

LANGUAGE AND GENDER: A CASE STUDY

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Abstract

Many factors influence the acquisition of a language. One of the factors influences gender differences. The language used by men and women is sometimes different in terms of time used, words produced, and standard language used. Based on findings from related areas, this research aims to give a comprehensive account of gender differences in second language acquisition in the Access class organized by IIEF (Indonesian International Education Foundation) collaborated with RELO (Regional English Language Officer) under the supervision of the US Embassy. There are differences in talking time used by women and men. women also uttered more words rather than men. But there is not a big difference between women and men in using the standard form of language. The data that was obtained from four men and four women participants showed that women spent more time to respond the questions. Women tend to comment on the statements in detail. The number of words uttered by women and men is different. Men produced the words on average 80 words in unlimited time which was prepared by the researcher. Women uttered more words than men. The average number of words uttered by women is 174 words. Women and men have no differences in using standard forms of the language.

Keywords: second language acquisition, language, and gender, talking time, standard forms

A. Introduction

Language as a means of communication is used by people to interact with others and share ideas to fulfill their needs. Numerous factors influence the acquisition of a language. Some factors come from both the internal and external of the speaker. The

internal factor is the factor that comes from the speaker itself, while the external factor comes from outside the speaker, such as society and the environment. The way people speak or utter the language is sometimes different between men and women. Somehow the differences appear when language is used by men or women. Men and women have different styles of speaking their language.

Some stereotypes arose that women produce more words than men. Women are also regarded as more talkative than men. Considering this issue, this research is done to find the differences between men's and women's language. Amberg and Vause define " language as a rule-based system of signs. Saying that language is rule-based usually makes people think of other kinds of situations where rules are enforced by a particular authority".

Gender issues have been studied by numerous researchers. The term "gender" itself has been defined by some linguists. Besnier defined gender as a complex set of identity resources that people can foreground, background, or negotiate across contexts, the boundary between the local and the global is shifting and contestable, and an attention to language can provide fascinating resources for the negotiation of this boundary. (2007: 72). Gender usually deals with politeness in the society (Pajusalu, 2010), especially for eastern people, where the society keeps the old tradition to differentiate what should the man do and what should not women do.

Many studies have been done by some linguists to examine the role of gender in a language with a broader framework (Dijk., 2009)

This research confirmed the differences between men and women in producing language in a class of English Access Microscholarship program organized by IIEF and RELO under the supervision of the US Embassy.

B. Literature Review

Language and gender discussions have arisen for many years. Many different types of gender systems can be found in the world's languages (Cruse, 2000). Not only English, but the Indonesian language also recognize the use of some words to refer to any gender. (Sunderland, 2006) stated that "Gender and language had been linked in scholarly writings well before the second wave of the Women's Movement began in the late 1960s and early 1970s".

Before discussing language and gender, there are some differences between gender and sex. Although for some people they are regarded as having the same meaning. gender relates to the social interaction based. How and why certain people behave, and how they communicate with others using language. Sex in connection with the biological body structure of a human being. McElhinny expressed that feminists who differentiate sex and gender regard that gender deals with the social interaction in the society and sex is defined as the biological identity (2003: 23).

This research confirmed some stereotypes of gender and language used by the students. The stereotypes are about (1) women talk more than men, (2) women spend more time speaking, and (3) women use more standard forms than men

Research on language and gender has been done by many researchers. One of the researchers is Brenda. She found that gender can be regarded as one factor in language variance in unacquainted female-male group interaction. Language

production will be considered both between men and women with potential frameworks of dominance and difference and diversity.

Her research showed that (1) men do not speak more than women, (2) there was an influence of the topics and experience and cultural background, (3) Some data showed that women used more cooperative language, (4) there was an individual variation type in men and women, (5) slower speech and pauses became a factor in addition to personal conversational style rather than gender determines the use of the vernacular, (6) Geographical origins and the different occupation influenced in individual language form.

There were some differences between this research and the previous research done by Brenda Wright has researched language and gender which the Participants in the study were unacquainted ex-patriots, who worked in Tokyo. There are four participants involved in the research. They are two males and two females. Participants were chosen who did know very well the researcher. It was done to avoid bias.

This research focused on language and gender for the students who learn the English language in the Access English Microscholarship program. The program is aimed for disadvantage families economically. There are three classes, one class for university level and the other two classes for high school level. The research investigated the effects of gender on language. The students come from a different universities. This research involves the participants that are from the university student level. There are 8 students. They are 4 male students and 4 female students.

