

Gender exposition in the select interview and speech of Miriam Defensor Santiago**Lyra Erika Lawas¹, Jehan Magdadaro¹, Jiza Mae Pilapil¹, Joemar Minoza**

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Article Info	Abstract
<i>Article History:</i> Received 26 February 2025 Approved 12 April 2025 Published 30 April 2025	This research intends to expose the gender of Philippine Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago using Women's Language Features by Robin Lakoff and Tannen's Difference Theory and the types of informal communication to determine Miriam Santiago's utterances in one interview on six topics and her speech at the University of Perpetual Help System as the main sources of data. Findings revealed that the selected interview and speech of Miriam Santiago have gender exposition. Analysis of the feminine or masculine language features of Miriam Santiago demonstrated that Robin Lakoff and Deborah Tannen's theories are significant in determining the language of one's sex. The study concludes that the language of Miriam Defensor Santiago is masculine. It recommends that the two theories from the 1970s and 1990s are still valuable for researching language and gender. Delving the language of Miriam Defensor Santiago in her younger years is recommended for future research.
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INTRODUCTION

Gender can be considered the cultural, behavioral, or psychological traits typically associated with one sex (Torgrimson & Minson, 2005). Moreover, gender is a significant element of men's or women's identities, and knowing gender differences is crucial in life (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2014). The study of Montenegro (1981) contributed to the language and gender research in the Philippines. It includes the descriptions of male and female language in Pilipino. Moreover, the result of the study shows the similarities and differences in the language of both sexes. In addition, current studies in the Philippines will show the different emphasis on the differences of

both genders based on their language or linguistic features. The detailed understanding and research of the Filipino linguists show that Gender Differences are a prevalent research subject and essential in linguistics. Moreover, Filipino researchers mostly describe the differences between men and women based on their language.

Even though the theories in gender-differentiated language expose women and men's speech, there are problems that a woman or man must face. The social issues existing in the studies of gender differences, such as gender stereotyping and gender discrimination, are why the researchers study the language of Miriam. She is one of the senators and attorneys in the Philippines. She is called the Iron Lady of Asia. Her witty jokes, feisty

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comebacks, and the way she uses language to catch the attention of the researchers and choose her language to describe and analyze. Hence, this study aims to identify and analyze the linguistic features found in Miriam Defensor Santiago's selected interview and speech and to reveal the masculine or feminine language of one's sex.

Literature Review

This study hypothesizes that the language used by Senator Miriam Santiago is masculine. This argument is supported by two theories, Robin Lakoff's theory and her influential work 'Language and Woman's Place' (2004) and Tannen's Difference Theory (2007).

Language is an immense help in determining an individual's identity, whether someone is feminine or masculine. Language can categorize people according to their social standing, race, nationality, or gender; it is also a communication system that combines words into sentences. The relationship between male and female language refer to as language and gender. Gender differences manifest not only in the discourse of males and females but also in their distinct lifestyles and attitudes.

Early research on power imbalance as the primary factor contributing to gender language variations can be ascribed to Lakoff (2004) and her influential work "Language and Woman's Place." There is much agreement for Lakoff, connecting feminism and the non-assertive discourse she characterizes as 'women's speech.' According to her, women pressure to show the feminine qualities of weakness and subordination toward men in a male-dominated society. Furthermore, Lakoff asserted a few things regarding the language that women speak and how it differs from that of men. According to her, women's language frequently incorporates lexical hedges or fillers. The words sort of, kind of is considered as hedges, while well, uhh, hmm, uhm, you see, you know, are categorized as fillers, meaningless particles that allow women to pause and consider their words.

Hedges demonstrates women's hesitancy when they ask a question or make a comment to the other person (Lakoff, 2004). But according to certain studies, men utilize hedges more frequently

than women (Holmes, 2013). According to Lakoff (quoted in Holmes 2013), hedges are a clear sign of women's uncertainty.

Tag questions, sometimes referred to as yes-or-no questions, are used when a speaker makes a claim but lacks sufficient confidence in it. But occasionally, like in this sentence: Sure, is not here, tag questions can signal a query that doesn't require confirmation. Additionally, here's another example: "Don't you have a headache?" It displays the opinions of the speaker (Lakoff, 2004). But to promote conversation, the tag question may also convey affective meaning (Holmes, 2013). It is employed when a speaker is unsure about their assertion and wants to reassure themselves by crafting a statement in the form of a question. According to Lakoff (2004), women utilize rising intonation when they are reluctant to provide information or make a statement. Then, they would rather respond by shifting the tone to a rising one.

