

Differences in Language Use by Male and Female Students in Tertiary Academia in Dhaka City

Ishrat Akhter

ID: 11103026

Department of English and Humanities

December 2014



BRAC University, Dhaka, Bangladesh

**Differences in Language Use by Male and Female
Students in Tertiary Academia in Dhaka City**

A Thesis

Submitted to the Department of English and Humanities

of

BRAC University

by

Ishrat Akhter

ID: 11103026

In partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree

of

Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics

December 2014

Abstract

Gender variation in language use has become a very common issue in everyday discourses of our life. When we use language frequently, we generally make differences from each other. The differences mainly occur among male and female. Now days, a variety of language use are occurring mostly among the young people of Bangladesh. This paper examines the common difference and reasons behind variation of language use among the undergraduate students of private universities of Dhaka city in Bangladesh. Questionnaires were given to fifty students of five well-known private universities of the capital of Dhaka to conduct the survey. It was found that the students have multiple reasons behind the variation of language use between male and female.

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my gratitude towards my supervisor, Mr. Mohibul Hasan for his valuable advices, guidance, and time in this research. Without his understanding and assistance, the present study would not have been completed. I would also like to thank Dr. Firdous Azim, the Chairperson of ENH Department and all faculty members. I am deeply grateful to the students who were the participants of this study. Finally, my warmest gratitude goes to my parents and my friends for their care, encouragement and support. The success of this dissertation is dedicated to my parents.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction.....	01
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	02
2.1. Introduction.....	02
2.2. Language and Gender.....	03
2.3. Theories of Language and Gender.....	03
2.4. Deficit Approach.....	04
2.5. Dominance Approach.....	05
2.6. Difference Approach.....	05
2.7. Discursive Approach.....	06
2.8. Gender Differences in Language Use.....	07
2.9. Reasons for Gender Differences in Language Use.....	10
Chapter 3: Research Methodology.....	11
3.1. Introduction.....	11
3.2. Research Design.....	11
3.3. Research Objective.....	12
3.4. Research Questions.....	12
3.5. Significance of the study.....	12
3.6. Participants	12
3.7. Instruments.....	12
3.8. Survey Questionnaire.....	13
3.9. Methods of Data Analysis.....	13
3.10. Procedure.....	13
3.11. Limitations.....	13
Chapter 4: Findings and Analysis.....	14-19
Chapter 5: Discussion.....	19-22
Chapter 6: Limitations.....	22

Chapter 7: Conclusion.....	23
References.....	24-25
Appendix.....	26-27

Chapter 1

Introduction

The major thing that distinguishes human beings from animals is basically our way to communicate with each other by using language. We have words for specific things, emotions, and expressions. In each language, words are constructed in a certain way and the way of expressing those words has become different. Through time society has gone through great changes which have influenced our languages. New vocabularies have been added and at the same time old-fashioned words have been replaced. Each language has its characteristics which reflect the society in a great extent.

Gender difference has entered into English studies as a linguistic variable for a long time. The relation between language and gender has become one of the major issues in sociolinguistics since early 1970s. In our modern society, it would appear that women are equal with men. However, the harsh reality tells us that women are not provided with an equal opportunity even for discussions. Now the two sexes respectively command different communication styles. In other words, the language used by women is different from the language used by men.

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. In every sphere of our life the 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 is considered greatly.

Among them if we survey the universities of Bangladesh, we will get a very clear view about the gender difference in language use. The research is done from five top ranking private universities of Dhaka city in Bangladesh. The universities are BRAC University, North South University, East West University, Independent University of Bangladesh (IUB) and South East University. Most of the private universities use English as the medium of their instruction (Rahman, 2005, p.3-4). The students of private universities use English in the classroom to talk with their teachers and their friends. When they are in informal situation, they use language which is Bangla and English. Their utterance of every single word differs from person to person. From the uses of both the language the gender difference is noticeable in a great extent. Now a day, gender difference reflects greatly on their way of using a language.

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.

