Sexism in Language: A Case Study on Bangladeshi Youth

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Abstract

This case study attempts to find out the variation of language use among the young generation of Bangladesh. Students from some renowned private universities were the target of this study. There were many theories regarding different use of language among different genders. Among them some of the theories are used in my research. This paper will discuss about various aspects of language becoming sexist. The hypothesis of the study is to find out those aspects where language varies among the sexes. To test the hypothesis a survey questionnaire was prepared and it was distributed among the students with the help of internet and Facebook. The study is based on the answer coming from the students. As it is a case study a good number of data was collected. Among them equal number of male and female data was selected to do the case study. Then theses data were analyzed to prepare the study. After analyzing the data, its finding helped us to prepare a result. Findings of the study were described with the reasons of the difference in language variation comes out and last conclusion is provided.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.0 Introduction:

Language is the powerful medium of communication in any speech communities. Language plays an important role in society. Language has been studied for many years from different views and there is no doubt that language varies from country to country and also within the country. It was studied in term of its structure; however, with the start of sociolinguistic study of language, it began to be studied in relation to the society. Society is the place where language is observed and differed in its use. Language variation is an important subject which has been discussed by many sociolinguists. There are some social variables which effect these variations in language; these are speaker's age, gender, ethnicity, social status etc.

Men and women are the main bodies in social activities and sexism in language differs from language to language Because of the gender difference, there exist many differences when people use language. Thus there is a close relationship between different genders and language use. The use of language is different between men and women in case of vocabulary, in voice and tone, in syntactic structure and style and in conversational style. In each of the single part gender differs in a great extent. However, There is a debate that whether a language can be sexist or not. Like English is a sexist language that expresses stereotyped attitudes toward one sex at the expense of the other. In every sphere of our life this difference is being noticed while using a language. In the context of our country, the gender difference is noticeable in a very wide range. Here, in using language men differ from

women in a great extent which is noteworthy. Among all the people of Bangladesh, the difference of language uses of adult considered greatly.

Observations of the differences between the way males and females speak were long restricted to grammatical features, such as the differences between masculine and feminine in morphology in many languages. However, in the 1970s women researchers started looking at how a linguistic code transmitted sexist values and bias. Lakoff's work (1975) is an example of this; she raised questions such as:

- Do women have a more restricted vocabulary than men?
- Do they use more adjectives? Are their sentences incomplete?
- Do they use more 'superficial' words?

Concentration of my research will be to find out how these implications are true.

1.1 Problem Statement:

Since the beginning of history, sexism has always been a prominent barrier between sexes. The notion that women are not on the same level as men has always been in existence. The word sexism does not mean that it refers to sex as in the physical act. 'Sex' is the "biological expression" but gender is the "social construct"- whether someone is male or female. (Wardhugh, 315). Sexism has a large ground than gender in language.

Considering the situation of male and female language few researches are done. So this paper will analyze the differences among the usage of language of males and females.

1.2 Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of this study is to explore the arena where language is varied. Since the beginning of history, sexism has always been a prominent barrier between sexes. The notion that women are not on the same level as men has always been in existence. The word sexism does not mean that it refers to sex as in the physical act. 'Sex' is the "biological expression" but gender is the "social construct"- whether someone is male or female. (Wardhugh, 315) Sexism has a large ground than gender in language. How language items are different for males and females and why ….The study will show what types of differences are common in speech of male and female. So, the main purpose is to go through their way of using language and to find out the common difference on their conversation which reflects gender difference. Moreover, the aim is to find out the reasons behind the difference and to establish those reasons logically.

1.3 Central Research Question:

The aim of the research was to know the answers of following questions

- What are the common differences among the language of the male and female?

- If or how society influences language use?

- Do media influence the language, how and to what extent?

1.4 Significance of the Study:

Particularly this study is going to represent the current scenario of the Bangladeshi male and female who come across many experiences in using English in general conversation. This

paper will analyze samples of natural conversation in order to discuss if the following claims can be supported by research, women talk more/less than men, women break the 'rules' of turn-taking less than men, women use more standard forms than men, women's speech is less direct/assertive than men's, in women's and men's speech.

1.5 Delimitation:

The data was collected directly through conducting a survey on students of different private universities of Dhaka city. So, the data was very much raw and thus be mostly accurate. The research is done from eight top ranking private universities of Dhaka city in Bangladesh. The universities are BRAC University, North South University, East West University, American University of Bangladesh (AIUB), Independent University of Bangladesh (IUB), United international University (UIU), State University of Bangladesh (SUB) and South East University. As most of the private universities use English as the medium of their instruction (Rahman, 2005, p.3-4). Moreover, Library and internet research will be used to study the theoretical aspects of the topic. Among them if we survey the universities of Bangladesh, we will get a very clear view about the gender difference in language use.

1.6 Limitation:

This thesis is done for academic purpose for fulfilling partial requirement of the researcher's master's degree. There is not much research available on this specific topic in Bangladesh. So, as mentioned earlier, this will be mostly a primary research. Therefore, the time is limited. If there were more time available, then number of collected data would be more

representative, and would be more accurate as well. In addition, the number of students surveyed for the research might give a scattered idea about their thoughts and views; it will not be necessarily be a complete representation of all the students of this level. The sample has been taken only from the Dhaka city as a result it does not represent the whole country.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter consists of a review of the literature providing the related ideas to my research. In this part, related theories and research on gender variation on language use in and reasons will be reviewed and relation will be established with research my paper. In this chapter I have produced a summary of the knowledge gained from and the relevance of the literature. My discussion will consider the key approaches to language and gender addressed over the past few years; Deficit, Dominance, Difference Theory. The focus will then move to the myths about language and gender. I will then discuss the concept that men and women belong to two different language society.