On the other hand, women utilize empty adjectives to convey how they feel about something in a certain circumstance. Lakoff (2004) claimed that women amuse themselves by using adjectives like "divine," "charming," and "cute," which have meanings that are inconsequential. For instance, an average person might remark, "What a terrific idea!" when the idea is terrible, while women would reply, "What a divine idea!" since, to them, the word "divine" sounds more humorous than "terrible." According to Lakoff, women's word choices reveal their differing perspectives on the topic.

Intensifiers fall within the category of boosting devices that women frequently employ; some examples of these include simply, so, very, and really. Women are more likely than males to utilize intensifiers or boosters, according to Holmes (2013). They employed it to ensure that the recipient understood the message and to reinforce their anticipated meaning. According to Arliss (1991), intensifiers usually draw attention to the emotional message of a statement rather than its cognitive meaning.

Super polite expressions are used as appropriate language and commands. This

characteristic appears when women choose more appropriate or courteous words when communicating. The 'super nice' form is similarly an imperative statement, according to Lakoff (2004), albeit women use it more graciously. For instance, "please" and "thank you" display the standard polite form. Holmes, euphemisms, and indirect requests are all classified as "super polite forms" (2013). By recommending something to be done for themselves, ladies use this characteristic to ask their addressee for a favor. For example, they wish to use this function to communicate with the other person in a courteous manner without hurting their feelings. Women commonly use expletives, also known as avoidance of strong swear words, to show how strongly they feel about something (Lakoff, 2004). Usually, phrases such as fudge, my goodness, oh my, shoot, etc., will come from their mouths when they are surprised by something without saying swear words.

Women utilize emphatic stress, another boosting technique, to persuade the other person of the significance of their message. Its purpose is to make the meaning stronger (Holmes, 2013). For example, it was a BRILLIANT performance and a GREAT movie; I had the BEST DAY ever!

Lakoff characterizes women as having no sense of humor and being unable to tell jokes in this linguistic feature (2004). According to Dorfler (2020), humor will be seen as a specific type of message that functions when a specific communicative situation may alter the relationship between the sign and its referent. Additionally, he says that the sign no longer relates to its natural referent; instead, it now refers to another "paradoxical" referent, which gives the sign and its funny effect a negative paradoxical meaning. Furthermore, humor is defined as anything that makes people laugh or find it funny, as well as the capacity to recognize what is funny in each circumstance.

The function of the consistent Lakoff's list of linguistic traits is to convey a lack of confidence. This list is divided into two groups by Holmes (2013). Filters, tag questions, and rising intonation on declarative sentences are examples of "linguistic

devices that may be used for hedging or reducing the force of an utterance." Secondly, there are "features that may boost or intensify the force of a proposition, such as intensifiers and emphatic stress." Both boosting and hedging modifiers show a woman's lack of power in a mixed-sex conversation, according to Lakoff (2004). Although the hedges lack boldness, she asserts that boosters increase the impact of a remark by assuming that women would not take it seriously otherwise. However, the more recently developed difference, known as dual culture, sees sex disparities as due to different orientations toward relationships rather than assuming that speech variations between men and women are related to power and position (Montgomery, 2021). Tannen (2007) delves deeply into the idea of misunderstanding in the dual-culture approach.

There are two ways that gender-differentiated language might be reinterpreted, reflecting contrasting societal perceptions of women. The dominance approach considers linguistic variations as a reflection of the conventional societal roles of women's subjugation and men's domination. The difference method, on the other hand, emphasizes how sex speech differs between two distinct subcultures. It is asserted that men are more hierarchical and independent-minded, whereas women are from a social world in terms of intimacy and solidarity.

Tannen (2007) examines the ways in which men and women communicate. It encompasses two conversational styles (high involvement and high consideration), cooperative overlaps, collaborative floors, two talk styles (rapport talk and report talk), politeness levels (direct and indirect speech), and emotionality expression (objective and referential language styles). The four sets of contrasts in the chosen speech and interview of the late Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago can be identified with the use of this information. Tannen (2007) summarized her book (*You Just Don't Understand* 1990) in an article where she claims that there are several contrasts between how males and females communicate.