Literature Review

Introduction:

This chapter consists of a review of the literature providing the background to my investigation. Here I have produced the summary of the knowledge gained from the history and significance of the literature. My discussion begins with a brief consideration about language and gender. Then the discussion will move into the four key approaches of language and gender: Deficit, Dominance, Difference and Discursive (White, 2004). The focus will then move to the difference in the language as used by male and female students in the tertiary level academia in Dhaka.

Language and Gender:

Men and women interact as social beings. Language is an important tool for the people.

(www.yikes.com/~noah/transfer/Linda.doc). As mankind has gender difference, language has the same. There are certain differences when it comes to language use by men and women.

The study of how gender is reflected in language is a recent branch of linguistics; it has developed research findings in the early 1960s. The research on the relationship between language and gender developed on some levels:

- 1) The gender difference in language form and structure,
- 2) The gender difference in utterance style and
- 3) The reasons for gender difference in language.

(www.yikes.com/~noah/transfer/Linda.doc)

Within our culture there remains a deep rooted belief about how men and women behave and are supposed to behave. A major part of this is based upon how we speak and it has developed into the field of “folk linguistics”. (Broadbridge, 2003). In order to find some possible answers about gender differences in language use one has to go back in time and look at the historical background. Old letters, novels, diaries and poems provide us with evidence of folk linguistic beliefs regarding gender differences in language. To get more evidence about the gender differences in language use it is important to discuss about the approaches which will actually give a certain result.

Theories of Language and Gender:

Some well-known linguists like Lakoff, Taneen, Cameron explores the reflect of gender differences in pronunciation, intonation, vocabulary and discourse style from the perspective of sociolinguistics research, and analyze the latest reasons of these differences and

development and changes.(Wenjing, 2012). Besides, these some well-known writers like Robin Lakoff, Deborah Taneen have given their own point of view about the theories of language and gender based on some approaches. Among the writers Robin Lakoff is a renowned writer who has discussed four approaches regarding language and gender. With The ‘Deficit’, ‘Dominance’, ‘Difference’ and ‘Discursive’ approaches linguists have engaged in writing, in order to critically evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the works of their respective authors, and to offer a personal perspective on the most useful approach. So, the aim is to discuss elaborately those approaches and to point out the main strengths and weaknesses of those approaches based on their authors’ point of view.

Deficit Approach:

The Deficit Approach by Robin Lakoff (1975) describes male language as stronger, more prestigious and more desirable. She argues that women are socialized into behaving like ‘ladies’ (linguistically and in other ways too) and that this in turn keeps them in their place because ‘ladylike’ precludes being ‘powerful’ in our culture. (transcript of the deficit model).

The first approach of the language and gender is the ‘deficit’ approach. Initiated in the early 1970s, this approach sees women as disadvantaged as language users, with their language conflicting from an implicit male norm. The main protagonist of this theory was Robin Lakoff. Her work is discussed by Finch (2003, p.137):

The overall pictures which emerges from Lakoff study is that women’s speech is generally inferior to men’s and reflect their sense of personal and social inferiority.

Lakoff describes the way women’s speech style includes features which are ‘expressive of uncertainty, lack of confidence and excessive deference or politeness’ (Lakoff in Finch: 2003, p. 137). These features include tag questions, rising intonation and hedges.

Dominance Approach:

Robin Tolmach Lakoff presented *Language and Woman's Place* (1975) 'less as the final word ... than as a goad to further research' (Lakoff 1975, 40). In this she prompted the 'Dominance' approach, which assigns language variances between men and women to the dominance of men within society.

The second approach of language and gender is the 'dominance approach'. Talbot (1998, p.131) criticized this approach as 'manifestations of a patriarchal social order'. Talbot (1998, p.132) concluded that this approach can be sighted along with the difference approach and both of them 'provided an early model for the analysis of language and gender in the social sciences'.

Difference Approach:

Tannen undertook this further study and so popularized the 'Difference' approach with *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation* (1990). This approach develops the 'two-culture' model of 'men' and 'women', where children are socialized within two separate groups. A situation which Tannen suggests engenders 'mis-communication'. Tannen distances herself from the Dominance approach by eliminating blame: 'Taking a cross-cultural approach to male-female conversations ... without accusing anyone of being wrong or crazy' (Tannen 1990, 47). Moreover, she claimed six points for male and female language. Those six points are:

- Status vs. Support
- Independence vs. Intimacy
- Advice vs. Understanding
- Information vs. Feelings

- Orders vs. Proposals
- Conflicts vs. Compromise

Talbot (1998, p.131) claimed that ‘behavior previously perceived as men’s efforts to dominate women is reinterpreted as a ‘cross-cultural’ phenomenon’. According to Johnson and Meinhof (1997, p.9), the difference approach can be criticized because it ‘fails to address why women and men belong to different subcultures’.

