



A Study about Language Used Toward Gender Differences Between Females and Males in Social Context

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Abstract

This study was purposed to investigate gender differences impact to the language used in widely social context. Library research method was conducted in this study. There were no population and sample in this study. As the author only need books and pieces of research to find out the answer. The auhor was using thematical analysis technique to analyze. The results showed that the gender differences affected to the language used, such as dialects, phonological, morphological structure and how they communicate, which are have unique characteristics every origin/language.

Keywords: language and gender; gender differences; sociolinguistics

Introduction

Language and gender is the topic that always debated until now. Gender is defined as the distinction of females, males, etc that constructed socially and also distinguish from their socio-cultural behavior, which is include their speech (Holmes, 2013; Holmes & Meyerhoff, 2003). "Gender is also something we cannot avoid; it is part of the way in which societies are ordered around us, with each society doing that ordering differently" (Wardough, 2006, p. 316). In addition, Phillips et. al (1987) (as cited by Wardough in 2006) stated that the differences between females and males in common had been obvious to see, such as the chromosomes between females and males are different. The females have 'Y' chromosomes, while males 'X' chromosomes. Their muscles and fat body are different. The majority of men are stronger rather than women. In addition, women get mature more rapidly rather

than men. This condition brings major impact in every aspects of life, especially language used between women and men. The gender differences affected the society's perspectives toward any gender in the language used daily. The distinctions language used toward the gender differences were found in the more salient languages toward each other languages (Bucholtz & Hall, 2006; Holmes & Meyerhoff, 2003). The language used toward the gender differences sometimes considered from the belief of 'sexism' in certain cultures. However, language used also showing cultures or society, in the way their respecting to each other gender. As it reflected the females and males role and status in that culture. The majority of people view good women/girls based on their utterances. People would think that females must be more polite at their speaking rather than males. Also, males are getting more allowance at speaking using dirty words, rather than females. That stereotype also influenced the way how parents upbringing their children based on gender differences, especially in language used. Therefore, these differences resulted called of "women's languages" and "men's languages" which are very different, and exclusive in each other (Bucholtz & Hall, 2006; Lakoff, 1973). From that descriptions, language and gender topic is very important to know. There were found several relevant study that found. As the language and gender topic is the popular to do by many scholars. However, the author was found only three closest topics. The relevant topic study were investigated the specifics language and used difference study method. First, the study from Sardabi & Afghari (2015) investigated about the use of intensifiers toward Iranian females and males students. Second, the study from Al-Harashsheh (2014) that examined the conversational style and phonological variations toward Jordanian females and males in spoken Arabic language. Last, the study from (Newman et al., 2008) that analyzed 14,000 text samples by using discourse analysis to find out the gender differences in language use. In this study, the author is only focused and discussed about the language used in widely use toward females and males in social context, such as linguistics characteristics in their language used and the way their communicate in society. In addition, the investigation toward language and gender in social context would be very informative and knowledgeable. This study was done by library research in online media. The books and pieces of research that used were searching by its keyword or through the bibliography references in somewhat book. Thus, the language and gender perspectives and study finding from sociolinguist and linguist scholars was conducted. Besides that, the following research question, as follows.

- 1) How gender differences affect to the linguistics characteristics (i.e grammatical, dialects, phonological and morphological structure, etc)?
- 2) How gender differences influence to the way people communicate in common?

Method

This study is designed by using a qualitative design, which conducted by using

library research. George (2008) defined library research method as a research method that conducted by computer engine searching or practical books reading to find the knowledge and information, to be answered the research question. This study is done by using online library or computer search engine, because it does not have the limitation to find any books and pieces of study. The online library are flexible to use, which found most of them are costless, paperless and not have a tentative schedule. The books and articles were mainly found from Google Scholar and Crossreff by searching the related topic. There were no participants or respondents in this study. Thematical analysis was conducted in this study to analyze in three steps procedure, as follows. The books and pieces of articles were read and taken notes. Then, the author interpreted several interesting features and compared within others sociolinguist and linguist perspectives. The similar interesting features were notes by several codes that related with gender differences. In the last step, the data were produced into reports.

Results



The gender differences are being affected to the society culture. The society culture sometimes provided by the society perspectives itself. The distinctions in language use toward women and men, which resulted the society perception to the proper language to use in each genders. The author was found some society cultures perceive the gender differences as the gender exclusive toward each others.