Independence VS Intimacy. The linguistic feature 'Independence' is described by Tannen as Masculine language. According to her, males prioritize independence since status is important to them. Men haggle to maintain control of a conversation and to defend themselves against those who would put them down. In contrast, intimacy is how women think, seeking Support and closeness from their partner. Tannen considers the linguistic feature 'Intimacy' as Feminine language. Intimate language is used by women in discussion today, hence Tannen's phrase 'rapport-talk.' Girls rise to believe that "conversation is the glue that ties a relationship together" through socialization. (Tannen, 2007), so that as adults, conversations for women are "negotiations for closeness in which people try to seek and give affirmation and support, and to establish consensus" are what conversations are for women." (Tannen, 2007).

Information VS Feelings. The linguistic feature 'Information' describes as Masculine language. Tannen noticed that men exchange information briefly, for example, in a telephone conversation, to arrange a meeting. Men commonly use this linguistic feature because they tend to be more specific with the Information they want to convey. However, the linguistic feature 'Feelings' is considered by Tannen (2007) as feminine. Feelings where most women are more concerned and comfortable. Like, Tannen claims that women will spend an hour on the telephone talking about feelings and emotions. From their observations of Tannen (2007) between men's and women's language, she linked the linguistic feature 'feelings' to the expression of emotionality. Wherein women used intensifier, a word that gives force or emphasis to a statement. For example, significantly, highly, totally, etc.

Orders VS proposals. The linguistic feature 'Orders' is considered by Tannen as masculine language. Tannen claims that men make orders by using more direct imperatives. They used it because they wanted to inform and do so very straightforwardly. From the observations of Tannen to men and women's conversations, the third series of contrasts link to the level of

politeness. The linguistic feature 'Orders' is considered a person who will use direct speech.

In contrast, women use proposals to suggest things in more indirect ways. The linguistic feature 'Proposals' is described by Tannen as Feminine language. Moreover, from the level of politeness, this linguistic feature is considered a person who will use indirect speech.

Status VS Support. The linguistic feature 'Status' is described by Tannen (2007) as masculine language. Moreover, she noticed that men grow up in a world where a conversation is competitive and therefore strive to ensure others do not dominate them and use the conversation to gain status. Tannen also added that Men rely on "report talk" to position themselves within a hierarchy.

The linguistic feature that is part of the fourth series of contrasts is Support. Tannen considers the linguistic feature 'Support' as Feminine Language. As for Support, women used the conversation to gain Support and confirmation. As a result, women's style is often known as a supporting style. For example, the mother had been driving her little boy with his friends somewhere.

Tannen (2007) observed that women's language is largely 'rapport-talk,' emphasizing sameness and building relationships. Men, on the other hand, display knowledge and expertise while maintaining their independence by using what is known as "report-talk." Men and women have different perspectives on relationships: men prefer to retain rank and hierarchical order, while women negotiate with a desire for solidarity.

Amir et al. (2012) investigate how Malaysian teen bloggers' language usage varies by gender. Content analysis is used to collect linguistic data. Using a qualitative research design and a case study methodology, this study focuses on a group of persons carrying out the same task at the same time. It demonstrates the strong correlation between gender and socialization and linguistic elements including intensifiers, lexical hedges, and empty adjectives. The results of the study show that teenage bloggers in Malaysia

utilize language differently depending on their gender.

The language characteristics of Hillary Clinton and Emily Steel, who were reporters for the New York Times, were examined by Deby Rahmawati et al. (2019). It collects the information using a descriptive qualitative method. The use of sociolinguistics to the oral conversation between gender meaning and speech was found. It concludes that males and women have very different linguistic traits.

Using Deborah Tannen's Gender Language Theory, Ulrikayanti (2012) investigated the Gender Language of Students in the Sanata Dharma English Language Education Study Program. Finding out the gender language of the four students (two female and two male) enrolled in Sanata Dharma University's English Education Study Program during their fifth semester is its main goal. An in-depth interview is a tool and method used in a case study technique to collect data. The results of this study showed that students use gendered terminology in their talks. Only three of the five buildings are found in this investigation, though. There is sharing and lecturing, understanding and guidance, disagreement and compromise. The study also found that men and women exhibit distinct gender language patterns in response to topics.

