

How to Cite This Article: Salman, M., Ahmad, S., & Ashad, K. (2023). Language, Society and Gender: A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Linguistic Variation in the Language of Men and Women in the Movie North Country. *Journal of Social Sciences Review*, 3(2), 403–416. <https://doi.org/10.54183/jssr.v3i2.265>



Language, Society and Gender: A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Linguistic Variation in the Language of Men and Women in the Movie North Country

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Vol. 3, No. 2 (Spring 2023)

Pages: 403 – 416

ISSN (Print): 2789–441X

ISSN (Online): 2789–4428

Key Words

Critical Discourse Analysis,
Language and Gender, North
Country, Language Deficiencies

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Abstract: The present research is the study of linguistic variations in the language of males and females in the movie North Country. By applying Robin Lakoff's deficit theory to the work, the research highlighted the difference based on hedging, tag questions, and intensifiers. Language variation in gender was a common topic in the 1970s, but till now not much empirical evidence is present to support Robin Lakoff's theory, the research has provided a firm ground for the theory. The research study is a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the discourse of males and females in the movie "North Country." The research study findings in accordance with its objectives show how male and female's language differs from each other by providing empirical evidence, as males and females show different trends in the use of tag questions, hedging, and intensifiers. This is a highly significant study academically it will provide analyzed data with evidence to students of genderlect.

Background

Critical Discourse analysis can be defined as the analysis of any discourse in order to find relations between discourse, hidden meanings, social inequality, power, and dominance. It is a complex, multidisciplinary, multi-dimension field, but still, sociopolitical discourse or sociolinguistics is a main and pertinent topic in critical discourse analysis. In this paper, the researcher will mainly deal with the critical analysis of 'sociolinguistics', which mainly deals with the language used by people in society and the effect of society and its people on language. Further, the main issue sociolinguistics deals with is the difference and similarities between the language used by males and females under

the umbrella of their role in society. Wardhaugh (2000, p.309) opines that "a major topic in sociolinguistics is the connection, if any, between the structure, vocabularies, and ways of a particular language and the social roles of the men and women who speak these languages." As an example, if a little girl talks in a way that is not fit for females, she gets scolded and moulded in the way in which females are supposed to speak.

In late 1900, discourse analysis of speech of males and females was in its bloom, researchers were working to find the difference in language use by males and females and were trying to find out why it differs on the basis of grammatical and

lexical features. Many of them find out the language used by females shows their oppressive and subordinate psychology. By analysis of their language, we can find out that females are marginalized, powerless, and weak in society these attributes can be seen in both, the way language is used by females and the way male members use their language.

Robin Lakoff (1975) presented her work which presents the main idea that the language of females is different from the language of males on the basis of certain features and shows certain deficiencies on the basis of psychology. She explores certain deficiencies in female speech while considering lexical items, such as adjective and color terms used by females, and on the basis of syntax, they use tag questions and rise and fall in intonation while answering, questioning, and ordering. Robin Lakoff, in her book, analyzes language not only on the basis of gender, but also on the basis of roles played by women in society, like mothers, mistress widow, and wives.

North Country an American drama film, released in 2005, is a movie based on the story of the first harassment case ever legally registered on worksites in America. In the movie main character "Josey Aimes" suffers a lot at the hands of male members of society, from the age of 16 when she gets raped to the day when she reports the case. Her language portrays the presence of a feature, proposed by Robin Lakoff in 1975.

According to Lakoff's theory, there are certain features that are evident in a female speech some of them are as under.

Tag Question

A tag question is a language item used by people which turns a statement into a question. The speaker used a clause at the end of a statement, e.g.

- It's beautiful, isn't it?
- They like it, aren't they?

The speaker uses it to check the information when he or she isn't sure about it to check the authenticity of the statement.

To make a tag question usually consists of an auxiliary verb and a negative tag, but the main clause is most of the time positive, and the subordinate clause is negative.

According to Holmes (1995), there are four types of tag questions used in the English language that are "Facilitative tag, Challenging tag, Epistemic Tag, and Softening tag." Each of them portrays different psychology and mentality.

- i. **Epistemic Tags:** these types of tag questions show the uncertainty and unclarity of the speaker. For Example,
 - "We are going to have dinner at 8 o'clock, aren't we?"
- ii. **Challenging Tags:** these types of tag questions are used to challenge the statement of other speakers as Holmes considers it a "confrontational strategy". It is considered an aggressive reply. As in power relations, it is considered a dominance-showing statement. For example
 - "You understand that, don't you?"
- iii. **Facilitative Tags:** these types of questions are used for support, as they are used to invite the other person to participate in the conversation. For Example,
 - "You have a new bicycle, haven't you?"
- iv. **Softening Tags:** these types of tag questions are used for softening the previous statement, they are used for negative politeness. For Example,
 - "He is an idiot, isn't he?"

