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Gender and Power in Jordanian Speech Community A Sociolinguistic Analysis of the Effect of Gender on Power and Style of Language

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Abstract

Power, gender, beside language can be fundamental ideas in several academic disciplines. These ideals are represented in diverse directions by various cultures. The current study sheds light on the impact towards the gender variable on the power of language used in Jordanian society. The sample of the study comprised 30 participants (equally distributed by gender) who were randomly selected and voluntarily participated in the research from the University of Jordan. The analysis of the study included a qualitative method which was mainly based on identifying the difference between women and men in using powerful and powerless language by investigating the differences in using interruptions hedging tactics, tag inquiries. According to the results of the study, it has been discovered that men employ greater power language than women. While, it won't mean that feminine language is weak, though, in that situation due to the usage of power language is strongly tied to the classroom lesson's perspective. Additionally, research in varied circumstances would also be important to get a clear image of power language in people with similar backgrounds.

Keywords: Gender, Powerful and Powerless Language, Interruptions, Hedges, Tag Questions.

Introduction

I.1. Overview and Background

Applied linguistics, linguistic anthropology, gender studies, linguistics, sociolinguistics, and allied fields have all seen a rise in the multidisciplinary field of language, gender, and power studies. Many linguists, sociolinguists, psychologists, and others have studied the interrelationship of these notions. Gender is the most important biological distinction between men and women (what a guy or girl should expect from society). Gender, on the other hand, is constructed by cultural conventions, roles, and so on. The interplay of language, gender, and power and societal beliefs are closely intertwined (Gyamera, 2019).

Males and females are supposed being sociable distinct in the sense that culture assigns their various social echelons and expects them to behave differently. The societal perception of the a variety of behaviors and positions are anticipated of males and females empowers some while limiting the abilities of others (Gyamera,2019).

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I.2. Research Contexts

1.2.1. Gender

Gender conjugated with the varied responsibilities also obligations which culture allocates with each gender. Different fields have various definitions of gender, besides others differentiate between it and sex. Legal professionals and literary critics both define gender as the biological sex of an individual. Social scientists, however, associate "gender" with non-biological factors. According to Rothwell (2000), gender is a "social role behavior" whereas sex, or men and women, is biological" (feminine-masculine).

It is the product of the biological sexes as they are created by civilization. "raw ingredients." "Gender" refers to sociocultural and psychological factors that shape, pattern, and evaluate female and male behavior in ethnographic studies of speaking. It is closed to an anthropological standpoint in this study. In contrast to sex differentiation, which denotes biological differences between males and females (Rothwell, 2000).

The Dominance Approach was first put forth by Lakoff (1975), who claimed that men inherently exhibit greater dominance than women, particularly in their speech and behavior toward or around females. However, the dominance method shows that females behave less dominantly with males in her other theories of tag issues. This is because females tend to utilize tag inquiries more often than males, even out of elegance, also because of their unsure of their viewpoints and need a male opinion to confirm them. Men are known to act dominantly around women, hence females are known to utilize tag questions further frequently in comparative with males. Consequently, she needs a male suggestion or reinforcement for the women's discourse to be viable. There is a difference in speech patterns between the sexes as a result of male domination and perhaps as a result of patriarchy. The dominance theories contend that males and females reside in a community where the languages and cultures are similar, when rank and power are unequally distributed and are depicted through language and other cultural indicators. In theory, the language and conversational tools available to men and women are the same, and they serve the same functions. Evident disparities in usage imply status and objective distinctions. Typically, analyses based on the dominance framework contend that the distinctions between males' and females' speech develop as a performance of male take control over females and endure to maintain women's subordination to males.

The Difference approach is well-known for Tannen (1990). She made it known that the lifestyles of men and women are frequently depicted as belonging to distinct cultures. Men and women live in various cultural (and hence linguistic) worlds. "Girls and boys develop in various linguistic environments, also if grow beside the same neighborhood, on the same street, or in the same home. Others speak differently to them and anticipate and agree various forms of communication with (Tannen, 1990), who grouped the theory under:

1. Status quotes Males have prestige beside are perceived like stronger that dominant in culture when they speech, whereas females utilize in the speech for reassuring and uplift others.
2. Suggestions vs. Understanding - While males will look for a solution to the issue, women will look for consolation and empathy.
3. Versus information Men tend to communicate or take in information in a message-oriented manner, whereas women talk to strengthen connections and social ties.
4. Orders versus Proposals - Men like to communicate with immediate commands (for instance, "close the door"). While, female interactions are rife with incredibly polite expressions (such as "would you mind if...?").