Briones (2019) examined the linguistic features of gender representation in the twenty-three most current junior high school English language textbooks published in the Philippines. The linguistic component of gender representation in the readings, discussions, and activities in English language textbooks was the focus of the analysis. The study demonstrates the existence of gender and language studies in the Philippines, particularly in determining the language used by men and women in particular public and private school textbooks. The most prevalent aspects of gender representation in each society were identified by the researcher. Nouns, adjectives, and verbs pertaining to the third-person singular male and feminine pronouns (i.e., she and he) comprise the linguistic elements.

Tajolosa (2012) investigated the banned words, euphemisms, conversational topics, and cathartic emotions of male and female students in Philippine private and public universities. Two groups of respondents provided the study's corpus. The first group comprises 101 undergraduate students, 51 of whom are male and 50 of whom are female, from a prominent private university in Manila. The second group consists of 114 students, 49 of whom are male and 55 of whom are female, at a state university in Region IV-Mimaropa. They studied and calculated their replies. It highlights the disparities in communication between genders and the potential influence of socioeconomic origins on these inequalities.

The studies above proved that Gender Exposition occurs in both formal and informal communication. The existence of Gender Exposition in interviews and speech has been the subject of the study of many researchers and linguists, providing comprehensive concepts and relevant information in identifying one's gender. These studies further imply that using linguistic features in oral discourses provides a wide field of research for a better understanding of Gender Exposition since it can be a reliable source for developing a digital tool to identify one's gender. The following studies mentioned served as a basis for describing and analyzing the selected interview and speech of Miriam Defensor Santiago to reveal her gender, which is the focus of this study.

METHODS

Design

This study uses a discourse content analysis that describes and analyzes the gender of Miriam Defensor Santiago through the words she uses in her selected interview and speech. This study is a descriptive method that employs qualitative and quantitative research. It deals with Miriam Defensor Santiago's utterances and total linguistic features in her selected interview and speech.

Sources of Data

The primary data source is Miriam Defensor Santiago's selected interview and speech. Each video selected for one interview and one speech cannot be longer than 11 minutes. The video dialogue is English or Filipino. It focuses on the language used by Miriam Santiago. The secondary sources are electronic materials, online books, Academia, Research Gate, Google Scholar, and other related studies that contribute much to this research. The researchers purposively select Miriam Defensor Santiagos' interview and speech because it provides a broad interest in how Miriam Santiago speaks and her choices of words. The content of the six videos is the experiences and opinions of Miriam Defensor Santiago, while the seventh video is a speech at the University of Perpetual Health System.

Data Gathering and Analysis

The researchers transcribed the selected interview and speech of Miriam Santiago with Mel Tiangco to gather the data and create a checklist based on the information analyzed. In the first approach, the researchers used Lakoff's theory to identify women's language features in Miriam Santiago's utterances in her selected interview and speech. The researchers examined Miriam's language from the words she used in her chosen interview and speech and identify Miriam's language using Tannen's four series of contrasts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Women's Language Features

Women's Language Features	Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3	Topic 4	Topic 5	Topic 6	Topic 7	Total
Lexical Hedges	10	1	4	3	3	5	2	28
Empty Adjectives							1	1
Expletives								0
Tag Questions								0
Intensifiers			4	4	2		2	12
Emphatical Stress	1	2	1		2			6
Rising Intonation				1			1	2
Super-Polite Forms			1					1
Humor							10	10

The table shows the frequency of language features of Miriam Santiago in the selected interviews and speeches. Lexical hedges, intensifiers, and humor are the top three (3) women's language features used by Miriam

Santiago. It can be observed that humor only was used in topic 7 when Miriam was delivering a speech. It is also observed that emphatic stress is mostly used in all interviews and speech, resulting in 6 frequencies, which is the 4th in rank. Lexical Hedges

Extract 1 (T1L1)

Yeah, as a mother, uhh, when I was younger, I did everything by the book.

Extract 2 (T2L22)

T: Taong 1971, naikasal sila Miriam Defensor at Jun Santiago. Akalain ninyong nagtangkang nga pala ang kanyang asawa na patigilin siya sa kanyang karer (narrate).

M: Well, in any event, of course, he saw the light and then said I spent up for l everything.

Extract 3 (T4L73)

So uhm, and then my house is very functional and very comfortable. I don't want it to look like, uhm, show window in some expensive store.

Extract 4 (T5L80)

Yeah, I love that bathing suit.