Hedging

The second feature that can be evident in the movie is hedging. Hedging is a linguistic tool that is used for several purposes like to avoid answering a question, to avoid making a clear statement, reducing the force of an utterance, to avoid directly committing to an action or purpose, and uncertainty or hesitation of the user's mind.

According to Robin Lakoff's theory, females use hedging as a tool to reduce the negative force of an utterance, For example, "Would you please close the door." or when they are uncertain or hesitating about something. For example, "May I should marry her."

Intensifier

The third feature that can be evident in the movie is intensifiers. Intensifiers are words that put force, strength, or emphasis on the statement. It also consists of stress and a rise in voice. By doing so the meaning of the statement is emphasized. Intensifier does not have meaning of their own they are just used to provide strength to the statement. Even removing them, does not change the meaning of the statement. According to Robin Lakoff, women make more use of intensifiers in their daily use. Empirical evidence for this point can be found in the movie.

Problem Statement

The linguistic analysis of the movie *North Country* is not done in the light of "deficit theory" by Robin Lakoff. In the movie, we can see the discursive marginalization of female workers as this movie was the first case of female harassment in America, this movie consists of a lot of injustices and marginalization of females in work sites, these differences are not analyzed on the bases of language and psychology.

Research Question

Research Questions are as follows.

1. What are the linguistic variations between the discourse of males and females in the movie *North Country*?
2. How do these variations reflect gender-biased power relations in the movie *North Country*?

Research Objectives

Objectives of research are as follows:

- To highlight the linguistic variations between the discourse of men and women in the movie *North Country*.
- To explore the linguistic realization of gender-biased power relations in the movie *North Country*.

Significance of Study

In this research, the researcher works on the movie *North Country* which is based on a true story of the first Harassment case ever legally reported in America, Females in the movie face different problems and feel marginalized, there are certain deficiencies in the female speech that can be seen in the movie, male and female characters in movies have variations in their language. In this study, the researcher will show how male and female's character's language differs from each other. The research will try to present insight into characters' psychology from the perspective of their dominant or suppressive positions, represented by the help of their speech. This research will provide psychological evidence to the case, it will provide empirical evidence to the researchers for study. As not enough empirical data is present on genderlect.

Delimitation of the Study

There are certain delimitations of this research that are as follows. This research will be conducted based on the theory of Robin Lakoff's deficit theory (1975). The population of this research will be the movie *North Country*, as there are many characters in the movie, but research will delimit Josey Aimes, Glory, Alice Aimes, Leslie Conlin characters language as a sample for females language and Bill White, union, Don Pearson and Bobby Sharp as a sample for male speech.

Literature Review

Language is the ability that we can communicate; this ability separates us from other beings on the planet. Men and women both are considered social beings, we have the same ability to communicate, we as social beings live in societies

and communicate with others, we share our thought and absorb other thoughts and ideas as a result it shapes our psychology. Society, culture, norms, and social values shape language and thoughts. Many researches are done, to find the effect of society on human psychology. Wood, J.T. (2005), in his work 'Feminist standpoint theory' explains that the language, we speak depends on the social environment in which, we use the language, Females use language in different social environments and males in different, in accordance to their social roles. From color choices, adjectives, dominance, and subordination all arise from conditions that are common to girls and boys in society. His theory is similar to the Marxist claim that the work and activities we do, and the people we spend time with shape our identities. But mainly work on the difference in language use by males and females was started after Robin Lakoff's theory (1975), many researchers supported the work of Robin Lakoff and some criticized the work too. Some theories supporting Robin Lakoff's theory are, Tannen, D. (1990). *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation*. In her research, she divided society into 'Two Cultures' one in which male children are socialized and one in which female children are socialized, so on the basis of which their language shows different characteristics. She gives some basic characteristics of male and female speech. Males use language to gain power, while females use it to seek support. While facing a problem males use speech to get advice, while males try to solve and understand the problem. Women use language to express feelings with the help of language, while males convey information. Males give advice and females make proposals. The male does not avoid conflict while females use language to compromise. She in her work provides the difference in male and female speech and divided it into subcultures, but she fails to address why both males and females belong to a different subcultures. Johnson and Meinhof (1997, p.9), criticized "the difference approach", in which she

states "fails to address why women and men belong to a different subculture".