5. Conflict vs. Compromise - While males tend to conflict to demonstrate their dominance, generally females aim at minimizing conflict and find ways to reach agreements instead.
6. Verse on Independence According to the hypothesis, women want to seek companionship in general while males prefer to be independent.

Based on notions of dominance, power and its position are non-evenly allocated among males and females in their shared language and cultural context, and these differences are conveyed through linguistic as well as additional societal signs. In theory, the language and conversational tools available to men and women are the same, and they serve the same functions. Evident disparities in usage imply status and objective distinctions. Typically, analyses based on the dominance framework contend that the distinctions between males' and females' speech develop as a result of male domination over females and endure to maintain females' subordination to males.

Works like *Speaking Freely: Getting Rid of the Lies of the parent's tongues* by academics like Spender (1985), and Pearson & West (1991). were linked to the dominance concept.

1.2.2. Power

Power is the process of having the capacity to control and affect people's living circumstances depending on their sociocultural worldview. Depending on Moore and Hendry, it is "... the social force that drives action, also by studying that, can learn who manages that beside to whom led to advantage. (Moore & Hendry, 1982). Individuals with the power to affect the lives of others, like judges, police officers, and politicians, can wield power. Again, many functions' population perform in culture can provide with power. Teachers, bosses, and parents, for example, have authority over their employees as a result of their societal duties. Such power was categorized as 'personal power' by Thomas & Wareing (2004).

Language is frequently used to demonstrate power; it can also be used to create power. Political power, for example, exists through languages, such as speeches and debates. Language is also used to codify and discuss laws, and it is also used to give orders. It's kind of exercising within language even in the general field, also in individuals' residencies. Certain roles have been retained in societies through oral and traditional practices, institutional authorities, and established gender functions and standards. Gender-based structures attempt to govern each sexes. The outcome is existing institutional tensions, and hence management of institutional authority over who gets to speak, how much it matters, where, and how the different sexes can speak. The management of representations happens through social, institutional, and verbal contact, and how these are exhibited, communicated, and reproduced are all forms of social power. Coulmas (2005 a&b) said that "sex variance in communication style is understood like conveying also perpetuating power version's." Most nations have a tendency for males to govern and dominate females, and females fight for liberation. These 'dominance' and 'emancipation' can be seen in our naming everyday routine, works, proverbs, terms, and so on, each of which are communicated through language. As a result, the more power you have, the more language you can employ.

1.2.3. The Interface Between Language, Gender, and Power

The connection through language and gender is culturally produced rather than 'natural' (Foley 1997). This is because communities assign various types of language to gender. The big research's compact on men and women speech has improved that certain linguistic traits are solely communicated to males or females (Lakoff, 1975; Romaine, 1994 and

Romaine ,2003). Ladies are commonly expected to talk with so formally and politely in comparative with males in most civilizations. In compare with males, that is contacted by 'toughness' and concise language, femaleness is in relation to respectful, gentility, and top culture. These societal expectations of male and female behavior influence their word choice (language).

Many researchers have stated that female's talking ways varies from males'. Females have biological traits that distinguish them from men. Ladies low in weigh, grown faster, compared to men, they live longer but are weaker and have less muscular mass, also because of varies responsibilities that have among the people and culture. Additionally, the voice quality of the different genders varies. The voice chords of women are narrower than those of men, who have stronger vocal cords, which led to Females' voices have higher pitches than men's voices. However, these disparities may have a societal component (Wardhaugh, 1986).

Literature Review

Language, over the past 20 years, also gender studies have looked at many various aspects of language use and presented a broad diversity of suggestions relating the relationship between gender, language, and, in particular, the function of power in that interaction. Language has been considered a resource for females fighting either via tyranny or through advancing their own objectives and interests, and as a reinforcement for male supremacy on the other. We've all learned a lot by considering such recommendations, the majority of which were supported by fascinating and frequently illuminating observations. However, the lack of a clear theoretical framework within which to improve and further investigate them as part of a continuous research community has diminished their explanatory power.