According to Crawford (1995, p.1), ‘men and women...are fated to misunderstand each other unless they recognize their deeply socialized differences’. Crawford describes how the ‘fundamental differences between women and men shape the way they talk’. The main emphasis on this approach is on the way in which men and women develop themselves in different subcultures.

Discursive Approach:

Deborah Cameron, a linguist within the ‘Discursive’ field of language and gender studies, demonstrates (from a feminist perspective) how versions of gender stereotypes can change according to responses to shifts in the economic climate. She shows how these shifts are interpreted and by whom influences the reproduction of patriarchal ideology. Power structures inherent within patriarchy create gender behaviors which are explained by that power; as Sattel explains: ‘[t]he starting point for understanding masculinity lies, not in its contrast with femininity, but in the asymmetrical dominance and prestige which accrues to males in this society’ (Sattel in Thorne *et al* 1983, 119). Sattel’s statement reveals the ‘discursive’ element to the reading of gender; a move away from the binary and towards a broader conversation.

Cameron points out that whereby previously females were viewed as inept communicators (as in the Deficit/Dominance approach) more lately men have been ascribed this characteristic 'not because the actual communicative behaviour of men and women is thought to have changed' but that 'male behaviour has been re-framed as dysfunctional and damaging' (2006, 138). Cameron's essay demonstrates how the 'Discursive' approach considers sociological factors within the study of language and gender.

The three approaches: 'Deficit', 'Dominance' and 'Difference', consider how gender variances expressed through language were visible within the physical manifestations of gender: of 'men' and of 'women'. The more recent 'Discursive' approach looks at how gender is constructed through language within a cultural framework.

Gender Differences in Language Use:

In our modern society, it would consequently come into view that women are equal with men. Yet the harsh reality is women are not considered as equal as men. Moreover, they do not get an equal chance even for discussion. That is because the two sexes respectively command different communication styles. In other words, it can be said that the language which is used by women is different from the language used by men. In the following part, differences in how they use their language and how they behave in conversational interactions will be discussed in details.

Vocabulary is the most active element in language. So, the vocabulary difference manifests the relationship between gender difference and language use. According to Wenjing (2012), there is no rule for female in English pronunciation rules, vocabulary structure and syntax, but the male and female differences in vocabulary is often encountered in daily life, and also overlooked. Robin Lakoff (1975) suggests as an explanation that in this society woman spend much more of their time on colour-related activities such as choosing clothes than men do.

They prefer to use colour terms borrowed from French, such as azure (blue), mauve (lavender), aquamarine (blue-green) etc. These words are not familiar to them but they can show their elegance. These words are unfamiliar for men.

According to Wenjing (2012), women always use a word with exaggerated significance, such as gorgeous, lovely, cute, divine, adorable, darling, precious, sweet, charming, and so on. For example, your dress is adorable. While men use the plain words to enhance the effect, like good, very, really and so on. Jerperson (1992) found that women use “so” to enhance tone and express attitude more than men. For example: It was so interesting.

Moreover, Lakoff (1975) found that female use more intensifiers than male, such as “so”, “awfully”, “pretty”, “terribly”, “quite” and so on. Labov (1966), Levine & Crockett (1966) and Trudgil (1972) have speculated that men use more slang expressions than women.

According to Wenjing (2012), women pay more attention to language elegance. The expression like Shit! / The damned weather! / The hell with him! These are avoided by women. They don't use abusive words in conversation. According to Lakoff (1975), women use more tag questions than men. Women use more hedges than men do.

According to Wenjing (2012), in pronunciation, women speak more standard than men. That means standard form and elegant accent come from women's mouths instead of men's.