Daniel Maltz and Ruth Borkez (1982) "A Cultural Approach to Male-Female Miscommunication," in their work findings were that both males and females use their language to accomplish different goals, when both interact in cross-sex conversation, the female's approach while using language is to establish and maintain social relationships, to show equality, loyalty, care and to get support. The Male's approach while using language is too dominant and controls the conversation, and expresses skills, abilities, and status. E. Jennifer, C. and Deborah, J. (1998) conducted their research on the basis of Tannen, D. (1990). They conducted a detailed analysis of female speech, they added more to her research, and first Coates stated that there is a difference in style of male and female speech because they developed language in all boys and all girls groups. Secondly, they find out four characteristics of female speech. Female speech is usually based on Household talks, females usually talk about scandals, and they usually complain about the situation they live in and talk about other people and chat they usually share their emotions and stories

In the later 1900 as many supported Robin Lakoff's idea, still some critics the ideas and concepts given by Robin Lakoff. As Robin Lakoff was one of the first to talk about language and gender she analyzed the links between language, gender and its effects and portrayal of psychology, so many researches raise questions on theory too some are:

Haas, A. (1979). "Male and Female Spoken Language Differences: Stereotypes and Evidence." This research mainly deals with one main idea, whether differences exist in male and female languages are not. At that time, many stereotypes exist about language differences in males' and females' speech from the beginning of the 1970s. At that time according to the researcher, it was considered that female language contains more euphemisms, politeness

forms, apology, laughter, crying, and unfinished sentences. Most of the time considered talking about the home and family and are more emotional. Some positive features were that their language is more nonassertive, tentative, and supportive. But according to Haas, in his research, clearly stated that there is less, clear, partly empirical evidence available because studies are only done on limited populations in specific situations. According to the researcher, these differences are only statistical differences in American English. There is no such feature it is exclusively only used by one gender and not by another. But on the basis of content and subject matter of discussion for males and females subjects, according to Haas, it can be empirically proven and one stereotype can be considered right that, women talk more about household and family matters, while on the other side men's talk more about politics, business, sports, and money. According to Haas, men are more oriented toward perceptual attributes and destructive action. While females use more emotional language. Dubois and Crouch (1975) in their research paper both raise certain arguments on Robin Lakoff's findings. Their main argument was that the Robin Lakoff theory does not provide empirical evidence and secondly, the observations were uncontrolled and unverifiable, they were based on non-random sampling of people. Their findings are that there is no difference between, hedging use by males and females both use it in equal amounts, secondly, both genders use intensifiers in a similar amount and thirdly the main point of their research was about tag questions, they agreed with idea that in English language people use more tag question as compared to the Serbian language. According to their finding, both genders make use of tag questions in a similar amount.

O'Barr and Bowman Atkins (1998) 'Women's language and powerless language', conducted their studies on language and gender as this was a major topic in the 1960s, they studied language use by males and females in a courtroom and find out that, language differences in male and female

speech are dependent on the situation and person role and statues that who has authority and power in that situation. O'Bare and Atkins observe the language used by males and females in the courtroom environment for 30 months. Their findings were contradicting Robin Lakoff's theory of deficiencies in female speech, they find out that these differences were not because of gender, but because of the powerless position of females in society. Females as housewives and workers are less powerful and less dominant in conversations, so they use such features in their language

As a result, there is a gap in my research, my research will provide empirical evidence for the Robin Lakoff theory as well as my research will base on Random sampling so it will test Robin Lakoff's theory that these differences exist in 20 century or not. A lot of feminist work is going on, to empower women in society.

Research Methodology

The discourse of the movie *North Country* is analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. Discourse analysis in light of Robin Lakoff Deficit theory serves as the theoretical framework, for research. The data of the study were taken from the movie *North Country*, the research deals with quantitative analysis and qualitative analysis of the impact of gender variation on language use and on the basis of these differences in males and females language how their psychology is portrayed in the movie *North Country*. The population, of movie speech of females, are taken as a sample, and the data were classified based on kinds of lexical hedges, tag questions and intensifiers. The researcher will find out the frequency and tendency of using all these elements in the male and female language in the movie.

Theoretical Framework

The research will apply Robin Lakoff's theory to the movie *North Country*. Robin Lakoff (1975) presented a theory in her book "Language and

Woman's Place" in which she stated that there are certain differences in language use by males and females in daily life. She pointed out certain features in males' and females' speech and claimed that these differences show deficiencies in females' language and dominance of males' language. She highlighted some features that were predominant in the speech which are as follows.

- Females use more 'hedges' in language.
- Females use more 'tag questions', which show their uncertainty.
- Females use more 'apologies', even when they are not supposed to.
- Females use more 'intensifiers'.
- Females use more 'euphemistic' language.
- Females use more 'empty adjectives'.
- Females use more 'hypercorrect grammar'.
- Females use language 'related to household language'.
- Females use more 'direct quotations', while males paraphrase things.
- Females give 'indirect commands', while males use direct commands.
- Females have less sense of 'humour'.

Robin Lakoff pointed out these differences in female speech and explain how these differences show deficiencies in female speech. The researcher will find out three of these feathers in the movie *North Country*. The first tag, second hedging, and third intensifiers.