Gender Differences toward Phonological, Morphological Structure and Dialects Use in Language used

Wardaugh (2006) mentioned *Gros Ventre* language has different phonological structure. He found that this language is from an Indian tribe of American, which spoken along Northeast United States. Females and males have different pronunciation in bread word. It found that women have palatalized velar stops, while the men have palatalized dental stops, for instance female said *kjatsa* 'bread' and male *djatsa* 'bread'. Hans (1944) (as cited by Wardaugh in 2006) added *Koasati* as another Indian language, which has language used difference toward gender differences. This language is come from Southwestern Lousiana in United States. Males often added *s* in the end of verbs, for instance, males *lakáws* and females *lakáw*. It also happen in their behavior, such as upbringing their children. Mothers from that origin teach their son by using males language used, while the men narrating stories to their daughter by using women's language. In addition, *Yukaghir* language is claimed have the salient differences toward females and males language used. The differences also showed in the age-graded toward their language used. This language is come from Russia which spoken along the Kolymn river in Northeast Siberia. There are phonological differences among females and males in that origin. The majority of women from that origin have /ts/ and /dz/ in their pronunciation, and the men have /tj/ and /dj/. The differences that happen in age-draded, e. g /čj/

and /j̃j/ that used by old people to the younger people in both genders in that origin. As results, the females have /ts/; /dz/; /čj/ and /j̃j/, while the males have /tj/; /dj/; /čj/ and /j̃j/ in their pronunciation. Holmes (2013) added the *Bengali* language, which came from India as the language that have different language used toward gender differences. The using of [l] and [n] in their pronunciation toward the gender differences. However, (Wardaugh, 2006) mentioned the women, children and uneducated people prefer to do not using that pronunciation. The same thing also happen in the Siberian language, *Chuckchi*. The differences using the pronunciation only happen in men, which uses [n] and [t], for example, females *nitvaqenat* and males *nitvaqaat*. Similarly, the women in montreal do not pronounce 't' in the words *il* and *elle*. Across from this, the females pronounce 't' more clear rather than males in the words e. g *water* and *got* in Scotland. Further, Holmes (2013) added the *Yana* language is known as North American Indian language, and *Chiquitano* (indigenous people from Brazil), a South American Indian language. However, *Yana* language is already extinct. This language has different intonation between women and men languages. The men language in *Yana* used to longer intonation to the men users, than women language to the others women. As the men language form in *Yana* add a suffix in sometimes. For example, the females usually said 'ba' and males 'ba-na' (deer); and the women said 't'et' and males 't'en-na' (grizzly bear). In Japanese, the majority of females are frequently prefixed by *o-*, which showed a politeness and signed a formal style, for instance, *ootosan* which spoken by women and the men said *oyaji* (dad/father). However, this rules is more appropriate to speak to the social degrees and/or formality, in the modern standard Japanese. In addition, the females would be have social sanctions when they talked the 'men's languages' in Japanese. In addition, the gender differences can be predicted from the change of pronoun system in Japanese. They have different pronoun to say 'I' to refers themselves. The females are expected to use semi-formal words pronoun 'I' *atashi*, the formal *watashi* and *watakushi* (the men also use this pronoun 'I'). Further, the males use the causal context in pronoun 'I' to refers themselves, which are could be *ore* and *boku*. However, the modern Japanese women agaisnt this language used rules nowadays. Based on those explanation, the following table is to construct how gender differences affect to the linguistics characteristics that derived from several finding, as follows.

Table 1.1 How the gender differences affect to the structure of phonological, morphological structure and dialects in language used

| Language | Origin | Notes | Analysis |
|--------------------|--|---|---|
| <i>Gros Ventre</i> | Northeast United States | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Phonological differences between females and males. - The pronounce that aim to refers females and males. | The phonological differences is aspect which affected by the gender differences toward language used. The phonological differences sometimes showing the politeness, and/or strength toward verbal or non-verbal communication. |
| <i>Koasati</i> | Indian language (Southwestern Lousiana, United States) | The males often add s in the verbs that they talk. This case also happen in the way they upbringing their children. The females use the men's languages to their sons. The males use women's language to narrate stories. | The gender differences in language used affect to their mindset toward their position in society. Also, they tend to make children more habitual in their language used toward the gender differences. |
| <i>Yukaghir</i> | Russia (Kolymn river until Northeast Siberia) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Phonological differences between females and males. - Phonological differences toward age-graded | The politeness and strength are reflected in <i>Yukaghir</i> language used while the verbal communication |

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|-----------------|--|--|--|
| | | | takes places. |
| <i>Bengali</i> | India language | The word choices that only can used by males on verbal communication. | This also same with the previous analysis. Males are trying to show their strength. |
| <i>Chuckchi</i> | Siberia | The differences word only can used by males. | Similar within previous analysis |
| <i>Yana</i> | Indian language (North America and South America), Chiquitano (Indigenous people from Brazil) this language now extinct. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Differences intonation between females and males. - The suffix addition in men languages. | Similar within previous analysis |
| Japanese | Japan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The prefix <i>o-</i> addition in women languages (Traditional japanese). - The prefix <i>o-</i> addition only spoken to the people who have higher social status and in the formal situation (Modern standard japanese). - The pronouns 'I' to refers themselves either formal and informal languages style, among females | The females tend to show their politeness and softness. Therefore, in the modern standard japanese, this structure would be good, if communicating to the higher social status and formal situation. In addition, the differences pronoun are example of gender- |