In some cases, we can see obviously in the society women tend to speak loudly. The way they walk, talk and behave like men. They want to show that they are strong. They want to prove that they can do every job that men can do. In line with this claim, Shan Chan explained that a woman acts femininely not always because biologically she is a woman but because they are trained by the society to imitate and behave being a woman in the social life. Feminine and masculine behaviors are trained. They can be learned by each individual or group of people in learning in social interaction. People constantly change their gendered behavior. Men can behave in ways stereotypically associated with femininity and women can be masculine.

A woman may show her masculine behavior when she needs to appear strong. (2008: 46). Robin Lakoff in Fromkin et al stated that specifically concerned with women and language, she found that several features occurred more frequently in women's speech than in men's. She also claimed that the use of these features deals with uncertainty and a lack of confidence on the part of women. (2011: 449)

Women Talk More/Less Than Men

We know from the society that more often women speak more than men. When we go to the traditional market, more women speak more compare to the male. Women usually give more comments on something rather than men. They usually give explanations in detail even sometimes exaggerated. When two or more women meet, they can spend a lot of time talking about something that for men is not important. Baym and Herring in Herring (2003: 207) stated that " women tend to be more aggressive in male-dominated groups than among other women, and men

tend to be less aggressive in female-dominated groups than in groups controlled by men".

Women Use More Standard Forms Than Men

The difference between the language used by women and men sometimes deals with the use of the standard of the language. The use of language in society can define the social status of each person as part of social life. Women were regarded to have the lower class level in society a long time ago. They have no more power to express their ideas. Many histories tell us that women have second positions in the social interaction, they tend to use the standard language to show their prestigious positions when most societies accord higher status and power to men (Romaine 2003: 103).

Nowadays society has regarded women should have the same level or position as men. There are still many cases that show the position of women cannot be as high as men. Some people think that women should stay at home to take care of the baby or children and do the housework, especially in the third world. Their job is to take care house and children only. Although women have struggled very hard to position themselves at the same level as men have, society still regards them as the lower class than men. Romaine states that

Thus, women may be using linguistic means as a way to achieve status denied to them through other outlets. Since women have long been denied equality with men as far as educational and employment opportunities are concerned, these are not reliable indicators of a woman's status or the status she aspires (2003: 104).

There is a claim that women use the standard forms of language to bargain their position in society as men have since some women are still regarded to have a lower class than men.

C. Research Method

The data are obtained in a class for English Microscholarship Program (Access) at Unipdu university. Access program is only for disadvantaged families economically. The program is for two years, divided into four semesters. The researcher is also one of the teachers in the program. The research took some processes.

The data were taken from the university students of the Access program. The researcher who is also a teacher obtained the data by recording via smartphone. After the data were collected, the researcher classify the recording based on the sex. the researcher did some analysis such as counting the words used, the time allotment, and the standard form used by the students. This research used several volunteer participants who are also taking the program.

D. Data Analysis

The researcher recorded the students' comments on three topics; (1) the reason the student join the Access program, (2) the improvement of their English they have since they joined the Access program, and (3) their hope after joining Access class for two years. Since they are from the English department, the researcher asked the

students to speak using the English language. The time was not limited for the students to give their comments. The researcher asked the students to give comments on those three topics. To avoid bias, the researcher did not tell the students that their comments would be data sources.

D. Findings

The research shows some findings related to the objective of the study. From the explanation stated before that this research tends to find the fact or to clarify whether the gender issue between male and female classes only has the differences or not. As the result of the analysis done from the data, the research can be seen that there are some differences in language use they have. There are some differences between women and men in talking time.

For this case, Mr. M1 speaks in 27 seconds although the researcher did not limit the time for him to speak. There is a tendency for some men to speak efficiently in a short time. He tends to speak the points only. Another example is by Mr. M4. Mr. M4: He spent 2 minutes. We can understand that men spent more time answering the question. It is different from women. The data show that some women spent less time giving comments.

While the differences were found between male and female-only classrooms. The data can be seen as follows: Ms. F1 spent 01.55 seconds commenting. Another data obtained from Ms. F 3. She spent 01.47 seconds commenting on the questions. From the data above, it is clearly stated that women used more time to comment on the questions.

The amount of words uttered by women and men is also different. The amount of talk (words uttered) was measured in total for each person, and the average talk time for women and men was calculated in seconds.