Holmes (1995) divided tag questions further divided into four types "Facilitative tag, Challenging tag, Epistemic Tag, and Softening tag." Each of these tag questions portrays different psychology of female's minds. The researcher will find these tag questions in the speech of females and explain the psychology of females. Secondly, hedging is a linguistic tool that is used for several purposes like avoiding an answer, avoiding making a clear statement, reducing the force of utterance, and mostly making a direct commitment to an action. Thirdly Intensifiers are words that put force, strength, or emphasis on the statement. It also consists of stress and a rise in voice, in light of this theory

researchers will find out these features in the female's speech in the movie *North Country*. Josey Aimes, Glory, and Alice Aimes character's language show these features as they face marginalization at a work site and they are powerless against the union and the male members of the work site.

Data Analysis and Discussion

Discourse analysis is the study of the utterances both written and spoken used by people in daily life. A lot of work is done in the field of discourse analysis. Studies done in the 1970s show that discourse produced by people portrays their psychology, as well as these studies, show human's psychological relationship with society, that how societies shape human psychology. These studies also find power relations in them.

The research aims at analyzing the discourses produced by characters in the movie *North Country*. The movie portrays an environment similar to society at that time, we see females in lower rank on working sites and powerless. The discourse produced by them shows their psychological conditions. The researcher will try to find empirical evidence for Robin Lakoff's theory, by analyzing discourse produced by male and female characters, under the language markers assigned to different gender by Robin Lakoff.

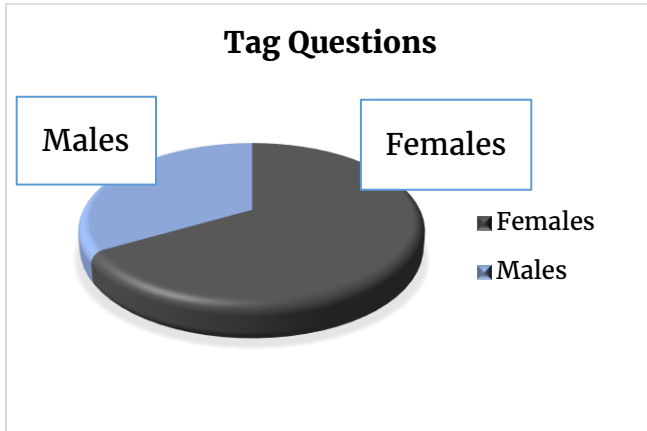
Tag Question

According to Robin Lakoff, tag questions are considered to be one of the most frequently used linguistic features used by females. In the movie *North Country*, 21 tag questions were found; 14 were used by females and 7 were used by males. So there is a clear difference between tag questions used by males and females. Females use twice-tag questions as compared to males.

Table 1

Total	Females	Males
21	14	7

Figure 1



According to figure 4.1.2 in all the discourses of the movie *The North Country*, the tag question used by males and females difference can easily be seen as 67% of women use tag questions in their speech while males on the other hand use only 33% of the time in their speech. This provides empirical evidence for Robin Lakoff's theory as according to her females use more tag questions in their speech which shows the uncertainty of their minds.

Examples,

1. This wasn't the first time you'd disappointed your father, was it? (Female lawyer, **Leslie Conlin**.) **Challenge tag**.
Wasn't the first time he disappointed me either
Female lawyer Leslie Conlin in the first scene of the movie uses this statement as a challenge tag to provoke Josey Aimes. As she tries to make Josie speak more of her past mistakes. Josey replies it wasn't the first time he disappointed me either.
2. Beats his wife. Bad enough, ain't it? (**Josey Aimes**) **Epistemic tag**
You weren't kidding. You're good.
This tag question is used by Josey Aimes, which shows the uncertainty of her mind. When her friend Glory asks about her ex-husband that he will spread humour about her. So she replies How about I tell them the truth? That he beat his wife, bad enough she asks Glory. This shows the uncertainty in her

mind. That whether society considered it bad or not.

3. Yours truly, the first woman ever. Now, isn't that a heck of a...? (**Josey Aimes**) **Epistemic tag**.

This statement also shows Josey Aime's mind's uncertainty even though she knows the answer, she hesitates to make a statement. This Dialogue is a shred of empirical evidence for Robin Lakoff's theory.

4. You know they don't want us up there. Right? (**Glory**) **Epistemic tag**.

Glory while informing Josey Aimes about the mining site say's this dialogue. Even having been working at the mining site for quite a while, she should be certain about this, that males up there do not want females to work with them, but she hesitates to make a statement, which shows the uncertainty in her mind.

5. ...but Supreme Court didn't ask me, did they? (**Glory**) **Epistemic tag**.

A similar epistemic tag can be seen up here. She fails to make a statement, she is uncertain about it.

6. We've taken to calling this area the Powder Room. Catchy, don't you think? (**Arlen Pavich**) **Challenge tag**.

Especially since you girls will be the ones cleaning it.