Extract 5 (T6L92)

It was expensive to make chemicals, but you know

In the first extract, Miriam uses the lexical hedge 'uhh' to pause for a while and think about what word she will continue to say and by doing that Miriam avoids silence in the conversation. Pearson and Nelson (2000) explain that verbal fillers are used when the speaker fills in the silence of their conversations.

Lexical Hedges or fillers are used to be sensitive to other's feelings (Coates, 2015). Miriam uses a lexical hedge well for the interviewer to be comfortable in asking questions. In the second extract, it is considering a sensitive topic and

Miriam participates to respect with the interviewer and very vocal in sharing their experiences.

Lexical hedges or Fillers are often utilized to slow down the time traverse as speakers search for the following upcoming words to produce. Miriam, in the third extract, uses lexical hedge 'uhm' to make a pause for a while and think about the next word she will utter. She uses the word 'uhm' to produce the correct word or answer the interlocutor's question and maintains a polite conversation with the interviewer. Holmes (2013) stated that women use hedges as an act of politeness and solidarity with the interlocutor rather than as a form of expressing uncertainty when delivering a speech.

Lexical hedges or fillers are used to welcome and make it easier for others to participate in the discussion to reach consensus, to temper and restrain their speech from showing respect and care for the opinions of their interlocutors and any potential disagreements, and as a familiar tactic. In the fourth extract, Miriam agrees with the interlocutor's assessment of her in the dialogue by using the lexical hedge yes. It shows a sign of respect toward the opinion of the interlocutor.

The function of lexical hedges is to avoid making explicit statements and thus sound more polite. Hedging devices allow people to express themselves while softening their opinions (Almusaway, et al., 2020). In the fifth extract, Miriam uses the word 'you know', trying to get the interviewer's attention and open the interlocutor's emotional state, which aims to demonstrate the same knowledge. The frequent use of lexical hedges by Miriam Santiago is reflected in the studies of Adi et al., (2024), Namaziandost and Shafiee (2018), Subagia Putri et al. (2022) and Rosanti and Jaelani (2016). These studies revealed that females tend to use more lexical hedges than men. This implies that Miriam Defensor possesses a women language feature, confirming Lakof's Theory on women's language features.

Intensifiers

Intensifiers are classified as boosting devices. According to Holmes (2013), women employ boosters or intensifiers more often than

males, to reinforce their intended meaning and ensure the listener gets the point.

Extract 1 (T2L28)

I always urge my husband kiss that friend of mine or go kiss somebody, and he is always very reluctant.

Extract 2 (T3L51)

If you had sent a robot to ask me for dinner, hahaha, I have been very happily dating a robot, hahaha.

Extract 3 (T4L72)

The house should be very, very quiet.

You will notice that my house is very quiet.

Extract 4 (T6L88)

I really found it funny (T6L98)

Extract 5 (T1L32)

We have faith that the Filipino people will very soon rise above their immoral values.

In the first extract, Miriam used the intensifier 'very' to strengthen the intended meaning of her message, which is about her husband. Holmes (2013) states that intensifiers aimed to strengthen intended meaning, for example, really, so, such, and very. In the second extract, Miriam still used the intensifier 'very' to emphasize her intended meaning of the message and to describe what she felt. Arliss (1991) states that the use of intensifiers concerns attention to the emotional message.

Women frequently use, so, really, and very as intensifiers to emphasize, strengthen their intended meaning, and ensure that the receiver receives the message. In the third and fifth extracts, Miriam uses the intensifier to let the interviewer focus on how quiet her house is and to communicate the intended meaning of her speech at the University of Perpetual Health System. She wants the interlocutor to understand her message

and deliver her message. Holmes (2013) stated that women use intensifiers to ensure that the receiver receives the message.

An intensifier is used to complement something and strengthen a particular word's meaning. In fourth extract, Miriam uses the intensifier to emphasize the adjective word in the sentence, which is funny; Miriam emphasizes how funny she found that thing. Miriam tries to convince the interlocutor that what she is saying is true. Pearson and Nelson (2000) mentioned that women also want to enhance their relationships with others through their feelings. Miriam tries to connect with the interviewer about what she feels about that thing by using an intensifier to describe the adjective word funny. This confirms that women use intensifiers more than men do (Rasekh & Saeb, 2015; Fuchs, 2017; Putri et al., 2020; Adi et al. 2024). This implies that Miriam Santiago uses features of women language, confirming Lakof's theory.