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------|---|---|
| | | and males differences. | exclusive in Japanese. However, this language rules against the using of this language rules. |
| English Language (Scotland) | Scotland | The pronounce 't' in females are more clear rather than males. | This case may intended to make the words that used more interesting and clear to hear. |
| English Language (Canada) | Canada | The pronounce of 'T' in women in certain words are not too clearly. | Similar within previous analysis. |

Gender Differences Affect The Way People to Communicate

The gender differences also influences the way they communicate toward another gender. Holmes (2013) clarified that the *Bengali* (India language), the women have different verbal structure within men to communicate, precisely when refers to the opposite gender. That women sometimes have to be more polite to men, rather than men to women, for example, when a wife adressed something to her husband, she does not permitted to use his name or first name. She addresses him by said the term of *suncho* (*Bengali* language). In this case, a wife refers him by using circumlocution. Similarly, this case also happen when the younger people addresses the older in their daily conversation. Wardaugh (2006) added in English language there are very much words that showed the distinctions gender-based kind, for example, *actor-actress*, *waiter-waitress*, and *master-mistress*. In this case, he mentioned words that have different range use and meaning e. g *Fred's mistress*, and *Joan's master*. In addition, Holmes (2013) cited Lakoff's statement, which said the women's subordination social status in USA is indicated by the women's language and their language used in daily. The women's language is claimed uncertainty and less confident. In line with this, Bucholtz & Hall (2006) also stated the women's languages showed real-world powerlessness. However, they added those case still debated by the contemporary antrophological research, which revealed the women's languages are forceful and assertive in others culture, even though still humiliated. In addition, Lakoff (1973) categorized in special women's languages, because it is more unique rather than language that use males. The following table below, Lakoff showed the example of women's languages how the witness A using the women's language, while the witness B not using the women's languages.

Table 1.2 The example of conversation that show the differences using women’s language and not using it at all (Holmes, 2013, p. 302).

| |
|---|
| <p>1. Lawyer : What was the nature of your acquaintance with the late Mrs E. D.?</p> <p>Witness A : Well, we were, uh, very close friends. Uh she was even sort of like a mother to me.</p> <p>2. Lawyer : And had the heart not been functioning, in other words, had the heart been stopped, there would have been no blood to have come from that region?</p> <p>Witness B : It may leak down depending on the position of the body after death. But the presence of blood in the alveoli indicates that some active respiratory action had to take place.</p> |
|---|

In that conversation, Witness A was talking in emotionally, which opposites within Witness B that is more logical. In line with this, there were found the characteristics of women’s languages which provided by Lakoff (as cited by Holmes in 2013). The author was trying to find examples in general. The conversations are always find at Instagram posts, comments, live, story and memes

Table 1.3 The women’s language features defined from Lakoff

| Features | Examples that we found in common (American English) |
|---------------------------|--|
| Lexical hedges or fillers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - You know that - Well, I am curious about... |
| Tag questions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - You like it, aren’t you? - This is a match hairstyle, isn’t it? |
| Declaratives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - That’s crazy! - Uh this is so bad! |
| Empty adjectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cute! - Adorable! |
| Colour terms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Navy Blue - Magenta |
| Intensifiers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I just chillin in here |

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| | - I like it so much |
| Hypercorrect grammar | I was going to the pet shop yesterday (In this case Lakoff state they always use the standard verb forms). |
| Superpolite grammar | - The using of baby words is more frequently in women's language. (euphemisms) - Sometimes women ask and showed something by using several code or indirectly. |
| Avoidance of strong swear words | - Oh my goodness! |
| Emphatic stress | - That's SICK |