This statement is also considered empirical evidence for Robin Lakoff's theory as the male, make tag question where less a while but it is also according to Holmes males make more use of Challenge tag as compared to females making the epistemic tag. Arlen Pavich makes use of this tag question as a challenge or as a "confrontational strategy". It also shows power relation, the dominance of Arlen Pavich in the conversation. In his very next statement, we can see him telling the ladies that you're the one to clean it.

7. It won't fart in bed. I might just marry it. Right? **Epistemic tag (Glory)**
8. You don't mind, do you? (**Worker**).**Challenge tag (Male)**

In the above tag question, it can be evident that different two tag questions are used by a Male and Females. Males use it as a challenge tag to provoke Josey Aimes. While Glory uses it as a confirmation tag question, about whether she should marry Kyle or not.

9. I think you're one of my girls, right? (**Donald Pearson**) **Facilitative Tags**

This conversation takes place between Josey Aimes and her Boss Donald Pearson. When he meets her in the restaurant. Donald Pearson makes use of Facilitative to invite Josey Aimes to take part in the conversation. He was certain about his statement, he makes use of tag questions to make Josey Aimes take part in the conversation when he saw them in the restaurant.

10. You like a little Boy Scout love, don't you? (**Bobby Sharp**) **Challenge tag.**

This conversation can be considered as a shred of mainstream evidence for Holmes's theory that males use tag questions as a challenging strategy. When Bobby Grey uses this statement to harass Josey Aimes. He uses this statement as a conflict strategy to harass Josey and to sexually attract her.

11. It's pink, isn't it? (**Karen Aimes**) **Epistemic tag.**

Karen Aimes use this tag question to confirm, the colour of her mother. From a very small age, she is moulded in a way that she is uncertain about his statements. She even knows the colour confirms it from her mother.

12. She's still my daughter, isn't she? (**Hank Aimes.**) **Challenge tag.**

Hank Aimes, Josey's father use the Challenge tag as a statement to seek an answer and provide Josey with a chance to put forward her point in front of all workers. As all accept Josey as their friend's daughter and give her a chance to speak.

The quantitative analyzing the discourse of the movie *The North Country*. In the movie, the tag question is used 21 times as can be seen in table 4.1.1. Out of 21 females in the movie use it "14" times while males use it "7" times. A clear

difference can be seen in that females make use of tag questions more as compared to males.

Figure 2

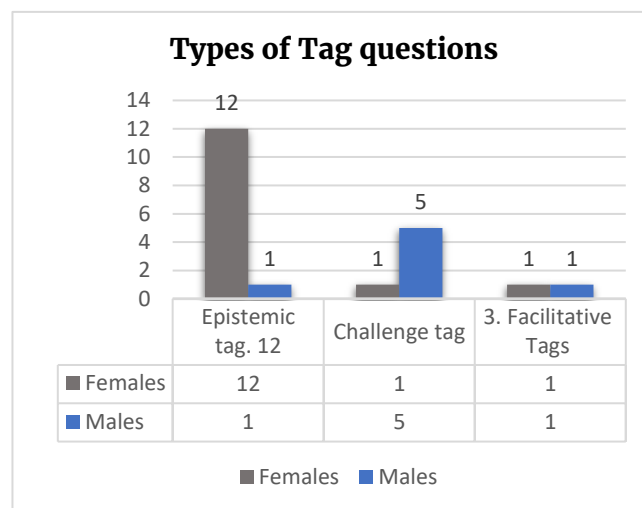


Figure 2 Explains Holme's model about tag questions, as he divided tag questions into four types that are already discussed earlier. From the figure, it is clear that both gender use tag questions. It is similar to Holme's theory of tag questions as he believes that epistemic modal tag is the most frequent tag question used in discourse. Females most of the time make use of epistemic tag questions. As in the movie out of 21 total tag questions females use it 12 times. Which shows their uncertainty of mind and female hesitation to commit.

While on the other hand, it can be seen from data of research that males make more use of the "Challenge tag". These types of tag questions are considered in a more negative sense. Males use it to show their power and dominance. Males out of 7 tag questions use challenge tag 5 times in discourse. Which always shows their dominance in a discourse. Females also make use of it when they are in power, For example.

This wasn't the first time you'd disappointed your father, was it? (Female lawyer, Leslie Conlin.) **Challenge tag**

Leslie Conlin uses it as she is in power, and she used it as a strategy to raise conflict.

Facilitative tag questions are used 2 times in the whole discourse of the movie. One time by Male and One by Female. As they are used for more positive politeness to invite other people into the conversation. For Example,

I think you're one of my girls, right? (Donald Pearson) **Facilitative Tags**

Donald Pearson used it to invite Josey Aimes into the conversation. When he says this statement they have a conversation in a restaurant.