Women keep sensitivity on speaking, so they usually use the standard and authoritative manner of articulation. On the other hand, men use non-standard forms of voice more than women. Moreover, female tone is higher than males. After analysing many language materials, Linguists found that women often use the interrogative tone. In addition, comparing with men it is found that women use the reverse stress, which means that men often put the highest pitch on the most important word. On the other hand, women use the lowest pitch on the most important word.

According to Ning & Dai (2010), men and women are also found different in topic selection. For example, politics and economics are major topics selected by male. On the other hand, education and family are the major topics selected by women. Just as Lydie Meunier (1996) states in his article “ The topics such as sports, politics and cars which are seen as “serious” are preserved for men only, the choice for women are the topics such as child-bearing and personal relationships which are labelled as “trivial”.

<http://hhobel.phl.univie.ac.at/mii/gpme.dir9606/msg00013.html>

The amount of talk is another field where men and women display the difference in their language. According to Ning & Dai (2010), usually men talk much more than women in public communication. On the other hand women talk much more in their family than men do.

There exist some differences in the syntactic structure of choice between men and women. Wenjing (2012) stated that, women like to use tag questions most in syntactically. They use rising tone which is used to express consult and the uncertain tone. On the other hand, men prefer to speak directly and that is why they always select declarative and imperative sentences to express the tone of orders and requests.

According to Karlsson (2007), there is a discussion about the characters uses by female and male. The characters are given below:

The female character uses:

- Intensifiers: so, such
- Hedges: I think, you know, I really, I mean, I suppose
- Tag questions: You didn't- did you?
- Minimal responses: yeah, mhm, right

- Words which are supposed to be used more frequently by women than men: oh, my goodness
- Polite language: please
- Formal language: I cannot....

The male character uses:

- Strategy in order to control the conversation
- Minimal responses in order to let the woman know he is not interested in what she has to say
- Taboo words: the man uses taboo words which are supposed to be more frequently used among males than females. The words are: Shit! God damn it!
- Commands: ‘give me some paper!’, ‘Hand me the sport magazine by the sofa!’

Reasons for gender differences in language use:

According to Wenjing (2012), the language of gender differences is an extremely complex social, cultural, psychological and physiological phenomenon, which involves the language of politics, ideology, social status, roles, relationships, language, attitude, level of education, social interaction and many other factors.

Lakoff (1975) thought that the differences of language between men and women are caused by social factors, not the language itself. These social factors are discussed below:

1. Men and women's social role is different. Because of the sex difference, men and women carry out different social responsibilities in social activities. At the beginning of Bible, one thing is certain that women's social status is governed and dominated by men. In all, women speak without confidence because they have low social status and have no power (Lakoff, 1975).

2. The society is men-centered. Women are derived from men. People reach an agreement that men are superior to women. The women are considered in a lower status.
3. Value is another element. Value is the core of culture. Different values also influence men and women's vocabulary selection.
4. According to the physiological factors, it is stated that innate biological differences between men and women decide men and women are different. According to the latest medical research, from the development of language skills the women's left hemisphere develop early than men's. So, the girl speak more frequently and emotional than boy from the beginning. On the other hand, the latest voice experiment proved that the male and female voice on the resonance peak is very different voice tone quality because of their gender. Moreover. Women vocal cords are shorter, thinner and relaxer then the men's (Wenjing, 2012).

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

Introduction:

This chapter contains the research methodology that was followed by the researcher to conduct the research. Moreover, a detailed discussion on the objective of the research, the significance of the study, instruments, participants, and process of analysis has been included here. Questionnaire consisting of multiple choice item was distributed to the students of different private universities.

Research design:

This research deals with a small-scale, quantitative survey on the impact of gender variation in language use.

Research objective:

The objective of the research is to find out different reasons and effects of gender variation in language use among the students of private universities in Bangladesh.

Research Questions:

Do male students and female students use language differently at the tertiary level?

How do they speak differently from each other?

What are the most common differences among them?

Is there any impact or effect of this variation in communication?

Significance of the study:

Young people have variation in language use. This study will show how the students of private universities differ from each other in terms of gender while using their language. It presents an insight of students' perspective on the effect of variation in language use.

