

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter includes important knowledge about the research. It is broken into five pieces. The background, research questions, research objectives, the scope of the research, and the significance of the research.

#### **1.1 Rationale**

Emphatic stress is a form of stress that is used to put more emphasis on certain words in a sentence or to ensure that the meaning of the sentence is clear. Stress is used by speakers to give more emphasis to certain aspects of what is being said through intonation, loudness, or pitch of words. Emphatic stress in written text is made by using different typographic methods to emphasize certain words or phrases. According to Nuringtyas & Navila (2022) women can use italics, coloring, repetition, bold, capitalization, and even punctuation like exclamation points for extra emphasis are common techniques. The role of vocal emphasis in spoken language is mirrored by these approaches, which graphically highlight the most significant portion of the text. Lakoff (1975) said that while speaking, women utilize emphatic stress to highlight the most significant terms in the sentence, ensuring that the audience takes them seriously. Women utilize emphatic stress to reinforce their statements.

Women support women, which refers to showing solidarity and support for other women. This movement empowers women in many areas of life. Holmes (2013) suggests that there are 4 reasons why women have different speaking styles, namely: 1) Social status, more spoken cues denoting social class and background are understood by women than by men. Some women use more standard forms to mark high social status, while others have no social status and use these forms to get it; 2) Women's role as guardians of society's values, in society, most women are expected to have better behavior than men, and society expects them to be modeling correct behavior; 3) Women's status as a subordinate group, is a mark of courtesy for women to speak as a subordinate group. This is a generalization that most women cover their faces as a form of. A lady does not like to give cause for offense

to others. It is therefore implying that a woman who uses formal language to avoid 'losing face' is asking for more status than she is entitled to in comparison with men in the same social class; 4) Speech expresses masculinity, machos are typical of men, implying strength and hardness; women prefer the traditional forms.

Instagram is a social networking platform where users may post photos and then add a caption to share their thoughts about the image. (Sari et al 2020). The Instagram comments area is an important feature that allows users to seek and receive validation and support, therefore developing social relationships and creating a feeling of community. Spencer Barbosa is a prominent social media star known for her engaging content on TikTok, where she has amassed over 10 million followers. She shares makeup tutorials, GRWM (Get Ready With Me) videos, and commentary on trending topics (Li, 2024). In a Q&A session with Mediaplanet, Spencer clarified that the way social media distorts people's perceptions of their bodies is one of the things that inspired her to become a women's advocate. People normalized spending hours scrolling through the bodies, faces, and lives of hundreds of other people on their phones over the past several years. She made an effort to educate young people about the unfairness of comparing their bodies to the flawlessly poised bodies of others. She therefore makes use of her position to spread ideas that value originality and body positivity to boost confidence, particularly among young women.

Agustia (2023); Ainurisanti (2023); Ni Putu Tifani Puspa Lestari et al (2024); Nuringtyas & Navila (2022); Rahmawati & Sayogie (2023); Rizki et al (2023); Utari Juanda (2023); Widiasari et al (2023); and Wilyandri Sukma (2023). Their study focused on how women's language is portrayed in the movie. It highlights the importance of analyzing language in media to understand gender and communication. Bustan & Alakrash (2020); Indanna et al (2022); Shahzad et al (2024). Their study focused on the language used in travel blogger videos. It highlights how language plays a role in engaging audiences and shaping perceptions of travel experiences. Ginarti et al (2022) and Sari et al (2020) studies were focused on the language variations used on Instagram. It highlights how users adapt their language to engage diverse audiences and express identity. While Lubis & Bahri,

(2020) and Purba et al (2023) focused on the use of language in a talk show. It highlights how language is used to entertain, engage, and communicate ideas to the audience. Lastiar Sinurat et al (2021) and Ramadhani et al (2024) their studies focused on the use of language in speech. It highlights how language choices impact communication, persuasion, and audience engagement. Dwiantari et al (2023) studied only focused on how language is used in the interview video. Suwastini et al (2023) studied the use of language in English textbooks.

Ni Putu Tifani Puspa Lestari et al (2024) stated that when it comes to gender disparities in human language usage, research on women's language is essential. It can increase comprehension of various communication styles, improving inter-gender communication and perhaps lowering miscommunications.

Among the previous research studies, the works of Ginarti et al (2022) and Sari et al (2020) stood out as significant sources of inspiration for this study due to their close relevance and insightful findings. The similarities between the two previous studies and this study lie in the following: 1) the object of research, which both use Instagram as the object of research; 2) theory, previous studies both used the theory proposed by Robin Lakoff related to women's language. While the difference lies in the specific types of women's language, this research only focuses on one type of women's language, namely, emphatic stress. Therefore, the researcher will focus on identifying comments that contain emphatic stress features, such as the use of capitalization, repetition of words, extended letters, and punctuation, and try to analyze the intent of the comments to understand how the followers conveyed support, emotions, or certain messages to Spencer Barbosa post on February 29th, 2024.

While emphatic stress in face-to-face interaction has been extensively studied, its strategic role in constructing online solidarity among women remains underexplored. Therefore, this study contributes to bridging the gap between traditional gender language research and emerging patterns in digital discourse.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

This research is intended to find out the use of emphatic stress in Spencer Barbosa's Comment Section, the researcher's interest in formulating the problems as follows:

1. What are the types of emphatic stress used in the comment section of Spencer Barbosa's Instagram?
2. What are the functions of emphatic stress used in the comment section of Spencer Barbosa's Instagram post?

## **1.3 Research Objectives**

Based on the Research Questions as mentioned above, this research aims:

1. To know the types of emphatic stress used in the comment section of Spencer Barbosa's Instagram post.
2. To know the functions of emphatic stress used in the comment sections of Spencer Barbosa's Instagram Post.

## **1.4 Scope of The Research**

Based on the objectives of this study, which aim to determine the usage of emphatic stress words in Spencer Barbosa's Instagram comment section, the features and functions of the words employed have been understood. Knowing the theory, types of characteristics, and functions of emphatic stress words allows one to hypothesize on the meaning of the language used by followers who comment on Spencer Barbosa's Instagram post.

## **1.5 Significance of Research**

The purpose of this study is to identify the types and functions of emphatic stress used in the comment section of Spencer Barbosa's Instagram. From the research objectives, it is expected that this research can be useful as:

1. Theoretically

This research contributes to linguistic studies, especially sociolinguistics, by focusing on the use of emphatic stress as a communication tool to build solidarity on social media. In addition, this research complements gender

studies by providing insights into how women use language to support each other.

2. Practically

The results of this study can be used by influencers and content creators to create more supportive communities, as well as provide insights to social media platform managers on the importance of maintaining inclusive digital spaces.