Wenjing (2012), females always utilize phrases having inflated importance, as in lovely, pretty, cute, heavenly, adorable, darling, precious, sweet, and charming. Your clothing, for example, is beautiful. Males utilize simple phrases to heighten the outcome—good, great, really, and so forth. Additionally, Lakoff (1975) learned about that women utilize so intensifiers in compare men, like "so," "awfully," "beautiful," "terrible," "very," and so on. Men.

Wenjing (2012) found that females talking more naturally than males do. Meaning that women rather than males speak with formality and a classy accent. Females often talk with traditional and authoritative articulation because they want to keep their sensitivity when communicating. The use of non-standard voice styles is more prevalent among males than among females, though. Also, the feminine tone is higher than the masculine tone. Linguists studied a range of linguistic resources and found that women typically utilize the interrogative tone. Additionally, women use reversal stress more often than men do, which means that men usually emphasize the most important word with the highest pitch. Conversely, while speaking the most important word, women speak at the lowest tone. According to Ning *et al.*, (2010), Topics are picked by men and women differently. For instance, guys like to talk about politics and economics. Contrarily, women place a higher priority on their families and education.

Rangkuti and Lubis (2018) built on the idea that a person's use of language is a reflection of their personality. Power language is used to communicate to power, authority, and

confidence. The 3 components can be detected in the manner of speech. The lack of "Umm", "I mean", "I assume", and so on in a person's talking indicates that they are not reluctant, but instead exhibits persuasion. According to O'Barr (1982) cited by Areni and Sparks, (2005).

The regular employment of speech indicators such as Because of their 'powerless' language, deictic phrases, formal language, tag questions, hedges, and intensifiers, both verbal and nonverbal hesitations and hesitations are used often (O'Barr, 1982 cited Areni and Sparks, 2005). Additionally, to voice signals, power language refers to a person's competence, understanding, and familiarity with the subject or information being delivered. According to McGinty (2001), this is also related to the fact that a person leads rather than answers, makes claims, establishes context with authority, contrasts, disputes, and argues before demonstrating the consequences of control.

According to Domingos & Webb (2012), the "control" exerted by individuals who are dominating the engagement over less powerful players in communication is referred to as the power of discourse utilization (Fairclough, 2001). The premise and presumption that males are better and more powerful than women raise concerns about the effects of male dominance on men's linguistic behavior. According to Difference Theory, which Uchida (1992) mentioned, men and women communicate differently even though they coexist socially.

Robinson *et al.*, (2003), said if a relationship of gender identity and linguistics could demonstrate that men dominate nearly every element of life. This has also had an impact on how men employ power language, with Holmes & Schnurr (2005) noting that men's speech patterns are built on "speaking eloquently", as described from Pearson *et al.*, (1991). Men tend to employ power language more than women do, as seen by the authoritative features of their language. Saul (2010) and Mullany (2007) proposed that male power language, which is often viewed as more significant than female power language, not only gives men the capacity to create, but also gives them the potential to alter reality by altering the presumptions that society places on them, that Spender (1985) quoted in Saul (2010), also is supported by him. He adds that "categorizations of reality depend on our social perspective," and in a culture where males are seen as more dominating than women, their use of language is believed to be more meaningful and powerful.

The similar problem was brought up by O'Barr (1982), as cited by Areni and Sparks (2005), by pointing out that women are the ones who use "powerless language" like hedges and tag questions. The usage of it between lady's professors can improved a precocious indicator led to the male lecturer's employ more powerful language than females. Furthermore, taking into account the role of lecturers as facilitators of interactions in the classroom, Holmes & Schnurr (2005) have explored how masculine conception influences male speech; masculine conception is a prime element that forms an outstanding leader. To provide additional opportunities to man professors for employing power language while talking to pupils than for lady's instructors, who, in order to maximize their use of power language, would need to adjust in the same manner.

ii.1. Objectives

They are surveys to investigate the function of gender and power in the language used in the Jordanian context. In this regard, the researcher in this study aims to:

- 1-Identify the variety for males and females utilizing of powerful language
- 2- Investigate the causes beyond the variation of men and women regarding interruptions, hedges, and tag questions.
- 3-Explore the cultural reasons concerning gender and the use of types of language that have strength and weakness.