Participants:

The participants of this research were fifty students from five top ranking private universities in Bangladesh. The subjects were randomly chosen from BRAC University, North South University, East West University, Independent University of Bangladesh (IUB), and South East University. Among the participants, twenty five of them were boys and rest were girls. The age range of the participants is 18-22 years.

Instruments:

The participants were given questionnaires for conducting the survey. Printed forms of questionnaire have been distributed among the participants and all the questions were

made understandable by the researcher. Therefore, the main sources of information of this research are: Survey (see appendix 1)

Survey Questionnaires:

A printed form that includes several questions on which respondents are expected to write their own thoughts and beliefs is known as a questionnaire. To assure questionnaire's validity and reliability, the consultation with the supervisor and the literature review of the study were taken into consideration while designing the questions. The questionnaires included 12 multiple choice questions consisting of 2 options. In each of the questions students had to choose one specific answer.

Methods of Data Analysis:

Collected raw data were analyzed by Microsoft Excel 2007. It is also used to make tables, drafts and calculating percentages. Moreover, Microsoft Word 2007 has been used to arrange the data in several tables.

Procedure:

The research was administered in the five private universities of Bangladesh. The researcher took permission from the authorities of the universities. Then the survey questionnaires were distributed among the randomly selected students of different departments.

Limitations:

The study was conducted among only the students of five private universities in Dhaka city. There are also other private universities inside and outside Dhaka. But it was not possible to make contact with the students of those universities because of time

constraints. Moreover, as students were not interested to answer open ended questions and were comfortable with multiple choice items, it was not possible to take interview of students.

Chapter 4

Findings and Analysis

Findings of Participants' multiple choice questions

Table 1. In a conversation, different types of language use

Options	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Total (%)
Formal language	3 (12%)	13 (52%)	32%
Informal language	22 (88%)	12 (48%)	68%

In table 1, we can see that 32 percent of the total participants use formal language with others. Among them boys are 12 percent and girls are 52 percent. On the other hand, we can see that 68 percent of the total participants use informal language with others. Among them boys are 88 percent and girls are 48 percent. The result of the table shows that the extensive use of formal and informal language among the private university students in Bangladesh.

Table 2. Using tag questions

Options	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Total (%)
Yes	20 (80%)	23 (92%)	86%
No	5 (20%)	2 (8%)	14%

In table 2, we can see that 86 percent of the total participants use tag questions while using language. Among them boys are 80 percent and girls are 92 percent. On the other hand, we can see that 14 percent of the total participants do not use tag questions. Among them, boys are 20 percent and girls are 8 percent. The result of the table shows that the extensive use of tag questions among the private university of Bangladesh.

Table 3. Tone of talk

Options	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Total (%)
Talk loudly	22 (88%)	19 (76%)	82%
Talk softly	3 (12%)	6 (24%)	18%

In table 3, we can see that 82 percent of the total participants talk loudly. Among them boys are 88 percent and girls are 76 percent. On the other hand, 18 percent of the total participants talk softly. Among them boys are 12 percent and girls are 24 percent. The result of the table shows that the extensive use of talking loudly among the private university of Bangladesh.

Table 4. Using Hedges

Options	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Total (%)
Yes	20 (80%)	22 (88%)	84%
No	5 (20%)	3 (12%)	16%

In table 4, we can see that 84 percent of the total participants use hedges while using a language. Among them boys are 80 percent and girls are 88 percent. On the other hand, 16 percent of the total participants do not use hedges while using language. Among them boys

are 20 percent and girls are 12 percent. The result of the table shows that the extensive use of hedges among the private university in Bangladesh.

Table 5. Use of taboo words and slang

Options	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Total (%)
Yes	23 (92%)	18 (72%)	82%
No	2 (8%)	7 (28%)	18%

In table 5, we can see that 82 percent of the total participants use taboo words and slang while using language. Among them boys are 92 percent and girls are 72 percent. On the other hand, we can see that 18 percent of the total participants do not use taboo words and slang. Among them boys are 8 percent and girls are 28 percent. The result of the table shows that the extensive use of taboo words and slang among the private university in Bangladesh.