2.1. The Nature of Gender:

The word 'gender' conditions misunderstanding, particularly when used concerning language. In general sense sex and gender has a similar meaning. But it is hard to understand exactly what is meant by the term 'gender', and how it differs from the closely related term 'sex'.

In 'The Oxford Dictionary of Difficult Words' (2004) it is mentioned that the word' gender' has been used since the 14th century. Firstly, the word 'gender' has been used as a grammatical term, referring to the classes of noun in Latin, Greek, German, and other languages designated as masculine, feminine or neuter. It has also been used since the 14th century in the sense 'the state of being male or female', but this did not become a standard use until the mid-20th century.

Though the word 'gender' and 'sex' both have the sense 'the state of being male or female', they are typically used in slightly different ways: 'sex' tends to refer to biological differences, while 'gender' tends to refer to cultural or social ones. (Hobson, 2004:189).

In modern feminist theory, it has been traditional to distinguish 'gender' from 'sex'. As Deborah Cameron (2006) pointed out, sex is connected with the biological characteristics that mark humans and other animals as either male or female, whereas gender refers to the cultural traits and behaviors deemed appropriate for men or women by a particular society. In addition, Cameron noted that "The sex/gender distinction is important for feminists because it challenges the belief that everything about women, men, and the relationship between them is a matter of biology" (in Arts, B. & McMahon, A., and 2006:724).

2.2 Deficit approach:

The first of the four key approaches to a study of language and gender is the deficit approach. Initiated in the early1970s, this approach sees women as disadvantaged as language users, with their language deviating from an implicit male norm**.**

The sexism is not built into grammar and usage the communities always concerns masculine as the norm. Words like master and father have traditionally been those of leadership and power i.e. Master of my fate, the father of modern science whereas feminine words are used to infer irregularity of treachery. That's why US weather bureau gives feminine names to hurricanes such as Katrina, Laila, Aila etc. (Wardhugh, 315)

Otto Jesperson, was the first linguists who wrote about male and female language. He believed that women had limited vocabularies as well as women are delicate and easily offended, so they prefer to avoid "coarse and gross expressions" and use more "veiled and indirect expressions". On the other hand, "Men" invent new terms, while women are naturally conservative. Jesperson also mentioned that "there is a danger of the language becoming languid and insipid" if we stay

contented ourselves with "women's expression" while male language adds "vigour and vividness" to the English language. (Jesperson, 237-254)

Robin Lakoff was one of the first women to publish theories on the existence of women's language. Her book Language and Woman's Place (1975) has served as the basis for much research on the subject "Sexist language also presents stereotypes of both females and males, sometimes to the disadvantage of males, but more often to the disadvantage of females. This sexism is seen universally in all languages. In English, Robin Lakoff (1975) uses the example of 'master' verses 'mistress' to make the point that there are unequal connotations that surround these two matching terms--and to the detriment of those born female--'Master' has strong and powerful connotations, while 'mistress' have negative connotation.

In her 1975 article she published 10 basic assumptions about what she felt constituted a special women's language. Much of what Lakoff proposed agreed with Jespersen's theories:

Table 1. R. Lakoff's the basic presumptions about the women's language

Presumptions	Explanations
Hedge:	Using words like "sort of," "kind of," "It seems like," etc.
Use super polite form	Using sentences like "Would you mind...," "I'd appreciate it if...," "...if you don't mind."

Using Tag questions	You're going to dinner, aren't you?"
Speak in Italics	Intonational emphasis equal to underlining words -- so, very, quite.
Use empty adjectives	divine, lovely, adorable, etc.
Use hyper correct grammar and pronunciations	English class grammar and clear enunciation.
Use direct quotations	men paraphrase more often
Special lexicon	women use more words for things like colors, men for sports, etc.
Question intonation in declarative statements	women make declarative statements questions by raising the pitch of their voice at the end of a statement, expressing uncertainty. For example, "What school do you attend?" "Lafayette College?"
Use 'wh' imperatives	(such as, "Why don't you open the door?")
Overuse qualifiers	(for example, "I think that...").
Apologies more	(for instance, "I'm sorry, but I think that...").
Use modal construction	such as can, would, should, ought - "Should we

	turn up the heat?”).
Use indirect command requests	(for example, “My, isn’t it cold in here?” - really a request to turn the heat on or close a window)
Sense of humor lacking	women do not tell jokes well and often don't understand the punch line of jokes.

Table 1 presents the basic presumptions about the women’s language according to R. Lakoff, 1975.

As Lakoff (1975) claimed, the differential use of language has to be explained in large part on the basis of women’s subordinate social status and the resulting social insecurity. Robin Lakoff accepted that women, have a language style in which they make use of the above mentioned speech patterns. Lakoff’s observations coincide with many of Jespersen’s (1922), and they have found much support of researchers and scholars today. She claimed that gender determines forms of address, expectations, and distinct vocabulary choices as people talk to each other. Although women’s language shows up in all levels of the grammar of English, differences are most distinct in the choice and frequency of lexical items. Deborah Tannen (1990) noticed, that women use much more “rapport talk”, while men are experts in “report talk”. “Report-talk” as defined by Tannen is “public speaking”. “Rapport-talk” as defined by Tannen is “private speaking”.