Materials and Methodology

iii.1. Research Design

Due to the fact that the survey's information were words or phrases style, a qualitative descriptive technique was adopted. Data collection for the descriptive analysis is done in order to test or address queries regarding the study's objectives.

The researcher in this study aims to answer the following questions:

- 1-Do men use more powerful language than women?
- 2-Do women use more Interruptions, Hedges, and Tag Questions than men?
- 3- What are the cultural reasons behind the difference between men and women in using powerful and powerless language?

iii.2. Data Collection

The researchers collected information through interviews. Jordan University students were questioned in total. The data was collected using a stratified random sampling procedure in which the researcher giving each person in the population an equal opportunity of being chosen. The interviews comprised general inquiries as well as cultural and sociological general information. The researcher utilized interviews as a data collection strategy to determine the similarities and differences in language power and language style based on the variable of gender.

iii.3. Data Analysis

The current study is a qualitative one in which the researcher analyzed the collected data to investigate the significant and insignificant differences between male and female participants. First, it was established which lecturers—men and women—used strong language. Following the transcription of the interview tapes, an analysis of the transcripts' content was conducted. All male and female participants' usage of power language was tallied, and table 1 shows how frequently it was done so. The results will demonstrate how gender and context have different effects on the frequency of power language usage. There is a significant effect of gender on both power and language presented in table 2 of the ANCOVA test.

Table 1. Study Sample Characteristics

| Variable | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------|-----------|----------------|
| GenderFemaleMale | 3530 | 53.846.2 |
| Age in years (Mean) | 9.31 | |

Table 2. Ancova test results of power and language based on gender variable

| Gender | Mean \pm SD | Adjusted Mean | F value | Pvalue | Partial eta square |
|--------|-----------------|---------------|---------|--------|--------------------|
| Female | 7.86 \pm 0.36 | 7.85 | 2.636 | 0.110 | 0.041 |
| Male | 7.67 \pm 0.55 | 7.67 | | | |
| Female | 9.83 \pm 3.44 | 9.97 | 0.266 | 0.608 | 0.004 |
| Male | 9.72 \pm 3.12 | 9.55 | | | |

iv. Analysis

As mentioned previously in this chapter, the researcher recorded the daily speech of pupils, both boys and girls at the University of Jordan to identify the similarities and differences in the use of interruptions, hedges, and tag questions. The results of the survey revealed regarding interruption that while men and women interrupt each other in various ways, both genders interrupt frequently and exert control over the floor. The researcher hypothesizes that improved knowledge of the patterns of interruption and conversational dominance between genders will promote the involvement of all speakers in discussion and subject development. In Jordanian society, there is common sense that women talk and interrupt more than their male counterparts. This may be attributed to the idea that women express more than males while they frequently speak more succinctly and directly.

Concerning lexical hedges, the results showed the respondents' propensity for using lexical hedges differs across man and woman responders. Female respondents employ more lexical hedges than male respondents. Thus, the lexical hedges and fillers most commonly employed by female respondents were *hmm*, *uhh*, *you know*, and *yes*. In contrast, male respondents were more likely to utilize lexical hedges and fillers such as "I think" and "yes". When choosing lexical hedge terms, respondents showed a broad range of diversity. However, male respondents did not choose lexical hedge terms as effectively. The number of lexical hedges used in providing opinions in debate and discussion contexts proved this.

Regarding the utilize of tag questions depended about the gender variable, the most prominent claims of the early feminist linguistic study was that men and women employ tag questions differently. Robin Lakoff (1975) famously proposed, as part of her groundbreaking work in the study of gender inequality, that there is a "linguistic rule" where females use tag inquiries furthermore males. As a result, women's speech sounds politer furthermore men's. One part of politeness is, as previously stated, keeping a choice open and refraining from forcing your viewpoint, views, or assertions on other people (Lakoff 1975: 18). When it comes to the gender issue in interview discourse tag use, the current research results support the approach that both genders employ tag questions in their speech equally. Furthermore, the idea that the female-male interview discourse would include more question tags than the female-female interview discourse appears to have been validated. According to the findings, just two occurrences of constant polarity tags, or slightly more than 1%, can be identified in authentic, spontaneous interview conversation.