Table 6. Way of language use

Options	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Total (%)
Direct language	23 (92%)	2 (8%)	50%
Indirect language	2 (8%)	23 (92%)	50%

In table 6, we can see that 50 percent of the total participants use direct language. Among them boys are 92 percent and girls are 8 percent. On the other hand, we can see that 50 percent of the total participants use indirect language. Among them boys are 8 percent and girls are 92 percent. The result of the table shows that equal use of direct and indirect language among the private university in Bangladesh.

Table 7. Use of supportive language

Options	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Total (%)
Yes	18 (72%)	25 (100%)	86%
No	7 (28%)	0 (0%)	14%

In table 7, we can see that 86 percent of the total participants use supportive language.

Among them boys are 72 percent and girls are 100 percent. On the other hand, 14 percent of the total participants do not use supportive language. Among them boys are 28 percent and girls are 0 percent. The result of the table shows that the extensive use of supportive language among the private university in Bangladesh.

Table 8. Use of “so”, “such”, “pretty” & “quite”

Options	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Total (%)
Yes	22 (88%)	20 (80%)	84%
No	3 (12%)	5 (20%)	16%

In table 8, we can see that 84 percent of the total participants use “so”, “such”, “pretty” and “quite”. Among them boys are 88 percent and girls are 80 percent. On the other hand, 16 percent of the total participants do not use “so”, “such”, “pretty” and “quite”. Among them boys are 12 percent and girls are 20 percent. The result of the table shows that the extensive use of those words among the private university in Bangladesh.

Table 9. Use of minimal responses

Options	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Total (%)
Yes	20 (80%)	23 (92%)	86%
No	5 (20%)	2 (8%)	14%

In table 9, we can see that 86 percent of the total participants use minimal responses. Among them 80 percent are boys and 92 percent are girls. On the other hand, 14 percent of the total participants do not use minimal responses. Among them boys are 20 percent and girls are 8 percent. The result of the table shows that the extensive use of minimal responses among the private university in Bangladesh.

Table 10. Using language like “I think”, “You know”, “I really”

Options	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Total (%)
Yes	20 (80%)	22 (88%)	84%
No	5 (20%)	3 (12%)	16%

In table 10, we can see that 84 percent of the total participants use language like “I think”, “You know”, “I really”. Among them 80 percent are boys and 88 percent are girls. On the other hand, 16 percent of the total participants do not use those languages. Among them 20 percent are boys and 12 percent are girls. The result of the table shows that the extensive use of those languages among the private university in Bangladesh.

Table 11. Occurrence of interruption by boys and girls

Options	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Total (%)
Yes	24 (96%)	20 (80%)	88%

No	1 (4%)	5 (20%)	12%
----	--------	---------	-----

In table 11, we can see that 88 percent of the total participants interrupt while using a language. Among them 96 percent of them are boys and 80 percent of them are girls. On the other hand, 12 percent of them do not interrupt while using a language. Among them 4 percent are boys and 20 percent are girls. The result of the table shows that the extensive use of interruption among the private university in Bangladesh.

Table 12. Using adjectives like “Adorable”, “Charming”, “Sweet”, “Lovely”

Options	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Total (%)
Yes	20 (80%)	23 (92%)	86%
No	5 (20%)	2 (8%)	14%

In table 12, we can see that 86 percent of the total participants use words like “adorable”, “charming”, “sweet”, and “lovely”. Among them 80 percent of them are boys and 92 percent of them are girls. On the other hand, 14 percent of the total participants do not use those adjectives. Among them boys are 20 percent and girls are 8 percent. The result of the table shows that the extensive use of adjectives among the private university in Bangladesh.

Chapter 5

Discussion

The focus of the researcher was to find out the gender difference in language use among the participants in private university of Bangladesh. From the very beginning of the research including the responses of the participants, it has been found that while using a language in a

conversation, 32% of the total participants use formal language. On the other hand, 68% of the total participants use informal language. Here, in case of using formal language majority are girls and in case of using informal language majority are boys. So, from this point of view it can be said that there are gender difference while using a language in a conversation and the use of informal language is increasing day by day among Bangladeshi youth.

