur terkait erat dengan konteks penggunaannya. Banyaknya ciri kebahasaan perempuan dalam film tersebut mempunyai fungsi dan tujuan yang berbeda-beda. Penggunaan lexical hedges, fungsi setiap ujaran adalah untuk menyatakan ketidakpastian dan mengawali diskusi. Sedangkan intensifier fungsinya untuk mengungkapkan perasaan.

**Kata Kunci:** Bahasa Perempuan, Lindung Nilai Leksikal, Penguat, Fungsi Bahasa
⊘

**Abstract**

The study, entitled Lexical Hedges and Intensifiers Used by the Female Characters in *Encanto* Movie, aims to identify the usage of two women's languages, lexical hedges, and intensifiers based on Lakoff's theory and to describing languages functions by those women's language found in Encanto Movie based on Pearson theory. This research was employed by the descriptive-qualitative method. The data were collected and generated from the movie in the form of utterances and conversations expressed by the female characters in Encanto. The data were collected using the documentation method and the note-taking technique. This study presenting the data by using informal method, in which the results of the analysis are presented using words or description information, and it was intended to help readers understand the topic. The result of the study showed there are 23 hedges and

10 intensifiers used by the female characters in her utterances. The functions of each type of feature are intimately connected to the context in which it is employed. The many language features of women in the movie have different functions and objectives. The use of lexical hedges, the function of each utterance is to express uncertainty and to start a discussion. Meanwhile, the function of the intensifiers is to express feelings.

*Keywords: women's language, lexical hedges, intensifiers, language functions*

**INTRODUCTION**

Language is influenced by society and has a gender connection, where there a different ways and styles between men and also women when used a language. Lakoff (1975) states that women are typically more polite and discriminating, paying more attention to good syntax, pronunciation, whereas a men tend to utilize "rough" speech features, whereas a slang and profanity. However, in certain situations, women are also claimed to have less confidence to talk than men because they are powerless. Women's language features demonstrate their lack of power and weakness, as they must speak calmly and politely but be childlike, or else they are assumed to be unfeminine women who have acted as bad girls. Women's language is important to this study because it is a unique form of communication that differs from the standard language used by the majority of people. Women engage in more cooperative and engaging ways, using more hesitant and indirect language, and employing structures that demonstrate politeness and deference.

This study discusses the usage of two women's language, lexical hedges, and intensifiers used in the Encanto movie using Lakoff's and Pearson's theories. Walt Disney Animation Studios has a tendency to create animated movies centered on female protagonists, often portraying women as attractive creatures who cannot handle situations independently. However, the Disney animated movie Encanto presents some delicate messages about gender equality, as female characters face complex challenges but are portrayed as capable individuals who can resolve conflicts. The movie opens with the Madrigals, a multigenerational Colombian family led by a mother (Abuela Alma Madrigal), who has three children, Julieta, Pepa, and Bruno, with her husband (Pedro). Mirabel sets out to discover what is causing the family's loss of magic and save her family and their enchanted house. Encanto, an animated movie, explores the gender struggles faced by female characters, highlighting how culture influences their roles and experiences. The analysis of women's language helps understand how they express their identities and empowerment, influencing their communication, interactions, and roles in family and society. This highlights the significance of understanding cultural influences on women's experiences. The objectives of this research are to identify the usage of two women's language, lexical hedges, and intensifiers used by the female characters in the movie of Encanto and also to determine the functions of those characteristics of women's language features. It was hoped that this study would stimulate other researchers to examine women's language from a sociolinguistic perspective.