Table 2: Gender differences in communication styles

Female's speech	Males speech
Women tend to talk more than men at home	Men tend to talk more than women in public situations
Women are more inclined to face each other and make eye contact when talking	Men are more likely to look away from each other
Girls and women tend to talk at length about one topic	Boys and men tend to jump from topic to topic
When listening, women make more noises such as "mhm" and "uhuh"	Men are more likely to listen silently
Women are inclined to express agreement and support	Men are more inclined to debate

Table 2 presents gender differences in speech behavior according to Tannen, 1990.

The studies that find men talking more are usually carried out in formal experiments or public contexts such as meetings. It is obvious that if men talk to establish status, most male conversations would inevitably occur in public, at the workplace. On the other hand, if women talk to establish intimacy, most female conversations would take place in private, at home. have suggested that Tannen's findings may apply more to women of certain specific cultural and economic groups than to women in general. There is no evidence to support the belief that women speak far more words than men do. To sum up, despite the fact that there are some

certain disagreements among the linguists, it is generally accepted that women and men develop different patterns of language use. Deborah Tannen (1990) argued that gender differences are parallel to cross-cultural differences. She claimed that when interpreting the cultural information encoded by language, women and men rely on different subcultural norms. Male subculture uses language to build hierarchical relationships, while female subculture uses language to build equal relationships. In other words, Tannen (1990) maintained that differences in language between women and men result from a misunderstanding of the intent of the other sex, and not from the dominant position of men in society.

Lakoff believed that women, in general, have a language style in which   they make use of the above-mentioned speech patterns. She did not deny, however, that there are cases in   which women do not use all or even some of these patterns. Her observations coincide with many of Jespersen's, and they have found much support in researchers and scholars today.

Lakoff's theories still have much support, although some are more difficult to assess, such   as   women lack a sense of humor because they do not tell jokes well and often don't understand the punch   line   of   jokes. Another central idea of Lakoff's was that women were socialized into sounding like "ladies", which then kept them in their place because being   ladylike   is   a   bar   to   being powerful in our culture. If women talked like "ladies" they were seen as powerless and trivial, but if they talked like men, they were considered unfeminine.

2.3 Dominance Approach:

The second approach, of the mid to late 1970s is the dominance approach. A   1975   study   by   Don   Zimmerman   and   Candace   West   at UC   Santa   Barbara   analyzed conversations in a college community. They found that in same-sex conversations, interruptions

were distributed fairly evenly among the speakers. In the cross-sex conversations, however, contrary to the belief that women talk and interrupt others more than men do while speaking -- men were responsible for 96% of the interruptions. In this view, men dominate linguistic interaction in the same way that they dominate the world in general.

Because of the social significance of gender and the popular view that interruption is essentially an expression of power and dominance, most studies on interruptions have addressed gender differences either focally or tangentially. This tradition started with the classic study by Zimmerman and West (1975). There is a quite old study of a small sample of conversations, recorded by Don Zimmerman and Candace West at the Santa Barbara campus of the University of California in 1975. The subjects of the recording were white, middle class, and under 35. Zimmerman and West produce in evidence 31 segments of conversation. In same-sex conversations (male-male and female-female) Zimmerman and West (1975) reported that there were 7 instances of simultaneous speech classified as interruptions and 22 classified as overlaps. Both interruptions and overlaps appear to be systematically distributed between speakers. That is, the speaker's overlaps and interruptions seem to be equally divided between the first and the second speakers in the conversations. Also, Zimmerman and West (1975) reported that in the 11 cross-sex conversations, men used 46 interruptions, but women only two. However, West and Zimmerman's (1975) findings that men dominate women by interrupting them in the conversation are often cited.

However, Deborah Tannen contrasts interruptions and overlapping. According to Tannen (1990:192), interruption, unlike overlap, 'is not a mechanical category'. It is inevitably a matter of interpretation regarding individuals' rights. To determine whether a speaker is violating another speaker's rights, you have to know a lot about both speakers and situations. To

summarize, in Zimmerman & West (1975) and Beattie (1982) studies it was shown that in all male conversations there were more interruptions and overlaps than in all-female conversations. However, these findings are often criticized, because it has been also found that many women interrupt more than men. Hence we may conclude that both women and do men interrupt in conversations.

2.4 Difference Approach:

The third approach is difference. The emphasis here is on the way in which men and women grow up in different subcultures with different social organisations. In this approach, it is claimed, 'behavior previously perceived as men's efforts to dominate women is reinterpreted as a 'cross-cultural' phenomenon'.

According to Crawford (1995), 'men and women…are fated to misunderstand each other unless they recognise their deeply socialized differences'. Crawford goes on to describe how the 'fundamental differences between women and men shape the way they talk'. These differences are, according to Crawford, 'located within individuals' and are differences in 'personality traits, skills, beliefs, attitudes, or goals'. I will explore such concepts through my focus group and my questionnaires to discover whether such a view about men and women does actually prevail.

2.5. Other Approaches:

In Dale Spender"s book, he made a breakthrough in the nature versus nurture debate about the pitch of the male voice when speaking. She analyzed previous theories and disputed them with questions   such   as why   the   voices   of some   congenitally   deaf males,   who   never

hear sex differences in speech, do not break at puberty. Her question suggests that females could possibly learn or choose to use a higher pitch, while boys in adolescence make an audible effort to enter "manhood" by lowering their voices, which results in the break.