Regarding the uses of tag questions, Holmes (1993) found out that certain types of tag questions are used more by men than by women, i.e. modal tags, and certain types are used by women, i.e. facilitative tags (Nemati & Bayer, 2007). Here, facilitative tags are addressee-oriented which expresses the speaker's solidarity or positive attitude to the addressee. On the other hand, modal tags are speaker-oriented and signal speaker's desire for confirmation. The research study shows that 86 % of the total participants use tag questions. Among them 80% are boys and 92% are girls. On the other hand, only 14% of the total participants do not use tag question. The result indicates that the use of tag questions creates gender differences among the participants.

Regarding the tone of talk in using a language the research shows that 82 % of the total participants talks loudly. Among them 88% are boys and 76% are girls. On the other hand, only 18 % of the total participants talks softly. Among them boys are 12% and girls are 24%. From this study, the result says that there is a huge difference among boys and girls regarding talking loudly. Here, the gender difference is clearly noticeable.

Lakoff (1975) believes that women use more hedges than men do (Nemati, A. & Bayer, J. M., p. 198). The evidence of the study shows that 84% of the total participants use hedges while using a language. Among them boys are 80% and girls are 88%. On the other hand, only 16% of the total participants do not use hedges. The result shows that girls use more hedges than boys do and the uses of hedges are increasing among Bangladeshi youth.

Men used more vulgar terms (Broadbridge, 2003). The evidence of the study shows that 82% of the total participants use taboo words and slang. Among them boys are 92% and girls are 72%. On the other hand, only 18% of the total participants do not use taboo words and slang. The result shows that now a day the use of taboo words and slang is increasing and the percentage shows the gender difference of the use.

Regarding the way of using language directly or indirectly, it is stated that “the males studied were generally more assertive and directive than the woman” (Haas, 1979). The evidence of the study shows that 50% of the total participants use direct language while having a conversation. Among them boys are 92% and girls are only 8%. On the other hand, 50% of the total participants use indirect language while in a conversation. Among them girls are 92% and boys are only 8%. The result shows that there is a huge gender difference in using direct and indirect language which reflects the statement truly.

Regarding the use of supportive language, it is stated that “women are more supportive than men” (Haas, 1979). The study shows that 86% of the total participants use supportive language. Among them boys are 72% and girls are 100%. On the other hand, only 14% of the total participants do not use supportive language where boys are 28% and girls are 0%. The result shows that there is a great gender difference among the participants and the statement reflects the results truly.

Regarding uses of some specific words like “so”, “such”, “pretty” and “quite”- the evidence of the study shows that 84% of the total participants use those words. Among them 88% are boys and 80% are girls. On the other hand, only 16% of the total participants do not use those words. The result of the study shows that the uses of those words create gender difference among Bangladeshi youth.

The evidence of the study shows that 86% of the total participants use minimal responses like “mmh”, “Yeah”, “right”. Among them 80% are boys and 92 % are girls. On the other hand, only 14% of the total participants do not use minimal responses while using a language. The result of the study shows that the use of minimal responses reflects gender difference in language use.

Again another evidence of the study shows that hedges like “I think”, “You know”, “I really” is used by 84 % of the total participants. Among them boys are 80% and girls are 88%. On the hand, only 16 % of the total participants do not use those terms while using a language. The result shows that the percentage of girls is more than the percentage of boys which reflect the gender difference greatly.

In terms of interruption the evidence of the study shows that 88% of the total participants interrupt while using a language in conversation. Among them boys are 96% and girls are 80%. On the other hand, only 12% of the total participants do not interrupt. The result of the study shows that boys interrupt more than girls and it indicates the gender difference among them.

In terms of using words like “adorable”, “charming”, “sweet” and “lovely”- the evidence of the study shows that 86% of the total participants use those words where boys are 80% and girls are 92%. On the other hand, only 14% of the total participants do not use those words. The result of the study shows that girls use those words more than boys which show the gender difference in a great extent.

Chapter 6

Limitations

This research was only done on the limited participants on some well-known private universities of Dhaka city. Opinions of a few people from other private universities of outside

and inside Dhaka could contribute the research as significant and more valuable. It would become harder for the researcher to cover other private universities of outside Dhaka city because of limited time. Moreover, the explanations that are given are also limited. The researcher expected to include more participants for her research. However, shortage of time has concluded the research with fifty people only.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

There can be no difference in any language itself. But language can be used by people to achieve a particular purpose which reflects the personal or social values. Restriction of the use of language because of the social environment creates gender difference mostly.