## METHOD AND THEORY

This study was conducted using qualitative methods. Creswell (2014) states that qualitative research is an analytical approach that uses different established methods to explore social or human phenomena. The data source for this study is the movie entitled Encanto, which was released in 2021. The data in this study are in the form of utterances spoken by the female characters. Encanto tells the story of an amazing family, the Madrigals, who live in the Colombian mountains in a wonderful house and charming place known as Encanto. The female characters in this movie are Mirabel Madrigal, Isabela Madrigal, Louisa Madrigal, Julieta Madrigal, Pepa Madrigal, Abuela Alma Madrigal, Dolores Madrigal, and Innocent Cecilia. The data were analyzed according to the theory of women's language features which was proposed by Lakoff (1975) and the theory of women's language function by Pearson (1985). There are several steps to collecting the data, such as: First, opening the Disney+ Hotstar platform through the website ("Disney+ Hotstar | Stream your favorite stories and more," n.d.). Second, watching the movie and trying to find women's language features in the female character's utterances. Third, read the subtitle of the movie. Fourth, taking some screenshots of every utterance that contains the woman's language features. Fifth, classifying the utterances by Lakoff (1975) and Pearson (1985) theories. Sixth, rechecking and validating the data to make sure that the utterances had the correct features. This study uses the content analysis method to analyze data to achieve a deep understanding of women's language as a social phenomenon. Cohen et al (2007) states that write content analysis is a research method for reporting the main idea, summarizing the content and underlying messages within written materials or main content, with the following steps: First, describing the context of the situation that happened in the storyline of the data. Second, analyzing the data according to the types of women's language features used Lakoff's theory and Pearson's theory about language function. This study used an informal method to presenting the data, in which the results of the analysis are presented using words or description information, and it was intended to help readers understand the topic. The data is presented by stating the utterances between female characters and describing in detail characteristics of women's language and how to use it with provide an example.

Related to this study, one of the studies related to women's language is an undergraduate thesis by Yunita (2018) that identifies the linguistic features to describe women and men use language features typically associated with women's speech in YouTube videos. This study used Lakoff's (2004) theory and conducted research by using a qualitative method. According to the research, women use roughly seven features in that video. The study provides the eight ideas and gives evidence to support them in this analysis, but the researcher might add more data to each topic to improve clarity. This current study differs from this study because it uses both genders as research objects, whereas this study only uses female characters. The source of data in this study is videos from Thoraya Maronesy's YouTube channel.

Another undergraduate thesis about the language feature use by men and also women in video vlog on YouTube by Nabilah (2019) is aims to find out the types of language features used by men and women on YouTube vlogs and the purpose behind their use. This study used Coates (1986) theory to discover the types of women's language features and to

employ them in a YouTube vlog. In addition, the research was employed by using the descriptive-qualitative method. Furthermore, it analyzes the data through the identification and classification of seven language features determined by Coates (1989). According to the research, there were only five linguistic features employed by both men and women on YouTube vlogs. There are significant differences in this undergraduate thesis. For instance, it employs both genders as research objects, whereas this current study only employs female characters. Second, the two studies employ opposing ideas.

There is also another undergraduate thesis about the women language feature that used in movie by Wulandari (2023). This study applied Lakoff's (1985) theory to identify the types of women's language features, intending to integrate them into the Enola Holmes movie. The data for this study were obtained from the movie Enola Holmes and the movie's script. The researcher collected data using a documentary technique and analyzed it using content analysis. This study was carried out using library research and qualitative descriptive techniques. According to the study's findings, nine types of women's language features have been found in the female characters' utterances in the Enola Holmes movie. This current study differs from this study because it uses both genders as research objects, whereas this study only uses female characters.

The following study to be reviewed related to women's language is taken from the international article by Chandra and Yulia (2018) that conducted to analyze the women's language feature that had been use by Nicki Minaj's when giving comments in American Idol Season 12. This study is aims to examine the features of Nicki Minaj's female style of language and its determinants. The theory of Lakoff (1975) was used in this study. The data for this analysis came from seven video transcripts of Nicki Minaj's comments on American Idol Season 12. This study gives a comprehensive explanation accompanied by data evidence; nevertheless, the researcher did not specify the strategy employed to conduct this research. This article differs from this current study in that it explores the underlying causes of each language feature.