The conclusion of an experiment at the University of New York/Stony Brook in 1974 stated that people, especially men, are more likely to swear when conversing in single-sex groups   than when the conversation participants are of both sexes. Interestingly, men were found to weaken their obscenities when in the company of women, while women tended to strengthen theirs in the company of men.

"Sexist language also includes the depiction of women in the position of passive object rather than active subject, such as on the basis of their appearance ('a blonde') or domestic roles   ('a mother of two') when similar depictions in similar contexts would not be made of men. These representations of women trivialize their lives and place an extra level of personal judgment on them."(Spender, 1980)

Another linguist named Pamela Fishman taped conversation of 3 married couple found out that

☐ Woman asks questions of any kind two and half times more than a man.

☐ Woman use hedges in conversations five times more frequently than a man as after all

  man have the upper hand in conversation.

☐ Conversational strategies by these women are seen as a reflection of their inferior social position.

2.6. Gender Differences in Speech Behavior:

It is generally accepted that men and women do not use and interpret language in the same way. In addition, males and females use language in essentially different ways. As it was mentioned above, Robin Lakoff was one of the first linguists who proposed that women's speech style is a powerless style. She introduced the term "women's language" which implies that women and men speak different languages. In the related article, 'Woman's Language', she published a set of basic presumptions about what marks out the language of women. Among these are claims that woman.

2.7. Media and Language:

Media plays a huge role in language change of the young generation. They are mostly influenced by Television shows and serials. As Wood say, representation of women in national television is almost half of the male characters. She also mentions, "Men and women are portrayed in stereotypical ways that reflect and sustain socially endorsed views of gender". She also emphasizes on the fact the most female characters shown on television or children books are very stereotypical, as the good female characters are fair in skin tone, kind at heart and soft spoken, while the female villains tend to be more hard, cold and aggressive. She furthermore points out the fact that how the prime time shows portray stereotypical roles of males and females, as successful 'good' male characters are shown as career oriented, self-dependent and aggressive at times. On the other hand, the female characters having the same attributes are considered as "as lonely, embittered spinsters who are counterpoints to 'good' women."

Moreover, Wood also added that in media women are placed as dependent on men's, "females dependent on males for identity", in television serials or movies this factor is major. Media

shows very "narrow range of womanhood" as they are presented as housewife's who are dependent to their husbands. He mentions about a son "Having baby boy" and said which glorified   a woman who defines herself by motherhood and his relationship with a men. There was nothing wrong in it but the way of presenting it was wrong.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

This chapter presents an overview of the research methodology. The chapter begins with the research design. Then it describes the participants, instruments used for collecting data, and also the data collection procedure. The study was designed to know the perception of the Bangladeshi youth about their usage of language being a male or female.

3.1 Research Design:

The research is a primary research. Brown (1988), categorized researches into two types: primary research and secondary research (as cited in Nunan, 1997, p. 8). This research is considered as a primary research because it is derived from the primary sources of information. According to Nunan (1997), in primary research, first hand data or primary sources of information are used to explore the original hypothesis. In this research, survey questionnaires were the primary data for identification of the differences of language used by the male and female.

Traditionally, there are two types of research methods- qualitative and quantitative methods. Here, in this research, both quantitative and qualitative methods were applied. It is called mixed method approach. Mixed method approach helps the researcher to get a bunch of effective data to explore a better picture of the collected data in all possible ways. It also provides a broader perspective to look into the study. For these reasons, mix method approach is used in many researches. Thus it is becoming increasingly a part of research practice and also taking place of the third major research approach along with qualitative research and quantitative research. (Johnson, R. Bruke, Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie, and Lisa A. Turner). Therefore the researcher

chose to apply this approach in her research as well, in order to make it clarifying and concise at the same time. In this approach both qualitative and quantitative data is collected through a single questionnaire. According to John Creswell, "Mixed methods research is a research design (or methodology) in which the researcher collects, analyzes, and mixes (integrates or connects) both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or a multiphase program of inquiry" (as cited in, Johnson, R. Bruke, Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie, and Lisa A. Turner). Therefore, a combination of both close-ended and open-ended questions were used for the survey questionnaire in order to collect primary data for this research. In this study, the data is presented with tables, graphs, charts and required explanations.

3.2 Theoretical Framework:

The survey was conducted in eight different universities of Dhaka city. All the selected universities were renowned private universities of Bangladesh. The universities were chosen randomly based on the researcher's personal affiliations with the present students there. Her friends also helped her to get to meet with students from those universities at social gatherings.

3.3 Data Collection Procedure:

Although, a written questionnaire was provided to each of the participants in order to gather their responses, some participants of the research also submitted their response over internet, as the researcher utilized the help of Google forms services to send interested participants the access link of the survey questionnaire. They sent their feedback along the same forms. Therefore,

Google forms, Facebook and most importantly internet played an important part in the data collection procedure. Apart from that, social gatherings were another method of collecting data. Ample time was given to each participant for filling up the questionnaire. Though the questionnaire was self-explanatory, the survey conductor was available during that time for their further help and quarries.