More participants uttered more than 100 words. Only two men produced less than 100 words. Mr. M1 produced 34 words and Mr. M4 produced 54 words in their comments.

Women Use More Standard Forms than Men. As stated before that the reason why women tend to use more standards is to position themselves as men. From the data obtained by the researcher that all participants used non-standard language in their sentences.

E. Discussion

1. Talking Time

There are some differences between women and men in talking time.

For instance, M1's comment is as follows:

"My reason join to Access is make me understand about English. After join in Access, I can...I can...I want to try and try to learn English. And my improvement, I can be a good speak English".

Mr. M1 speaks in 27 seconds although the researcher did not limit the time for him to speak. There is a tendency for some men to speak efficiently in short time. He tends to speak the points only. Another example is by Mr. M4.

Mr. M4: *"First, my reason joins the program I want to develop my English and my knowledge. The second I have studied about many things in English especially cross-culture understanding (CCU). The last, after joining the program my English and my knowledge will be better and it will be useful for me and others."*

He spent 2 minutes. With the time used by Mr. M4, we can understand that men spent more time to answer the question. It is different from women. The data show that some women spent less time commenting.

Ms. F1: *"My reason to join the access program. Before I am a student of the university. I hope only studied in the class but I also can study and follow a program and Alhamdulillah, my wish come true. I didn't expect and my reason to join access is I want to my knowledge of English more widely and second question, my English improvement up to now. Although I learn English from basic in access my knowledge more widely much by grateful. I can try to add my knowledge. And third question. My hope after the program finished. I hope that the program a continue and never finished and ehm....my wish after the program is finished, I hope that I can be a professional teacher when I teach my students and also I want to go to America...thank you."*

Ms. F1 spent 01.55 seconds in commenting.

Another data obtained from Ms. F 3. She spent 01.47 seconds giving comments for the questions.

From the data above, it is clearly stated that women used more time to give comments to the questions.

2. The Number of Words Uttered by Women and Men

The amount of talk (words uttered) was measured in total for each person, and the average talk time for women and men was calculated in seconds.

More participants uttered more than 100 words. Only two men produced less than 100 words. Mr. M1 produced 34 words and Mr. M4 produced 54 words in their comments.

Mr.M1: ... *"My reason join to Access is make me understand English. After joining in Access, I can....I can...I want to try and try to learn English. And my improvement, I can be a good speak English"*

Mr. M1 produced 34 words in 27 seconds. Compared to men, women tend to utter more words and more time is used. Ms. F1 commented as follows;

Ms. F4 : *"My reason to join access program...Thank you."*

She spent 01.55 minutes

Women Use more Standard Forms than Men

The reason why women tend to use more standards is to position themselves as men. From the data obtained by the researcher that all participants used nonstandard language in their sentences as described in the following table.

Speaker	Non-standard	Standard
Mr. M1	And my improvement, I can be a good speak English.	My improvement, I can be a good English speaker.
Mr. M2	Because yes...I study in education of English.	Because I study in English education.
Mr. M3	My reason why do I join access program because I want to improve my English ability	: My reason why I have been joining access program is I want to improve my English ability
Mr. M4	First, my reason... join the program I want to develop my English and my knowledge	firstly, my reason to join the program I want to improve my English and my knowledge.
Ms. F1	...before I am student of university	... before I became a student of university.
Ms. F2	I also study culture in the world that make me more happy and interesting	I also study culture in the world that make me more happy and interesting
Ms. F3	during join the Access, I feel	English has been

	that my English have been improving because my knowledges about English also increase step by step.	improving because my knowledge about English also increases step by step.
Ms. F4	I will be more clever	I will be cleverer

From the table above, it can be seen that there are no differences between men and women in using standard or non-standard language. Both men and women used non-standard language.

F. Conclusion

Research about the effect of gender on second language acquisition has been done for a long time ago up to now. This research shows that men used talking time more efficiently rather than women. The data showed that men use less time in giving comments to the questions, while women used talking time more than men. Women tend to give comments on the statements in detail. There are no big differences between men and women in using talking time.

The number of words uttered by women and men is different. Men produced the words on average 80 words in unlimited time which was prepared by the researcher. Women uttered more words than men. The average number of words uttered by women is 174 words. There are no differences between women and men in using a standard form of the language. Both men and women used non-standard language. The findings of this study indicate that there are some gender differences in language use among students in English Access Microscholarship Program (Access) class.

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