Hedging

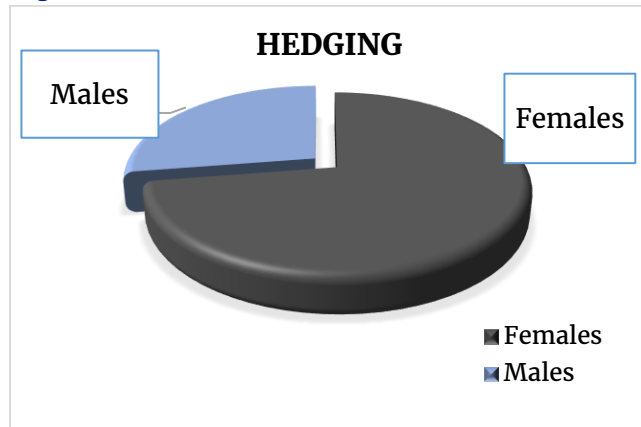
Hedging is also a linguistic feature used several times in the movie. This part will be a qualitative and quantitative analysis hedge in the movie.

Table 2 shows hedges are used 102 times in the movie out of which females use them 74 times in the movie.

Table 2

Hedging	Total	Females	Males	Percentage% of hedging use by females
May	8	8	0	100%
Could	9	5	4	55%
Well	20	11	9	55%
Would	14	9	5	64%
Kind of	9	8	1	90%
You know	42	33	11	78%
Total :	102	74	28	73%

Figure 3



The difference can quite clearly be seen in Figure 4.2.2 as the males in the movie use hedging 27% of the time in their discourse. Most of the time they use hedging for negative politeness. For Example, Well, the good news is, all roads lead to lawyers. Here well is used by Bill White, just for negative politeness. Instead of rejecting Josey Aimes' proposal at the time, he tells her that you can find many other lawyers. While on the other hand, females use hedging 74% of the time more than males in the movie. According to Robin

Lakoff's and Holmes's theories, females use more hedging because they have uncertainty in their minds. Which is demonstrated in their language. Similar can be seen in the movie females use more hedging in the movie as compared to males. They use 73% more hedging in the movie as compared to males.

Some Examples of hedging are,
Maybe later. Okay? Jeez, Glory.
 (Glory.)

The above line is used by Glory at the start of the movie. When in the bar, two men ask them that can they buy a drink for them. So she was polite instead of refusing directly says Maybe later.

*Maybe Pete over there likes sitting.
 In his pee, but I don't.*

Maybe Pete over there likes sitting in his pee, but I don't. The second statement is used by a girl worker. When the male boss asks her to sit until the work is finished. So she replies by using May as a tool for negative politeness, she replies may Peter wants to sit in her pee but I don't.

I haven't talked to Wayne yet.

Maybe he'll call us tonight.

Maybe here used glory shows the uncertainty of her mind. When her husband asks whether Wayne will call us or not. So she uses this Statement.

Maybe I'll go see Mr Pearson. (Josey Aimes.)

No, you don't see Pearson. (Arlen Parikh.)

I see Pearson.

These dialogues take place between Josey Aimes and Arlen Pavich. She threatened Arlen Pavich that she will go and talk to her boss. Where Pearson reply she does not see the boss while he does. Here the difference is quite obvious between male and female statements as Josey Aimes uses hedging. While Arlen Pavich does not.

Sammy. Get out of the car now!

- He's very upset, maybe...

This dialogue takes place between Josey and another female about her son.

What are you gonna do, sue him?

Well, could I?

This dialogue takes place between Josey Aimes and Glory. Here she uses hedging twice in the sentence for showing her uncertainty, well and could.

Well, good luck with that.

Well, the good news is, all roads lead to lawyers.

Bill White says this dialogue while talking to Josey Aimes. Well is one of the most used hedging used by males in their discourse.

Well, the company just wants to be sure before they hire you.

The doctor while examining Josey Aimes says this dialogue. Some other examples are:

Would a soda work?

Nope. Dart knows. (Josey and Glory)

Figured hockey wouldn't Take care of me forever. (Lawyer

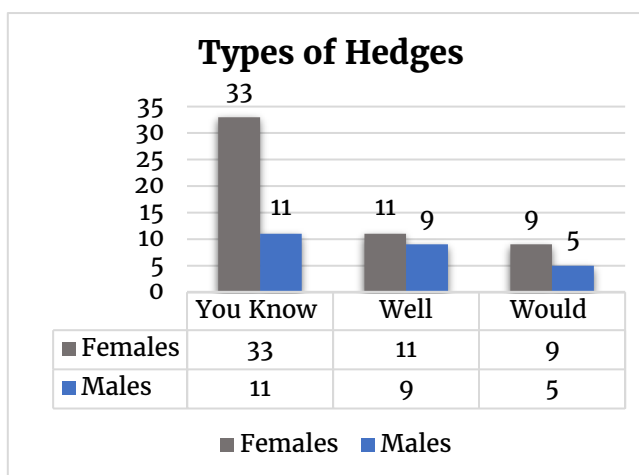
Bill White)

Wouldn't you like to make the same kind of money your dad does?