3.4. Instrumentation:

The questionnaire was prepared taking into account the present language used by the young generation. The questionnaire allowed them to identify the words they use in general conversation. The following instruments were used to conduct the survey:

1. Survey questionnaire and pen
2. Goggle doc
3. Goggle forms
4. Facebook
5. Internet

3.5 Written Questionnaire:

As mentioned earlier, the survey questionnaire included different kind of questions to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. While, Question no 1 is there to determine the sex of the participant, in order to analyze the collected data individual, answers to the questions 2 3, 4, 5 and 12 were expected to get more quantitative data, answers of question 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14,

15, 16 and 17 were expected to generate qualitative data. In quantitative section, all attempted answers were taken into account. On the other hand, in the qualitative section, only the unique answers or answers having most valuable inputs were taken into account. According to Jo McDonough & Steven McDough, "Questionnaire is a very common and popular tool for collecting data among educational researchers in general and ELT research in particular." (1997, p. 171). As it was an ELT research, so the researcher also chose that tool. Besides, asking questions is one of the feasible ways to gather information from the participants.

3.6 Participants:

To conduct the survey, data from 200 participants was collected by the researcher. They were selected on the basis of their availability for the survey, their interest and mostly the researcher's ability to reach them personally or thorough mutual friends. The participants belong to different private and public universities of Dhaka, Bangladesh. Among the 200 participants, 100 are male and 100 are female. All of them are very mature and experienced as they belong to the age limit of 20-25.

3.7 Data Analysis Procedure:

For the purpose of conducting the research, the researcher has used both quantitative and qualitative techniques. Therefore, the researcher used both multiple choice type questions in her survey; along with some open ended questions. So, the qualitative technique is used to analyze the open ended questions and quantitative technique for multiple choice type questions

simultaneously.

3.8 Obstacles Encountered:

While conducting the survey, the researcher had to reach out to a lot of her friends and social acquaintances, otherwise collecting this kind of diversified yet focused data all by her would have been really tough for her. Sometimes, she faced roadblocks as well, as everyone is busy in their personal life, and the instable political situation of Bangladesh during the past few months contributed as well. The temporary shutting down of Facebook and other social networks in Bangladesh affected her data collection as well. Other the other hand, some of the participants who were provided with printed questionnaire in hand, took some time to submit the replies. Then again, some of participants gave very general views, instead of personal opinion. What was disappointing is that many of them skipped few questions especially the open ended ones. Some participants didn't elaborate their stands either.

Chapter 4: Findings and Analysis

In this chapter the findings of the research will be discussed in different sections with the help of different diagrams. It will provide the analysis of women's and men's use of language as found during the research. The study will be based on the qualitative approach to language analysis. Due to the limitations of the paper, an account of only some differences in language use by women and men, including the usage of tag questions, hedges, and topics of conversations, interruptions, politeness, and message interpretation will be given.

Then it describes different parts of the evolving themes from the questions of the questionnaire. Mainly the first part of the questionnaire is involved with the information about the participants. So, the task of discussing findings starts from the second part of the questionnaire. The chapter ends with the finding of the survey in Bangladeshi context. In the next chapter some recommendations will be given on the basis of analysis of this chapter.

4.1. Findings and Analysis of Questions:

It is already mentioned earlier that the survey was conducted on the students of different universities of Bangladesh within the age limit of 20-25. The target audience was the young generation of the country. For this purpose, a questionnaire has been made and it contained seventeen close and open ended questions.

4.1.1. Participants:

The purpose of question one was to ensure equal participation of members from both the sexes, in order to get a balanced response for the following questions. Here, the responses of 100 male and 100 female students are taken in to account. So the ratio of this answer is 50%.for the male and 50% for the female. The below picture will help to understand the ratio. Figure 1 illustrates the quantity and percentage of the participants:
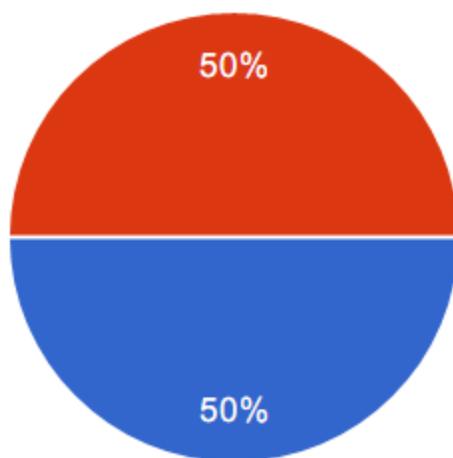

Figure: 1

4.1.2. Use of politeness:

It is accepted as a general fact that women speak more 'politely' than men do. In this question, 36.4% male and female agreed on the politeness issue. On the other hand, 63.6% male and female said that in a conversation it is not possible to follow politeness, as English is their second language. The below picture will illustrate the ratio.
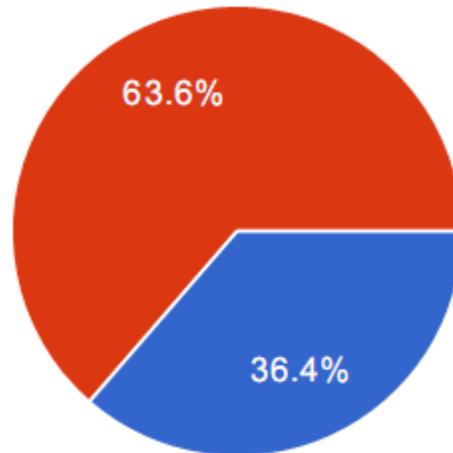
63.6%

36.4%

Figure: 2

From the diagram we can get the ratio in our context people are According to Lakoff (1975) noted, the more particles in a sentence that reinforce the notion that it is a request, rather than an order, the more polite the result. The more one compounds a request, the more characteristic it is of women's speech, the less of men's speech orders.

Politeness is accepted as a general fact that women speak more 'politely' than men do. Politeness involves an absence of a strong statement and order, and women's speech is devised to prevent the expression of strong statements.