Humor

Dorfles (2020) assumes that humor will be considered a particular kind of message that operates when a determined communicative circumstance may change a relationship between the sign and its referent. He also explains that the sign no longer refers to its natural referent, but another 'paradoxical' referent gives a negative paradoxical value to the sign and its humorous effect.

Extract 1 (T1L29)

Ngayon, kapag binoto sila, nanakawin nila ulit, kaya walang katapusan

Extract 2 (T1L8)

At 'yung ibang magnanakaw tumatakpong presidente, ang lalakas ng loob!

In the example given, Miriam tells, or cracks jokes to let the students enjoy themselves while listening to her speech. Lakoff (2004) describes women, lack of confidence and cannot tell jokes

but the utterances of Miriam Santiago in the selected speech is different. Like, it encourages Miriam to use lexical hedges to know the ideas and expressions of the students. Humour is defined as something amusing or makes others laugh and the capacity to recognize what is funny about a situation. Literature have differing points in the use of humor especially by women. Lakof (2004) has stereotype view that women cannot tell jokes. This is supported by the study of Tosun et al. (2018) which revealed that ideal sense of humor was primarily recognized as a masculine presence. Evans et al (2019) likewise confirmed this stereotype in their study which argued that humor by male tends to be less disruptive and more functional compared to female's. However, Bear and Miron-Spektor (2024) argues that despite the stereotype, humor can still be associated with women depending on the contextual moderators including humor type and status. Hence, the status of Miriam Santiago who loves to use humor in her speeches breaks the stereotypes, that empowered women can also express what is belived to be a manly traits – that is humor.

Emphatic Stress

Emphatic stress is also known as boosting devices. According to Lakoff, women use some words to show and emphasize their empathy in their statements.

Extract 1 (T1L3)

I, I, I turned against everything my mother applied to us because I felt that it was too demanding.

Extract 2 (T2L25)

I really want to buy, but they are too expensive.

Extract 3 (T3L60)

I really detested them malalaman mo talaga sinong nangongopya kasi sa likod sila uupo eh.

In the first extract, Miriam tries to persuade the interlocutor by using the word 'too demanding.' Emphatic stress is used by women

when trying to convince their message and the meaning of the message to the interlocutor and strengthens the meaning (Holmes, 2013). In the second extract, Miriam used a boosting device to emphasize the essential word(s) in her statement. Lakoff explains emphatic stress as a term to show that women tend to emphasize the most important word in their statements. In the third extract, Miriam used a boosting device to convince her message and its meaning to the receiver, it also intensifies her message and its intended meaning. Safitri (2017 p. 123) reports that “women generally have a tendency to emphasize certain part of their utterances to help them convey the specific meaning of their utterances.”

Women’s use of emphatic stress is reflected in the studies of Rahmawati (2019), Priska et al (2020), and Indanna (2022) which revealed that women commonly use emphatic stress to give the stress and boosting in the utterances as way of convincing people. Hence, the use of emphatic stress reveals the women’s traits in Miriam’s use of language.

Table 2. Four Series of Contrasts in Miriam Santiago’s
Utterances in the Selected Interviews and Speech

Four Series of Contrasts	The Number of Occurrences	
	Interview	Speech
MASCULINE LANGUAGE:		
Information	8	4
Status	5	2
Independence	1	3
Orders	2	2
FEMININE LANGUAGE:		
Feelings	1	1
Proposals	3	4
Support	4	1
Intimacy	1	0

Table 2 presents the data of Four Series of Contrasts by Tannen's Difference Theory found in Miriam Defensor Santiago's selected interview and speech. Four Series of Contrasts involves Independence Versus Intimacy, Information Versus Feelings, Orders Versus Proposals, and Status Versus Support. Likewise, it is designed to respond to the second objective concerning the

four series of contrasts by Tannen or the linguistic features used by the late Senator Miriam Santiago in GMA News (Interview of Miriam Santiago hosted by Mel Tiangco) and Rappler News (Speech of Miriam Santiago in University of Perpetual Help System).

Information Versus. Feelings

Tannen claims that Information is Masculine language while Feelings, on the other hand, is Feminine language. In the selected interview and speech, Information is more frequently used by Miriam than the linguistic feature “feelings”.

Extract 1 (T1L2)

T: So, you were like your mother?

