CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of research background, research of problem, research objectives, research significances, and definition of key terms.

1.1 Research Background

As social beings, humans need the opportunity to communicate with other people living in society. Social communication requires a communication tool called language. Language is a communication tool used by humans to interact, express themselves, and build social relationships. According to Eckert & McConnell-Ginet (2003) language not only reflects but also influences a person's worldview and behavior based on gender. Language is an important object of gender studies because language cannot be separated from culture and social construction.

However, certain communities often misunderstand the terms "gender" and "sex", even though they have different definitions. According to Rahmi (2015) sex is something innate to humans, a biological difference between men and women determined by physical characteristics. Whereas gender is something we do not have but something we do. In other words, gender is a social role, function, or responsibility that is determined based on sex, male and female.

Gender is related to the social and cultural roles of women and men. This affects the use of language in society because women and men have different socialization practices, different professions, and different sound production. Both men and women have special characteristics in their speech. The characteristics of

women's language are more visible than men's because women are more expressive in their language use. Language expression can reflect and maintain gender inequality in various contexts, including social life.

Gender inequality is a condition where women and men do not have equal opportunities and rights in society. This can be seen in many areas of life such as economy, politics, education, and social culture. Gender inequality is often due to gender roles and statuses, which then affect the language use of women and men. According to Lakoff (as cited in Rahmi, 2015) gender injustice occurs when women express their language because they are marginalized in their social lives and are expected to speak in a certain way according to their lower social status than men. Therefore, women's language skills are not as effective as men's.

Gender inequality in language, often influenced by patriarchal culture, leads to disparities in communication patterns between men and women. The use of gendered language can reinforce harmful stereotypes and biases, contribute to discrimination, and portray a negative view of a particular gender. Language plays an important role in shaping social societal norms and perceptions, which affect individuals' opportunities and experiences based on their gender. Language and gender theory have highlighted differences in language use between men and women, such as interruptions, response patterns, and vocabulary choices. Men's language is often considered the standard, while women's language is seen as inadequate or weaker, reflecting underlying gender inequality.

According to Lakoff (1975) gender inequality in language can be seen in how women and men use language. Women's language tends to use more subtle,

polite, and figurative words, while men's language is more assertive, blunt, and uses more precise vocabulary. Women tend to talk more often about things related to feelings, people, and relationships. According to Coates (1988) when women talk to other women, they often speak to each other as equals and they are cooperative in their speaking strategies, for them the group is more important than the individual. Meanwhile, men tend to talk more often about things that are based on facts and logic. Therefore, women are required to speak using softer and more polite language than men, because the use of language will reflect attitude and quality.

When women speak rudely and slovenly like men, they are usually ostracized and even made fun of. Therefore, parents always teach their daughters to speak using polite language. According to Lakoff (1975) women often have different psychological barriers than men in language use, which is caused by discrimination in language learning. Because mothers are the dominant influence in the lives of most children under the age of five, the first language adopted by boys and girls is "women's language". In general, children under the age of five will be under the supervision and care of their mother more often than their father. However, when they enter adolescence to adulthood, they will adopt a new language because they will interact more often with other people. Thus, their vocabulary will increase and even change. When growing up, boys will go through the stage of speaking harshly, which is considered normal for men. However, it is strongly discouraged for girls to speak rudely because it will be

considered very disrespectful and degrade women. This shows that women's language use is still closely related to the issue of gender inequality.

Women's language is used to portray women as weak and powerless subjects, where women should always be gentle and polite and avoid using derogatory words. If they refuse to speak like a woman, they will be ridiculed and considered unfeminist. However, this does not mean that men have complete freedom in using language. When men use women's language, they will be perceived as weak and powerless just like women.

In society, women are born unheard. Rarely are women allowed to express their opinions or views on social issues that occur, because women are considered weak in language. This can be proven when women experience sexual harassment or even rape, they cannot fight for their rights because they are considered weak in language. When expressing opinions, women usually use lexical hedges such as "I mean", "I think", and "I guess", this illustrates that when women speak, they look hesitant, afraid, and not confident. In her book "Language and Woman's Place" the second edition Lakoff (1975) identifies different language characteristics that appear more frequently in women's speech than men's, which is referred to as women's language. Some of the characteristics of women's language identified by Lakoff include the use of Lexical hedges, Tag questions, Empty adjectives, Emphatic stress, Rising intonation on declarative, Precise color terms, Intensifiers, Hypercorrect grammar, Superpolite forms, and Avoidance of strong swear words.

This topic includes cases like what happens to female characters in a Netflix series that illustrates the real phenomenon of women's language on the topic of

gender inequality, *Anne With An E*. The Netflix series, which has 3 seasons, is adapted from the established classic. Novel *Anne of Green Gables* (1908) by Lucy Maud Montgomery. The first season aired on CBC in 2017, and the show was released worldwide on Netflix the same year. It was renewed for a second season in 2018 and a third season in 2019. The researcher chose season 3 because it is the story that most frequently shows the use of women's language features in gender inequality issues related to research, and based on some websites the ratings of season 3 are also higher than previous seasons. *Anne With An E* (2019) is the adventure of a poor girl in the 19th century, Amybeth McNulty as Anne Shirley Cuthbert. Throughout Anne's adolescence, various gender inequality issues affect the female character. Based on the Anne of Green Gables book series by Lucy Maud Montgomery, this Netflix show follows Anne Shirley, a fourteen-year-old orphan, as she enters Avonlea on Prince Edward Island. This Netflix show describes many social problems. Through the film, Anne Shirley Cuthbert experiences a dark and difficult life and issues such as racism, feminism, education, gender bias, human rights, beauty standards, aboriginal history, representation, classism, and grief. These issues of gender inequality affect Anne Shirley Cuthbert and make her respond to this inequality by setting out with her friends to fight for human rights, especially women's rights. This movie shows the problem of gender inequality that can be seen in the way female characters speak. There are several female characters who reflect gender inequality through the use of language features in the series, including Marilla Cuthbert, Diana Barry, Mrs. Eliza Barry, Miss Stacey, and others. Besides Anne, Miss Stacey is an open-

minded and anti-patriarchal character. Judging from the way she dresses, Miss Stacey is more comfortable wearing trousers than skirts like most female characters.