4.1.3. Direct Commands:

Here 95.5% participants agreed on the fact that they use indirect commands rather than in direct commands. In the daily communication indirect command is popular than direct commands. The below picture will illustrate the situation.
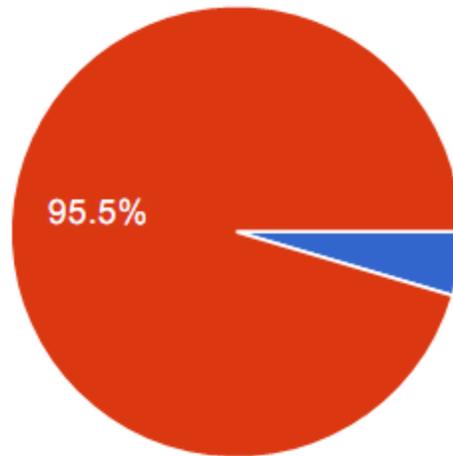
Figure: 3

4.1.4. Use of tag questions:

In Bangladeshi context people do not use tag questions in general conversations or in informal conversation while speaking English as English is their second language. So here the ratio of asking question in tag question is 14% versus the ratio of not asking in tag question is 85.7%. The below picture will illustrate the situation.
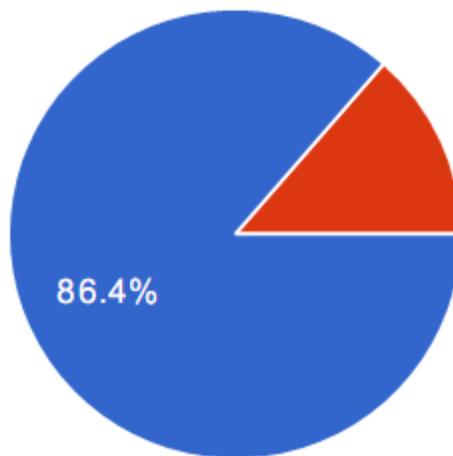

Figure: 4

4.1.5. Use of intensive 'so':

Use of so is common in Bangladeshi context but both male and female like to use this adjective in in this context. The instances of male and female usage of the intensive 'so' are found here by the questionnaire. In the question four possible uses of 'so' was given. Among them three options was in negative sense one was in positive sense.70% of the participant choose the positive use of 'so' and other (25+5)% choose the negative or less positive use of so.
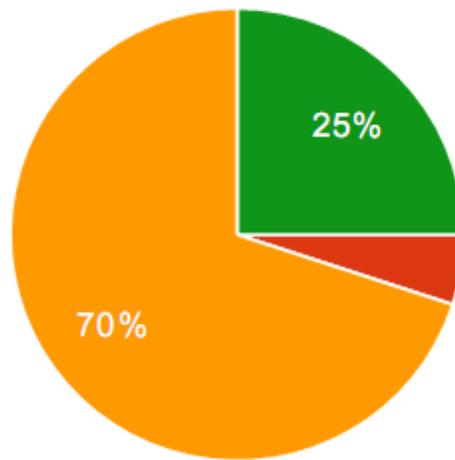

Figure: 5

Figure 5 illustrates the quantity and percentage of the usage of the intensive 'so'

4.1.6. Use of empty adjectives:

This was an open ended question to get the idea of using empty adjectives. Most of the participant especially females agreed on the use of empty adjectives like "Yes I do use to emphasize my feelings because I feel good using adjectives! It makes my expressions

complete!", "Yes. Adjectives decorate sentences which add extra emotion and feelings." One participant said "Enhance the quality of the sentence"

4.1.7. Use of Prestige grammar:

In this question mostly mixed answer, came some of them said they don't use prestige grammar because in Bangladeshi context people don't focus on word selection while talking. Speaking fluently is important to them. Mostly people replied that they do not use prestige grammar rather they prefer correct pronunciation of words.

Lakoff (1975) claimed that the women use English prestige grammar and clear pronunciation. The corpus under the investigation supported this tendency observed in gender-related language issues.

4.1.8. Sense of Humor

Most of the participants attended this question which tried to check how they react to a one liner or joke. It was interesting to see that most of the participants understood the punch line of the joke, and while they were asked to explain it in a single sentence, they were able to do so properly. However, what was more interesting that while many of the participants explained the joke, some of them also took the liberty of making more fun of it.

The question was, "Just read that 4,153,237 people got married last year, not to cause any trouble but   shouldn't that be an even number?" Explain the above sentence in   a single sentence.   One male participant replied, "well it's a joke I guess, unless two people are getting married to a

single guy or girl :P which would make it even more interesting.", another male also replied, "Though even number for married count was more preferred but 4,153,237 doesn't create any trouble." On the other hand, the overall answers were "Marriages require two people. Odd, isn't it?" and "the no. of people got married last year should be a even number" So, while most of the participants were very serious and tried to answer the question properly, two male participants took this opportunity to crack another joke out of this one. On the other hand, the female participants were very formal and mostly replied with direct answers. However there were answers from both the sexes which indicated they either did not understand the joke, or did not expect that it was a joke. One of the examples of such replies was "Does not make senses"

Now, the above discussion rhymes with the original argument made on the basis of Lakoff's assumption regarding sense of humor of both the sexes, as she mentions "women do not tell jokes well and often don't understand the punch line of jokes. "

4.1.9. Message interpretation:

In the questionnaire a direct quotation was given and they were asked to interpret. Most of the males gave the interpretation is short like "Come home early.", "Come home early, Dad. On the other hand, females gave interpretation with strong reference like, "Mom is worried about you so please come home earlier.", "Dad, mom asked you to come home early."