M: No, no (T1L2)

The linguistic feature “Information” is commonly used when exchanging information in a brief way or by just stating the facts. The answers of Miriam in the given examples are considered “information” as she answers the question directly without including what she feels. Miriam chooses to be factual in answering the question in her selected interview with Mel Tiangco than using the language from a more emotional viewpoint.

Hence, the dominant use of information by a woman like Miriam Santiago seems unorthodox to the what is believed and expected of a woman in her use of language as Tanen (2007) claimed that women use language accentuating on emotions which is opposite to men that is more on facts.

Orders versus. Proposals

Men are more likely to be more direct in their language using imperatives to command others while women are more likely to use more suggesting language in oppose to commanding. Tannen (2007) claims that the linguistic feature “orders” is a masculine language while “proposals” on the other hand is a feminine language. In this series, the linguistic feature “proposal” is prominently used by Miriam.

Extract 2 (T2L28)

M: I always urge my husband to go kiss that friend of mine or go kiss somebody and he is always very reluctant. (T2L28)

T: So?

M: You can at least kiss my women friends

The linguistic feature “proposal” is used to suggest things in more indirect ways. Miriam prefers to suggest and propose things in indirect ways. She suggests to her husband about kissing her friends in a way that they will not have a conflict. Additionally, Miriam asks questions politely and indirectly to her suitor to grant her request. The proposal is a feminine language which Miriam is more frequent use in this series. This confirms to the theory of Tannen (2007) that woman language are more indirect and suggestive.

The dominant use of indirect and suggestive language is reflected in the general Filipino culture politeness, harmony, and respect. Filipinos especially women tend to use indirect language to avoid conflicts, euphemize the impact of the language, and respect (Estrella, 2023; Pontillas et al., 2020).

Status versus. Support

Men see language as a means of asserting dominance while women see it as a way of confirming/supporting ideas. Tannen (2007) describes status as a masculine language and support as a feminine language. In this series, the linguistic feature “status” is frequently used by Miriam in her selected interview and speech.

Extract 3 (T2L30)

T: Hahaha, so wala, wala, wala kayong nadinig man lang?

Na ano na na dapat pagselosan?

M: Well, there's a saying the wife is always the last to know, so I wouldn't know until after I'm well buried six feet under the ground. But so far I hahaha. I've been the head of an intelligence unit. Remember? (T2L30)

Status is to ensure that other people do not discriminate against them. In the conversation,

Miriam prefers to answer the question by mentioning her position in the intelligence unit. Miriam used her position to ensure that her husband will not betray her and she is not afraid of her husband doing a bad thing because of her capability and the position she has. This means that the language of Miriam in this series is masculine.

Independence versus Intimacy

Tannen (2007) claims that Independence is a masculine language while Intimacy on the other hand is a feminine language. Men use language to show they do not rely on others while women prefer to use language to maintain closeness with each other and connect with others.

Extract 4 (T2L21)

M: We're always fighting whether I should practice my career because in terms of money it was completely unnecessary. He wanted me to be a kept woman.

T: Hahahaha And?

M: And as I said, just chose your weapon, ok? Let's abbreviate this discussion. Choose your weapon. Kailangan mamatay isa sa atin nito. Hahahaha eh nag asawa ka ng graduate ng UP college tapos dyan nalang siya sa bahay (T2L21)

Independence is when the meaning of the phrases or sentences is concerned with status. In the conversation, Miriam did not support the suggestion of her husband, and she wants her decision to be followed. Hence, Tannen (2007) describes the linguistic feature “independence” in a way that men go it alone without even discussing it with their partners. They just decide on their own. And it shows that the language of Miriam in this series is masculine.

Based on Tannen's series of contrasts, Miriam's language is masculine, since Miriam uses prominently the linguistic features like information, status, and independence, and proposal is the only feminine linguistic feature used by Miriam.

CONCLUSION

Lexical Hedges, Humor, and Intensifiers are the most prominent among the nine language features used by the late Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago in her selected interview and speech. Based on Tannen's series of contrasts, Miriam's language is masculine, since Miriam uses prominently linguistic features like information, status, and independence, and proposal is the only feminine linguistic feature used by Miriam. The study concludes that the language of Miriam Defensor Santiago in her selected interview and speech is masculine, since she uses linguistic features classified as masculine language. The study is limited to some interviews and speeches of Miriam Santiago in her senior years, which becomes the basis of a recommendation that language used by Miriam in her younger years be studied for future research

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