From the research study it is clear that male and female languages are quite different. This difference occurs mostly in vocabulary use, voice and tone, syntactic structure and style of using language. Moreover, there are some common differences and some common similarities in using language. The research study shows that in recent time the youth are practicing these differences in a large extent. While uttering a language their different ways of using language reflects the gender difference. The using of language differently also creates many variations in communication.

Finally it should be pointed out that the way is still endless for researchers to disclose more and more detailed difference between male and female language.

References

- Babalola, J., & Oyinloye, G. (2012). Language and Gender Distinctions. *International Review of Social Science and Humanities*, 2(2), 236-242.
- Boe, S. (1987). Language as an Expression of Caring in Women. *Anthropological Linguistics*, 29(3), 271-285.
- Cameron, D. (2003). *Gender and Language Ideologies*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Crawford, M. (1995). *Talking Difference- on gender and language*. SAGE.
- Finch, G. (2003). *Word of Mouth*. Palgrave.
- Haas, A. (1979). Male and Female Spoken Language Differences: Stereotypes And Evidence. *Psychological Bulletin*, 86(3), 616-626.
- Holmes, J. (1986). Functions of You Know in Women's and Men's Speech. *Language in Society*, 15(1), 1-21.
- Karlsson, S. (2007). Gender- related Differences in Language Use.
- Lakoff, R. (1975). Language and Woman's Place. *Language in Society*, 2(1), 45-80. New York: Harper and Row.
- Mei-rong, W., & Ching-yu hsieh, S. (2007). Gender Differences in the Language for Emotions. *Asian Journal of Management and Humanity Sciences*, 2(1-4), 89-97.
- Nemati, A. & Bayer, J. M. (2007). Gender Diffrences in the Use of Linguistic Forms in the Speech of Men and Women: A Comparative Study of Persian and English.

- Newman, M., Groom, C., Handelman, L., & Pennebaker, J. (2008). Gender Differences In Language Use: An Analysis Of 14,000 Text Samples. *Discourse Processes*, 211-236.
- Ning, H., & Dai, X. (2010). On Gender Difference in English Language and Its Causes. *Asian Social Science*, 6(2), 126-130.
- Rahman, S. (2005). Orientations and Motivations in English Language Learning: A study of Bangladeshi Students at Undergraduate Level. *Asian EFL Journal*, 7(1), 1-26.
- Tannen, D. (1990). *You just don't understand: Women and men in conversation*. New York: Ballantine.
- Talbot, M. (1998). *Language and Gender- An Introduction*. Polity Press.
- Wenjing, X. (2012). Study on gender differences in English. *International Conference on Education Technology and Management Engineering*, 16-17, 218-221.

Appendix

Survey Questionnaire

Gender: Male/ Female

Age:

Level of Study:

Institution's Name:

Educational Background:

1. In a conversation, what type of language do you use?
 - a) Formal language
 - b) Informal Language
2. While in a conversation, do you use tag questions like "...isn't it?", "...don't you?", "...right?"
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
3. In a conversation, how do you talk?
 - a) Talk loudly
 - b) Talk softly
4. Do you use hedges such as "Like", "Sort of", "Whatever", "For example", "I think"?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
5. Do you use taboo words and slang like "Shit", "Damn", "Hell" in your daily conversation?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
6. What type of language do you use?

a) Direct Language

b) Indirect language

7. Do you use supportive language?

a) Yes

b) No

8. Do you use words like “So”, “Such”, “Pretty”, “Quite”?

a) Yes

b) No

9. Do you use minimal responses like “mmh”, “Yeah”, “Right”?

a) Yes

b) No

10. Do you use language like “I think”, “You know”, “I really”?

a) Yes

b) No

11. In a conversation, do you interrupt?

a) Yes

b) No

12. Do you use word like “Adorable”, Charming”, “Sweet”, “and “Lovely”?

a) Yes

b) No