It is generally acknowledged by linguists that women and men sometimes perceive the same messages to have different meanings as a result of the differences in message interpretation. As it was mentioned above, women are typically considered the experts in "rapport talk" which refers

to the types of communication that build, maintain, and strengthen relationships and reflects skills of talking, nurturing, emotional expression, empathy, and support. However, men often use language for contest.

4.1.10. Topic of conversation:

Two questions there were two different pictures given, one was of different shades of blue colour and another one was a picture of different types of bats. Participants were asked to name them. Most of the males, 93% were able to name the bats but the females were unable to do so. On the other hand, 95% of the female participants were able to name the shades of blue but only 5% named some of the bats.

As we have already mentioned, there is a consistent pattern seen in gender differences for most topic areas, with women holding the most of conversations about people and relationships, fashion and appearances, and men typically (though not always) holding most of conversations about work, sports and money or political issues The corpus under the investigation provided a number of examples supporting tendencies suggested by Tannen (1990) who sees two styles in the conversation: many women bond by talking about troubles, and many men bond by exchanging playful insults and put-downs.

4.1.11. Use of questions in declaratives:

In this question they were asked to choose among two options, one was informal and another one was question using declarative. 63.6% persons replied in favor of using declarative and other chose the option of using non declarative. The figure 6 will illustrate the quantity and percentage:
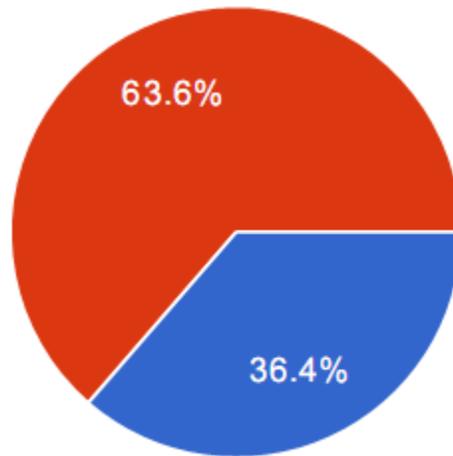

Figure: 6

4.1.12. Using Taboo language:

In this question 98% males and females agreed that males are more frequent using taboo words compared to females. As it was an open ended question, they gave various reasons for using taboo language. Like, "Males are more aggressive than a female.", "Males tend to do that more comparing to females, both is private and public setting. I guess the reason is mostly social upbringing and the stereotypical view towards males and females. As, males are supposed to be more bold and harsh than females.", "Maybe girls are more conscious about earning respect in society, that's why they choose to be careful with their words**."**

On the other hand 2% participants said that now days some girls also use taboo words sometimes. Though this is an exception, one of the participants gave reason in favor of that "It expresses their feelings."

4.1.13. Use of hedges:

Hedges are considered typical phrases adopted by women, which are interpreted as indications of the speaker's unwillingness to make a strong statement of her and express her .In this question 70% female participants agreed that they use hedges, pauses in the conversations, like "Female don't want to hurt people directly." , "I agree. It is because men tend to be more straightforward than women, they don't really care much about how the recipient would react.", "Men use less indirect comments as their social orientation leads them being so straightforward!"

On the other hand 30% male participants said that they use hedges, pauses in the conversations. According to them using hedges is the way of become more polite in conversations.

4.1.14: Interruption in conversation:

Interruption in a conversation is a common factor in new generations. 60% participants said that females are more frequent in interruption like ".Female because they usually wanted to be the centre topic of conversation." , "I'd say females, as they have a knack of doing that very often during both social and personal conversations. The reason may be is, they are a more of "speaker" type, not "listener" type." "Females, its biological n evolutionary I guess. Females have many things to do, they interrupt to stop unnecessary stories and to come straight to the

point." Some participants also said that females took too much, "i believe they love to linger the argument."

On the other hand 20% said that males are also make interruption in conversation more than female like," Males. Uninterested in others opinion.", "Male. Because we have less patience than female." Rest of participants said that both interrupt equally.

4.1.15: Society based/control conversation style;

In every society there are few norms of conversation like as female should be more diplomatic in conversation compare to male. I the questionnaire there was a question regarding this topic. Almost 98% of the participants agreed that females are "brought up" like that, it is a "tradition" and they have to maintain it. One said that "Because we live in a patriarchal society where women are dominated by men. So women are expected to be simple, polite and modest."

They also said that it is a "male dominant society", "Yes, I do agree with the argument, Because Men do forget to control over him when he gets angry. Which can lead towards any accidental issue.", "Yes, because in a patriarchal society and a man is socially expected to be stronghold of the family, thus being harsh in language use kind of comes naturally with this expectation."

4.1.16. Influence of Media:

Now a day's media plays a great role in language difference among the youth. In the answer of this question most of the participants said that media shows a way how females should behave like "In marriage a bride should keep mum, while a groom can speak with others." They also

said that media has got the real power now so they are using in both positive in negative directions. Media in positive directions, for example: "media has the power to impose a lifestyle on people. Media has the power of communication that actually can influence people's thinking style to behavior!" And media in negative directions, like "When a woman loses temper and screams even in a right point media will highlight her angry screaming implying "she is rude". If a male does so "he has a good reason for it"!" media is the

Hindi and English television serials are very influential to the youth. They follow them in a great extent, like "As the popular television soaps show the female characters (mostly young girls) very verbal and often quarreling with each other over silly issues, while the boys tend to be very close to each other, and do not really disagree with each other unless there's a big issue."