In conclusion, Powerful and weak words are frequently linked to the user's masculine and feminine traits. People are perceived as more feminine than those who do not employ hedges and other weak types of language. It's common knowledge that low-status groups and women use language that lacks influence. Women tend to speak in a way that makes them seem kind and kind, which makes them seem weaker and causes their language to be labeled as weak.

Women who are viewed as using strong language are considered unfavorably as "not acting" how women should act, which is to use courteous, loving, and caring language. Carli (2001) found that women are required to communicate with others with compassion and love in order to be perceived favorably for their use of strong words.

Lack of strength does not always translate into language that is weak. According to Carli (1990), women who used weak language had greater influence over males than those who used strong language. In a different research, Reid and Shui-Huang (1999) note that females use weak language to get their say in conversations but switch to strong language to take control of the topic. Although employed for distinct goals, both language types were utilised.

When weak speakers get a turn because of weak language that has been persuasively framed, the speaker then employs strong language to take control of the discourse. Therefore, despite what language creators, the males, have said, language is not as impotent as its name. In conclusion, the researcher found that the forms, contents, and uses of male and female pupils were different. Compared to women, males are more directive. Furthermore, they use clearer language. Women, on the other hand, speak more eloquently and formally. Additionally, they convey their sentiments, emotions, and psychological states with more gestures and words. The use of interruptions, tag questions, and hedges varied significantly between groups as well. Adverbs are not gender-specific, the research found. The study's conclusions confirmed Lakoff's view on gender-bound language, at least in four different domains. In this regard, it is important to keep in mind that, although this study emphasizes it, the use of their power language also depends on the situation in which they use their language. The statistics show that participants who are men use more powerful language than participants who are women. The same-gender subjects do, however, show differences that may be recognized.

The observations revealed in the survey also supported Romaine (2003) cites Lakoff's (1975) argument that women speak with more hedging and tag questions than males. Due to the association between the use of hedges and tag questions and "powerless language," as emphasized by Newman (2008) and suggested by O'Bar (1982), it has an effect on how they utilize language in their speeches. Holmes (1990) acknowledged the use of the tag questions and hedges that appear frequently in female speeches suggest a sense of duty to produce a successful engagement (Holmes, 1990). Given that women are more concerned with making connections than negotiating encounters (Tannen, 1994), the use of hedges and tag questions by female participants in this study could be regarded as a technique for them to better understand their students. Lakoff approaches the topic from the same angle, arguing that the use of women's conversational speech, which includes the use of hedges, indirectness, and tag questions, is a means of maintaining the social relationship formed between them and the listeners.

Conclusions

The social roles of men and women who speak the language are inextricably linked to the structures, vocabularies, and ways of employing language. Women's speech differs from men's speech, and they use language differently because of differences in styles and ways of using language, interaction, thought, culture, linguistic attitudes, gender, etiquette, and stereotypes. Gender and language have a lot of intimate relationships. To put it another way, men and women use language in very different ways. It is due to the language's structure, societal norms, or the people who use the language. Gender (male-female) is

also socially constructed. Furthermore, men's and women's speaking styles are profoundly rooted in power structures. Gender and language have a variety of intimate links. To put it another way, men and women use language in very different ways. It is due to the language's structure, societal norms, or the people who use the language.

Gender (male-female) is also socially constructed. We detect differences/variations between men and women as a result of social institutions or taboos. Furthermore, men's and women's speaking styles are profoundly rooted in power structures. Furthermore, the individual's personality and the vitality of the group have a role in explaining heterogeneity in language use. As a result, there is a close relationship between language structures, vocabularies, and ways of utilizing language, as well as the social roles of men and women who speak the language.

This paper included how language can be another potential source of power. Highlighting some of the studies done by scholars that point to concerns of language in the communication of power, future research could embark from the point where a gap has been left out. Most research was confined to investigating how communication is used to organize, shape, or structure an organization and its people through the study of information transmission, behavior and message sense-making, and production and reproduction of power through ideology, hegemony, and reification. Nonetheless, language was given less attention.

Therefore, it is important to recognize that language study does not only belong to linguists or sociolinguists, but to other researchers who find language constitutes part of their discipline. With this note, organizational communication researchers are invited to follow up on this proposition to discover the power of language so that the study of the language used in communication is administered by those who know what communication is all about and also to address other variables that have a role in language use differences like age and educational status.

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