The mine's hiring, you know.

You know is the most frequently used hedge in the movie. It is used 42 times in the movie. Out of which 33 it is used by females and 11 times by males in movies. Male use it for negative politeness while on the other hand. Females use you know hedging for showing their uncertainty and positive politeness.

Figure 4



In Figure 3 it can be seen the most used hedges in the movie are you know, well, and would. This figure provides a piece of clear empirical evidence for Robin Lakoff's theory.

Intensifiers

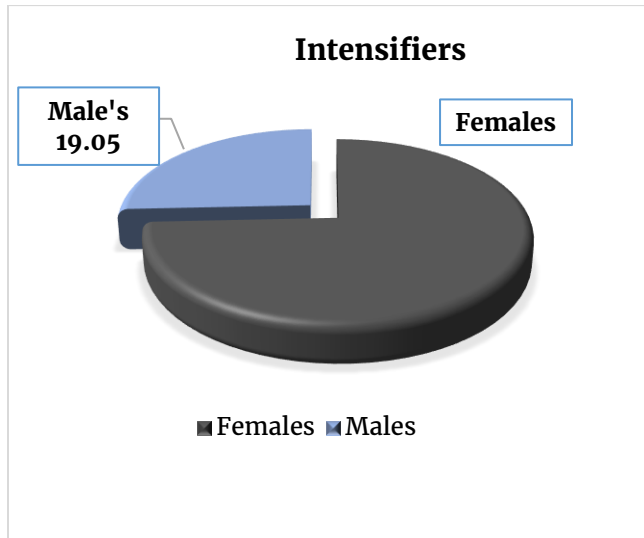
There are several intensifiers discovered in the movie. As mentioned in Table 3 Total number of intensifiers used in the movie is 42. In accordance with Robin Lakoff's theory, women use more intensifiers in their daily life. A similar result can be seen in the table. Males use only 8 intensifiers out of a total of 42, which is just 20 percent of the total. Females use it 34 times in total.

Table 3

intensifier	Total	Females	Males	Percentage % of intensifiers used by females
Really	10	8	2	80%
Very	2	2	0	100%

So	29	23	6	79%
Totally	1	1	0	100%
Total count:	42	34	8	80.95%

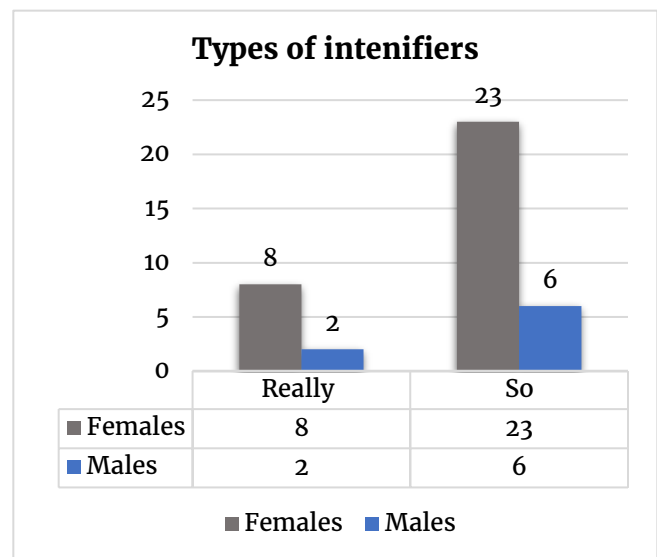
Figure 5



For Example,
Really asking me that?
While having a dialogue with a female lawyer. Josey Aimes use this intensifier. With stress on really.
That's... That's really great.
While having a conversation with Mr Pearson, Josey Aimes uses this dialogue to emphasize greatness. By doing so she expresses her happiness.
To really hate your mom...
This dialogue takes place between Kyle and Sammy Aimes. Kyle also uses it for strengthening the verb "Hate".
Very is one of the most well-known intensifiers, but it is just used twice in the movie. Both times by females.
He's very upset, maybe...
Sammy's friend uses this dialogue in the movie, she uses very to put emphasis on the word "upset".
The word "So" is the most used intensifier in the movie. It is used 29 times in the movie, females use it 23 times. While 6 times it is used by males in the movie.

So you stay here.
Here so intensify the word "stay".
So let's try something new.
Here word so emphasizes the word something.
I mean, we're totally fucking alone.
Intensifier totally emphasizes word alone.

Figure 6



In Figure 6 it can be seen the most used intensifier in the movie are you really, so. This figure provides a piece of clear empirical evidence for Robin Lakoff's theory.