Another comment in this was "For example, during the release of the Hindi movie 'Kabhi Kushi Kabhi Ghum,' actor Kareena was symbolized as an attractive and popular girl and she would always say 'whatever' in a feminine tone in the movie. So all the teenager's at that time started saying "whatever" in similar way and only the popular girls would do so. However, a guy would never say "whatever" in the same way as all the other boys would laugh at him and call him girly/gay." So media tend to affect us psychologically which eventually impose an effect on our use of language.

Moreover media has a great psychological influence on the youth .We get socialized into talking in a certain way based on how gender is portrayed in media. For example, "men will not say "gay" things because that's portrayed as something inferior in media." According to Wood, television serials or movies portray female always in a "stereotypical" ways which reflects the gender variation in the society."

Chapter 5: Conclusion

This chapter presents a summary of the main research trends and findings concerning variation in language and gender. Through this paper, the researcher tried to explain, men and women's roles in language variation in general. Within this variation it is seen certain distinctions in their word choice, topic selection amount of talks and pitch. Almost in all language of the world, males and females exhibit great differences in their speech. Briefly all these differences among sexes in language result from the discriminating attitudes of the society towards men and women influence of media plays a huge role as well.

To sum up, the evidence gathered in the study has shown that gender differences in language with regard to message interpretation signified their psychological behavior. There are numerous instances of miscommunication between men and women characters because female and male sometimes perceive the same messages to have different meanings as a result of the differences in message interpretation. While many of sociolinguists refer to characteristics of male and female speech styles by different names, they all have identified similar tendencies in terms of gender differences in language: women's use of hedges and tag questions, differences in topics of conversation and choice of lexicon, differences of interruptions, a higher degree of women's politeness, and differences of message interpretation.

5.1. The research into the representation of gender speech pattern differences:

1. This study has shown that males and females use tag questions less in Bangladeshi context. So the ration of using tag question is less than ration of using tag question.

2. In the answer under the investigation, we found that females use hedges approximately 40 % more often than males do. More instances of hedge usage by female were found in their answers.

3. The research has confirmed the theories of Lakoff R. (1975) and Tannen D. (1993) that there are difference in communication topics between female and male. Both of them prefer specific topic of their discussion.

4. The research has shown that more instances of the use of the intensive 'so' were found in female's speech; this approximately makes 50% more than male's speech.

5. The research has shown that participants prefer to use correct pronunciations rather than prestige grammar.

7. In the answer under the investigation, we found that male characters use more vulgar words, particles and expletives than female do. This speech style is very popular in Bangladeshi context also.

8. The research has shown that, that female interrupt approximately 30 % more often than males do.

9. The research has shown that females are more polite than males.

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Appendix

Survey Questionnaire

Participant Info: I am 2__ year old male/female.

1. Which of the following sentence will you use in your conversation? Choose one.

    a) I could be mistaken, are you Mr. Hossain?   b) Are you Mr. Hossain?

2. In your conversation which of the following sentences would you prefer? Choose one.

    a) Close the door.   b) Would you mind closing the door?

3. Which of the following pattern you use in your conversation? Choose one.

    a) Are you going to dinner?   b) You are going for dinner, aren't you?

4. Which of the following is your most frequent use of 'so' in your conversation?

    (a) I feel **so** unhappy!

    (b) That movie made me **so** sick!

    (c) That sunset is **so** beautiful!

    (d) Fred is **so** dumb!

5. In your conversation do you use adjectives like, 'adorable, lovely' etc? Why or why not?

    Ans)

6. Which of type of sentence you use in your conversation? Choose one/ do you use prestige grammar words and correct pronunciation in your conversation?
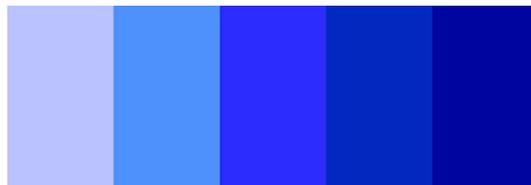
Ans)

7. "Just read that 4,153,237 people got married last year, not to cause any trouble but shouldn't that be an even number?" Explain the above sentence in a single sentence.

Ans)

8. If your mother tells you, "call your father and tell him, "Come home early"" what would you tell your father?

Ans)

9.   a) Name the different shades below.

b) Name the different kind of sports, in which these bats are used.

10. Which of the following pattern would you prefer to use in your conversation? Choose one.

a) You studied in London?   b) Did you study in London?

11. Who do you think use more taboo language (slang/ curse words) in conversations, male or female? Why do you think they do that?

Ans)

12. Do you believe that man uses less indirect comments than a woman in a conversation? Why or why not?

Ans)

13. Who do you think is more frequent to make interruption in conversations, male or females? Why or why not?

Ans)

14. Do you believe society forces a woman to be more polite and diplomatic than a man while man to be rude or straight forward in their use of language? Why?

Ans)

15. Do you feel that media influences the way a man or a woman should use their language different ways while facing the same situation? Why or why not? Can you give any examples from?

Ans)

16. Do you believe society forces a woman to be more polite and diplomatic than a man while man to be rude or straight forward in their use of language? Why?

Ans)

17. Do you feel that media influences the way a man or a woman should use their language different ways while facing the same situation? Why or why not? Can you give any examples from?

Ans)