This series presents the unequal treatment of men and women. How gender inequality affects educational outcomes, considering how these differences affect the labor market, the workplace, family structures, and health outcomes. Although we are talking about gender inequality, women are generally at a disadvantage compared to men. One of the most common types of social construction existing in the world is inequality, which manifests in many different ways (Klingorová & Havlíček, 2015).

Based on this phenomenon, the researcher is interested in examining the characteristics of women's language in the issue of gender inequality used by female characters in the *Anne With An E* series using Robin Lakoff's theory. The purpose of this research is to find out what characteristics of women's language and the function of the characteristics of women's language are found in the series.

A previous study on analyzing features of women's language with a different object was conducted by researcher Widyawati (2018), who researches *"Women's Language in Black Swan Movie: A Sociolinguistic Study"*. The purpose of this study is to analyze women's language as in Lakoff's theory of language and gender (1975). The study shows that only seven features of women's language were found in Lakoff's theory in the dialogue of female characters. It consists of

20 lexical hedges, 1 tag question, 1 rising intonation on declarative, 9 empty adjectives, 15 intensifiers, 1 super polite form, and 10 emphatic stress.

The other research about this was also conducted by Utari (2019), who researches *"An Analysis of Women's Language Features used by Indonesian Female Researcher in The Book of Dear Tomorrow by Maudy Ayunda"*. The purpose of the study was to describe the use of women's language features and language functions in the book Dear Tomorrow by Maudy Ayunda, based on the types of women's language features of Lakoff (1975). The results showed that these two book chapters did not use all the characteristics of women's language. The book contained 66 statements about six types of women's language features, they were 19 lexical hedges or fillers, 1 empty adjective, 17 intensifiers, 10 hypercorrect grammar, 1 super polite, and 18 emphatic stress.

The other research about this was also conducted by Bilqis (2023) who researches *"Struggle Against Gender Inequality in Anne With An E"*. The purpose of the study is to see how *Anne With An E* in season 3 faced gender inequality in education and how it affects the main character. This study used Marxist Feminism as a theory. Marx's approach gave us the tools and ideas to think about feminism, class and anti-capitalism simultaneously. Marxist feminism and historicism, which understand reproduction in relation to production, can help people better understand how women are mistreated and exploited under capitalism. The result of this study shows how gender inequality is portrayed, such as the abuse of women, including child abuse, unequal rights at work, and

barriers to girls' education. They make the protagonist react to inequality and highlight the women's liberation movement.

Based on the previous studies mentioned above, the researcher chose a similar topic for analysis. The similarity between the previous study and this study is that the study uses a basic theory that explains the characteristics of women's language based on Robin Lakoff's theory. However, the researcher studied other forms of expression, including the characteristics of women's language used by the female characters of *Anne With An E* series. The difference between previous research and this research is that these studies only focus on women's language features. This research found forms of speech that are included in women's language features in the issue of gender inequality. In addition, this research identifies the language function of the forms of speech in the women's language features found. Other features of the female character's speech, such as the way of speech expression, the effect of gender inequality on women's language use, the situations that occur in conversation, and the function of the language spoken by female characters are explained by the researcher.

1.2 Statement of Problem

The research aims to analyze the women's language features in *Anne With An E* Series. Based on the statement above, it can be formulated as follows:

1. What are the kinds of women's language features in gender inequality issues used by female characters in *Anne With An E*?

2. What are the functions of women's language features in gender inequality issues used by female characters in *Anne With An E*?

1.3 Research Objectives

Based on the formulation of the research question above, the researcher is intended:

1. To find out the kinds of women's language features in gender inequality issues used by female characters in *Anne With An E*.

2. To identify the functions of women's language features in gender inequality issues used by female characters in *Anne With An E*.

1.4 Research Significance

The purpose of this research is to explore and learn more about the characteristics of women's language in the themes of gender inequality in the female characters of the Netflix series *Anne With An E*, specifically how gender relates to language. Through this research, it is hoped that more explanations will be found about how gender inequality can affect language, especially in women's language use.

1) Theoretically

The results of this study are expected to provide more knowledge for people who want to explore more deeply the use of women's language, especially in film series that highlight issues of gender inequality. An in-depth analysis of women's language use is expected to generate wide-ranging thoughts and provide a deep understanding of how female characters use this women's language to address gender inequality.

2) Practically

   The results of this study are expected to provide benefits for students or readers who are studying in the field of English Literature, especially for those who are interested in similar research topics. This research can be a valuable reference source to understand how women's language is used in the issue of gender inequality in films. The analysis built on the findings of this research is expected to provide students with an overview of how women's language is used in films. The results of this research can also be used as a reference that will certainly enrich the insight for people who are interested in studying the use of women's language concerning issues of gender inequality.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

- **Language and Gender** refers to the study of the language used by men and women and how it reflects their position in society. This field examines gender differences in language use and how social and cultural factors influence these differences.

- **Gender Inequality** is a disparity between women and men in a society, particularly in terms of legal, social, economic, and cultural differences.

- **Women's language** is the specific linguistic features and patterns used by women in their communication, which are distinct from those used by men.

- **Series** is a collection of films with an identical schedule that are part of a larger story or franchise.