Another article conducted about the features of women language that have been used in Mulan movie (2020) by Yolanda and Bram (2021). This study examined the impact of gender roles on language use as demonstrated in women's language features observed in Mulan utterances while she pretended to be a woman and then a man. The Lakoff theory was employed in this study to determine the women's language features. This was a qualitative study, with data analyzed using a document analysis method. There are two observation checklist tables and a frequency comparison table was utilized to assist researchers in categorizing the data for interpretation. The analysis showed that Mulan's utterances included seven out of ten women's language features, the most common of which was emphatic stress. The results additionally showed that gender roles in society influence how people speak. The decreasing point demonstrated that playing the role of a man provided Mulan with more confidence to express her thoughts in society. This article differs from this current study in that it employs a character that pretends to be a woman and then a man as research objects, whereas this study only uses female characters.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

There are two problems discussed in this study. First, the two types of women's language features, lexical hedges and intensifiers used by the female characters in the Encanto movie, followed by the function of each women's language. The analysis can be presented in the following ways:

**Lexical Hedges or Fillers**
**Data (3-1)** (00:10:46-00:10:53)
Context: Mirabel was very enthusiastic about Antonio's ceremony, and she was very excited. Her mother was surprised and told her not to take on too much work. But she thinks she should do the same as the rest of the family.
Julieta         : "Mi vida, you okay? You don't have to overdo it."
Mirabel        : "**I know**, Mamá. I just wanna do my part like the rest of the family."

This utterance is categorized as a lexical hedge or filler because of the use phrase **I know**. Mirabel used **I know** at the beginning of the utterance because she understood the meaning of her mother's question about what she wanted to do. Mirabel explained that she knew what her mother meant, but she just wanted to give her family the best. It can be concluded that the function of the use of the lexical hedge **I know** in this utterance is to start a discussion with her mother.

**Data (3-2)** (00:04:35-00:04:42)
Context: Mirabel prepares the table for the family breakfast. While she is doing this, the kids approach her. The Kids want to know when the gift is coming and what Mirabel has. Mirabel refused to give an answer because she hadn't received the gift yet.
Mirabel        : "Who's asking?"
Kids           : "Us!"
Mirabel        : "**Well**, "us," I can't just talk about myself... I'm only part of the amazing
                    Madrigals."

This utterance is categorized as a lexical hedge or filler because of the use of the word **well**. Mirabel used the word **well** at the beginning of the utterance because she felt doubt and a lack of confidence in answering the questions asked by the children about what gifts she had. Having not received the gift makes her feel doubt and a lack of confidence in answering the questions. It can be concluded that the function of the use of the lexical hedge **well** in this utterance is to express uncertainty from Mirabel.

**Data (3-3)** (00:37:39-00:37:56)
Context: Mirabel began to be curious about the story of why she didn't get a gift and went to her sister Luisa to ask about her uncle Bruno, who left the house. Luisa said that when Mirabel saw the crack in Madrigal's house, Luisa felt something different, namely, she felt weak at that moment.
Mirabel        : "**I think** you're carrying way too much..."
Luisa          : "Maybe I overdo it."
Mirabel        : "Yep."

Luisa   : "There is something you should know. Last night, when you saw the
      cracks...I felt... weak."

   This utterance is categorized as a lexical hedge or filler because of the use phrase, **I think**. Mirabel used **I think** at the beginning of the utterance because she was uncertain and not confident in telling her sister about what she saw. It can be concluded that the function of the use of the lexical hedge **I think** in this utterance is to express uncertainty from Mirabel.

 **Intensifiers**
**Data (3-4)** (00:27:35-00:27:46)
Context: When everyone was celebrating Antonio's gift, Mirabel pulled back to the house, and when she got home, she saw the cracks in the house, so she hurriedly returned to the venue and said what she saw. Everyone returned home to see what Mirabel had said. When they got there, none of the buildings were cracked, and Abuela scolded her for thinking Mirabel wanted to destroy Antonio's event because she alone did not have a gift. Then she went to her mother to tell her everything, and her mother gave medicine to her injured hand and said that what her daughter went through was not easy.
Mirabel  : "If it was all in my head, how did I cut my hand? I would never ruin
      Antonio's night. Is that really what you think?"
Julieta   : "What I think is that today was **very** hard for you."

   This utterance is categorized as an intensifier because of the use of the word **very.** Julieta used the word **very,** which indicates her emotions that she is worried about what her daughter is going through very hard. It can be concluded that the function of the use of the intensifier **very** in this utterance is to express feelings because Julieta expresses her feelings of worry when talking to Mirabel by using polite language.