Meanwhile, most of society would give people who do not use appropriate gender languages, and behavior social sanctions. Those sanctions show by give them discriminations, judgement, intimidation and negative label. The people who have those kind of deviant would separately claimed as marginalized groups in the society and/or speech community. In this case, we know that not all of society nor speech community being open and receive that kind of deviant. As we defined before, most of Indonesian society and speech community seems to close and do not want to receive the gender differences in language used and behavior deviant. The men who talk as the same as women would get those sanctions. As the men who follow women's language and gesture while communicating in *Bahasa Indonesia* claim less masculinity. That men would be considered as 'effeminacy' *banci* (in *Bahasa Indonesia*). Wardaugh (2006) added this deviant also have label in others places, such as India *hi/ras* and Nigeria *'yan daudu*. On the other hand, from above table we will know the cause of women society rules arrangement are very strict. As the women mostly like seems unsure by using tag questions, submissive by superpolite words, conscientious by their detail when seeing any object color. In addition, many of cultures bring into sexist climate. This actually almost happens in many cultures in the world that arrange women as in traditional (60s until 90s cultures and rules) arrangement, for example, in Indonesian culture, while the women is already getting married. Women must be staying at home, cook food for her children and husband, obey to their husband, and 'good' at bed. However, modernity is slowly decreased those society rules to women. Even though, there are still not many Indonesian men who are agreeing rules women like this, that resulted the women's position in

Indonesian society are still debated within many scholars. The women awareness actually gives little social position changer to the women's rules in Indonesian society. This case also happens in Japan, the women who already getting married are received well in the workforce, which are before made them must be in home, taking care of their children and husband (Holmes, 2013). Similarly, Rahmi (2015) also stated from television, magazines or personal experience showed differentiate in gender, which are affecting to the society perception towards gender structures. She added "women are assumed in home making, care giving and subservient roles. Conversely, men are represented as leader and breadwinner. Furthermore, in many cultures women take the name of their husbands after getting married, sons have more freedom to play outside the house and daughters have to be more at home and take care of younger siblings." In line with this a linguist named Janett Holmes, stated critically in her book 'Introduction to Sociolinguistics'. She stated Holmes (2013, p. 163) "The responsibilities of women and men are different in such communities, and everyone knows that, and knows what they are. There are no arguments over who prepares the dinner and who puts the children to bed." In addition, the language used reflecting the social stereotypes of society, which influenced the cultures. Wardaugh (2006) mentioned the interesting example from English. The women must be speak as same with men to fill their position. Lakoff added in McElhinny et al. (2003) which state in the same direction finding. The lexical differences found in the men's language with power and women's language with power. She said in the other languages as same with English, there are many words, which is describing women who are interested in power, presupposing and inappropriateness in that attitude. Shrew and bitch considered more polite. She added "there are no equivalents for men and women", which is there are negative connotations to the men who do not 'dominate' their women, that showed the words henpecked and pussywhipped among them. The women's behavior while communicate also influenced to the society rules toward them, where must be submissive to the men. According to (Deklerk, 1992; and Hughes, 1992) (as cited by Wardaugh in 2006) most of women are gossip-laden, corrupt, illogical, idle, euphemistic, or deficient in their speech. Also, most of them are more precise, cultivated, or stylish-or even less profane. This finding are not always like this. We can see from the reality in nowadays, sometimes men is act the same as women in communicate. They also doing gossiping, euphemistic and so on. However, how they stated to be gossiping and euphemistic are different with as well as women do. In line with this finding, Lakoff said in Holmes & Meyerhoff (2003) "language reflects and contributes to the survival of the stereotype". The women's language used influences society's perception toward the women's themselves. The majority of social culture that came from gender differences toward language used, are considered women as the gender who are must be submissive to the men. Bucholtz & Hall (2006) stated on their paper, which stated this concept of culture was adopted by researchers to the American social culture to differs between women and men. They added the research on gender and language are gained from the attention of languages practice in the

certain speech community. Further, Lakoff stated in (McElhinny et al., 2003) the men are comfortable with power rather than women. This statement could be the same as the reality life, where the language used in a man and also their behavior reflected power. However, we cannot generalize that all men like this. There are very much men in this modernity age, who being balanced themselves to the women with power. Yet, men are still men so do women. Women sometimes being not comfortable within the changed of their position, even though men would allowing this. The majority of women with power still act the same as well as women wanted to treat by men. They are being honored if the men treat them with attention, love, balance emotion and understand by the men. Also, they sometimes use emotion much more rather than men, when something makes them disappoint or not the same with their plan, they would easily to crying and get stressed out. In this case, it means women would need the rational minds and fewer emotional minds that men able to do rather than women. Also, men would need greater emotional minds from the women. Therefore, this may the reason why women and men are need in each other.

Conclusion

Besides the finding, we can conclude that gender differences affect to the language used by their dialects, phonological, morphological structure, and the way they communicate. Absolutely, this differences influence to the certain cultures in their society. In addition, the following text below mentioned the conclusion toward language and gender in many perspectives.

- 1) Many of languages that still showed how the women must be submissive to the men.
- 2) The majority of women's languages show emotional sign and politeness (tenderness, euphemism, solidarity) oftenly rather than men's language.
- 3) The modern age change the women awareness toward their position in society and language rules.

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