Ishrat, Akhter (2014) in her research "Difference in language use by Male and Female students in Tertiary Academia in Dhaka City" support the result of the present research because findings of Ishrat Akhter show quite a big difference between the language of males and females As according to his research study females use 32% more formal language and males use 68% more informal language. The research shows 82% of the total participants talk loudly. Of this 82% of students, 88% are males and 76% are girls. The use of explicit adjectives is more in a female language like "adorable", "charming", "sweet", "amazing", and "lovely".

As 86% of total students use the adjective in their language out of which 80% were male and 92% were females.

Major Findings of the Study

In light of the above analysis and discussion of the data collected from the movie *The North Country*. The research finds the following things:

- Females make use of tag questions twice as compared to males in society. Females make more use of Epistemic tag questions which shows uncertainty and unclarity of the speaker's mind, while males on the other hand make more use of Challenging tag questions, which are used to challenge the statement of other people.
- Females make thrice more hedging as compared to males in the movie. Males mostly say things without hesitation.
- Females use hedging for softening the statement and for positive politeness, while males use it for negative politeness.
- Females use 4 times more intensifiers in the discourse of movies as compared to males.

Conclusions

To conclude, the research study aimed to provide empirical evidence for Robin Lakoff's theory, that females make more use of hedging, tag questions, and intensifiers. According to Robin Lakoff's theory, females make more use of certain features in their language, but no such empirical evidence was present for the theory. This research study finds hedging, tag questions, and intensifiers in the movie *North Country*. Hedging is found more frequently used by females in the movie *North Country*, it is used 73% in the discourse of females and only 27% in the discourse of males in the movie. Similar tag question is used more frequently by females as they use 67% of tag question, while males just use 33% of tag questions in their discourse. In making use of intensifiers females show similar dominance in the movie as they use nearly 81% of intensifiers while males just use 19% of intensifiers in their discourse.

These findings show that Robin Lakoff's features can be found in discourse used by females in the 2000s, as a lot of women empowerment rules and debates were going on at that time of the movie but still, this movie lies on the borderline of these women empowerment moments. Some changes in the use of features can be seen in the movie. But still, the movie follows all features proposed by Robin Lakoff.

Discussion of the Research Questions

The researcher conducted this research in order to find the answer to two questions that are mentioned in the chapter of the introduction. After analysis of data and findings of the research the answer the questions are the following:

Question 1: what are the linguistic variations between the discourse of males and females in the movie *North Country*?

From the result of this quantitative and qualitative research answer to this question is, as women make use of a higher frequency of hedges, intensifiers, and tag questions. The obtained result shows that features proposed by Robin Lakoff are true and clearly be seen in the speech of the female subject of research. A striking difference can be seen in the speech of females. Tag question is used twice more by females as compared to males in the movie, as males used tag question only 7 times in the movie while females use it for 14 time in the movie. Hedging another feature proposed by Robin Lakoff can also be evident in the movie as according to her females make more use of tag questions, similar findings can be seen in the movie. A total of 102 hedges are found in the movie, out of 102 females use 74 hedges, while males use 28 hedges. This linguistic variation is quite dominant in the movie. A similar striking difference can be seen for intensifiers. 42 intensifiers are found in the movie, females use 34 intensifiers, while males use only 8 intensifiers.

Question 2: How do these variations reflect gender-biased power relations in the movie *North Country*?

From the analysis of the data, these variations reflect gender-based differences because both males and females use them for different purposes. One feature proposed by Robin Lakoff is the tag question, it is used by both males and females in the movie but both use it for different purposes. Males make more use of challenge tag questions, while females on the other hand make more use of facilitative tags, Epistemic tags, and softening tag questions. This variation shows gender-biased power relations. From the movie, it is evident males use tag questions to dominate the conversation. For example Arlen Pavich, Bobby Shark, and other workers at sites. As they are dominant in society they use tag questions to show their dominance and to suppress females. While females on the other hand use it for showing uncertainty, positive politeness, and support. Hedging is also used in a similar way. Females use a lot of hedging which shows their uncertainty about something. When they are confused that whether they can do it or when they do not want to commit themselves. Variation in the use of intensifiers shows the same gender-biased power relations. Males in the movie do not strikingly use intensifiers to emphasize their point while females use intensifiers to emphasize their point as it is given less importance.

Suggestions and Recommendations

The research data put forward some recommendations for further studies that are:

1. In the 1970s lot of work was done on genderlect and different theories are proposed by researchers at that time. The research paperwork on only one theory proposed by Robin Lakoff, there are several other theories that can be applied to the movie *North Country*.
2. In this research paper, the researcher only finds out 3 features proposed by Robin Lakoff namely hedging, Intensifiers, and

tag questions. But there are several other features proposed by Robin Lakoff. These other features should also be searched in the movie *North Country*.

3. After the coming of feminism and different waves of feminism, women are given power and rights, as females gain power so their discourse also gains power. As variations in female discourse are due to their subordinate role in society after gaining power these variations start to change, such change variation can be searched in different discourses.

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