**Data (3-5)** (00:44:06-00:44:29)
Context: Mirabel was walking towards her room after she got the puzzle piece for the answer to the question that had been haunting her. On the way, she accidentally bumped into her grandmother, Abuela, and then her grandmother asked her what was making her rush. At the same time, her sister Luisa came with a tired face and didn't accept what happened to her; she lost a little of her strength.
Abuela   : "What is in your hair?"
Mirabel  : "My Gift!"
Luisa   : "I'm losing my Gift!"
Abuela   : "What?"
Luisa   : "Mirabel and I were having this little talk about me carrying too much.
      So, I tried not to carry so much, but I realized it was putting me behind. And
      I knew I was gonna let everyone down. And I felt **really** bad, so I was
      grabbing all the donkeys...but then when I went to throw the donkeys in the
      barn, they were...heavy!"

   This utterance is categorized as an intensifier because of the use of the word **really**. Luisa used the word **really** meant that she meant the emotion she was feeling. She told Abuela that she would be really bad if she lost her gifts. By using the word **really**, it

strengthens her utterance in conveying her feelings. It can be concluded that the function of the use of the intensifiers in this utterance is to express feelings because Luisa expresses her feelings when talking to Mirabel and Abuela by using polite language.

**Data (3-6)** (01:24:31-01:24:39)
Context: The entire Madrigal family was worried because Mirabel left after their house was destroyed. Everyone tried to find her, including her mother, Julieta, and then, after a while, Mirabel returned along with her grandmother Abuela and her uncle Bruno. The mother's feelings cannot lie; she is very worried about her daughter's condition.
Julieta　　　　　: "Mirabel!"
Mirabel　　　　　: "Mamá."
Julieta　　　　　: "Mi amor, I was **so** worried. We couldn't find you."
　　　　This utterance is categorized as an intensifier because of the use of the word **so**. Julieta used the word **so**, which indicates her emotions towards the person's acts. By using the word **so**, it strengthens her utterance in conveying her feelings. It can be concluded that the function of the use of the intensifier **so** in this utterance is to express feelings because Julieta expresses her feelings of worry when talking to Mirabel by using polite language.

**CONCLUSION**
　　　　The conclusion of the research examines the language features used by female characters in the movie Encanto, as well as the function of each feature. After conducting the analysis, the researcher found that the female characters in the movie only used 23 lexical hedges and 10 intensifiers of women's language features provided by Lakoff (1975). According to five women's language functions proposed by Pearson (1985), the purpose of women's language used by female characters in the movie differs based on the feature. The function of women's language in lexical hedges or fillers is to start a discussion and express uncertainty. The second feature was an intensifier, which was intended to express feelings and opinions. As a result, this study is presented as a useful addition to linguistics courses, specifically sociolinguistics lectures, as data or sources for teaching women's languages, especially lexical hedges and intensifiers. Then, linguistics students are able to use this research as a reference while studying women's language. It is necessary to assess women's language from several viewpoints in order to acquire an accurate understanding of its meaning.

**REFERENCES**
Chandra, D., Yulia, M.F., 2018. Nicki Minajs Comments in American Idol Season 12: An Analysis of Womens Language Features. International Journal of Humanity Studies (IJHS) 1, 184–192.
Creswell, J.W., 2014. Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches, 4th ed. ed. SAGE Publications, Thousand Oaks.
Disney+ Hotstar | Stream your favourite stories and more [WWW Document], n.d. URL https://www.apps.disneyplus.com/ph/pre_launch (accessed 10.4.23).
Lakoff, R.T., 1975. Language and Woman's Place. Harper & Row.

Nabilah, R.F., 2019. The Use of Language Features Between Men and Women on Youtube Vlog (undergraduate). UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya.

Wulandari, P., 2023. Women's Language Features in Enola Holmes Movie (PhD Thesis). IAIN Ponorogo.

Yolanda, N.A.Y.Y., Bram, B., 2021. Women's Language Features Used by a Woman Who Masquerades as a Man in Mulan (2020) Movie. TELL 9, 25. https://doi.org/10.30651/tell.v9i1.7207

Yunita, A., 2018. Features of Women's Language on Thoraya Maronesy's Youtube Videos (B.S. thesis). Fakultas Adab dan Humaniora UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta.