

Gender Differences in Second Language Speech Production and Communicative Strategies

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Article Information

Received: December 25, 2024

Accepted: January 27, 2025

Published: August 04, 2025

Keywords

Conversation Analysis, Gender Differences, Language Teaching

ABSTRACT

Using conversational analysis to study gender differences in the second language speech production and communicative strategies of selected grade 8 students of Baco National High School, specifically recognizing the differences in terms of the amount of talk, turn-taking system, and conversational elements, this study employed single-sex and mixed-sex conversations which only comprised of 3 males and 3 females purposively selected from Grade 8 curriculum level. The researcher transcribed the recorded conversations verbatim before adapting them to the Jeffersonian Transcription system. The study revealed that women are inarguably more verbose than men and that men interrupt and overlap more than men in mixed-sex conversations, while women overlap with the same sex more frequently, resulting in non-completion of turns. Moreover, it has also been found that men proclaim their dominance by using conversational strategies such as interrupting and overlapping, while women tend to talk more to ascend in mixed-sex conversations. On the other hand, both sexes tend to be more comfortable in expressing themselves when conversing with the same sex; however, men are more inclined to use non-verbal language with the same sex to comprehend each other. Finally, it was discovered that men's conversational styles are more likely to question, instruct, correct, disagree, and switch codes, while women tend to execute conforming, informing, repairing, and hedging.

INTRODUCTION

Gender differences as it has become one of the most controversial issues since the very beginning have spun the world generating numerous studies linking to language acquisition. It has been over decades that it continues to be a subject for many researchers giving it a demand to be a question of agreement.

Based on research conducted in the field of second language acquisition (SLA), there were many factors that affect language learning, including the learner's background or individual characteristics such as age, language ability, motivation, behavior, and gender. Astoundingly, gender is considered to be the most influential factor (Alahmadi & Lahlali, 2019).

In a more specific sense, gender differences have always affected language itself and the process of how male and female learners learn a second language. This is probably one of the reasons abundant studies have reported that males are more likely to lag behind in terms of language field.

Moreover, Jackman and Webb (2019) asserted that the superior performance of females over males at high school and further levels is a growing worldwide phenomenon. This is nevertheless the fact that a current and noteworthy comprehensive global meta-analysis that studied male-female performance at all levels discovered that girls have consistently outperformed boys in school. Relatively, such claims could be assumed close and similar to the researcher's reflection in her 8 years of teaching the English language. She noted how most boys show very little interest and do inferior compared to most girls, who happened to perform better most of the time. However,

she then spotted research gaps in terms of the results of men getting lower performance in school as Human Resources Online (2019) revealed that in Asia, where the Philippines ranked second, boys recorded a slightly higher EPI (English Proficiency Index) score of 60.41 vs 59.96 of their female counterparts. This has given the researcher a considerable subject to study and bring answers to. She believes that the topic of gender differences in language remains controversial and has become an interesting topic as it continually leaves diverse results.

However, in a study conducted by Bergman and Svensson (2021), it was found that female students are just more motivated to learn a second or third language than male students, which probably may explain the difference in school marks between boys and girls and a higher grade for girls in English national tests. Considering this dispute, it is too early to assume that men cannot perform the same as women in terms of language, which mainly contributed to the researcher's curiosity to figure out the riddle of why there is inconsistency with the results of different studies concerning linguistic capability.

Also, an attempt to study conversations between genders may provide some evidence of what male and female students usually focus on in situations where oral language occurs inside the classroom. She believes that this might give her clues on how to encourage not only her male students but also the females to comfortably engage in oral performances and speaking activities in English.

The research questions were: 1. How can the second language of selected grade 8 male and female Baco National High School students be described in terms of form and structure (grammar), vocabulary use, and

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communication style (speech features)? 2. What are the gender differences in the second language speech production and communicative strategies of the selected Grade 8 students of Baco National High School in terms of (a) Amount of talk, (b) Turn-taking system, and (c) Conversational elements?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Language is a significant aspect of everyday communication. Through language, people can express feelings and share their personal standpoints, needs, and everything they want to say. Generally speaking, language surrounds and describes personality, determines social behavior, supports societal schemes, specifies thoughts and feelings, and offers a platform to share ideas, cooperate, and polish the development process. However, men and women use language differently, as it has been a matter of issue for a long time (Sumipo, 2020).

From the biological standpoint on differences between the sexes, scientists have discovered that there is a gene associated with the development of utterance and language that is more active in females than in males. They found out that the protein production of this gene in girls is way further than in boys. This is probably one of the reasons why young girls, in their first years, learn language at an earlier and more rapid pace than boys (Sabra, 2018). From a different point of view, this has specified a triggering factor behind the gender differences in terms of language learning that explains why girls tend to learn faster than boys. However, since science is not absolute and continues to explore, there are still gaps in assuming that boys cannot perform just the same as girls.

In terms of gender differences in language, Wahyuningsih (2018) emphasized that men and women develop various patterns of using language. Women usually pay attention to the affective functions of interaction more frequently than men do and tend to use linguistic devices that emphasize unity more frequently than men do. They generally communicate in some ways, which will uphold and increase solidarity, while men tend to interact in some ways, which will stress power and position, as women are considered to be more flexible than men. The way men and women speak has become a thought-provoking topic to study as they have various ways of using language. These differences could be taken from the vocabulary, syntax, and so forth. In terms of vocabulary, for example, women typically tend to use flamboyant words and keep using adjectives such as lovely, sweet, and beloved which are hardly used by men. Thus, men and women have different styles of using language because they are raised in dissimilar ways as they possess different roles in society (Wahyuningsih, 2018).

Given all these circumstances, it could be concluded that men and women are designed to learn languages differently. As presented by several researchers, females tend to be more effective language learners from a very young age as the female learning style tends to jive with the instructional methods used in most English lessons,

which leaves males at an even greater drawback. It is also important to note that males and females have different goals in mind when learning a language. The few exclusions in certain languages can be explained by the field of work the learners choose to enter. Because of this, it is evident that languages are somewhat gendered. Educators should implement more tasks involving visual aids or auditory exercises to give males a fair chance. As for exams, oral exams are more suited to the male learning style since they rely on the senses and are not just written on paper. If these teaching methods were employed, males would succeed more in the classroom (Wightman, 2020).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study is a qualitative research using conversation analysis to study the gender differences in the second language speech production and communicative strategies of selected grade 8 students of Baco National High School. Qualitative research design was used in this study because, according to Busetto, *et al.* (2020), this research design is demarcated as the study of the nature of phenomena together with their quality, different indicators, the context in which they give the impression or the views from which they can be apparent and generally contains data in form of words rather than figures.

The study employed single-sex and mixed-sex conversations, comprising only three males and three females purposively selected from the Grade 8 curriculum level. The participants were selected based on their consent to partaking in the study, ease in speaking the English language, which is foremost vital in determining the study's success, and their acquaintance factor, which served as a source for an interaction to happen more comfortably and naturally. Furthermore, they were privileged to select the most convenient schedule for recording their conversation.

Since the approach is mainly in focus groups, which can include anywhere from 5 to 15 participants, the researcher involved only a small group of participants in a conversation intended to generate data pertinent to the research question (Crossman, 2020).

To investigate the distinctions between both sexes, the study adopted purposive sampling, which the researcher intentionally chose to obtain the data necessary to answer the research questions, such as the description of the selected participants' grammar, vocabulary, and conversational styles or language features, their gender differences, and the difficulties they encounter in L2 speech production.

The selected participants in the study were engaged in single-sex and mixed-sex conversations in a classroom to stimulate real feedback from them as if they were really in a face-to-face class. They interacted with situations usually done in a classroom set by the researcher while being recorded to acquire the gender differences in their second language speech production and communicative

strategies. As the pandemic continues to limit face-to-face interaction among the public, specifically with students, the researcher considered all necessary safety protocols to ensure the safety of the participants and followed ethical considerations such as consent and participants' anonymity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Using Conversation Analysis pioneered by Harvey Sacks in the early 1970s and later collaborated with Emmanuel Schegloff and Gail Jefferson in 1974, the recorded conversations were analyzed describing the participants' vocabulary, grammar and speech features and identified the gender differences in terms of amount of talk, turn-taking and conversational elements.

1. How can the second language of selected grade 8 male and female students of Baco National High School be described in terms of (a) form and structure (grammar), (b) vocabulary use, and (c) communication style (speech features)?

Form and Structure

Wahyuningsih (2018) asserts that women use more interrogative sentences than men. The results of his study indicate that women used six interrogative sentences while men used three. The use of interrogative sentences seems to mean that women are more likely to continue more conversations with other people. In terms of grammar, it shows that women tend to use more standard English than men do. This indicates that women focus more on grammar correctness by using clear utterances of precise grammar.

As described in the literature review of this study, women would always prefer to use causal, conditional, and purpose-finite adverbial clauses rather than concessive, which is congruent with the results of the present study. Although Ali is the only interactant who has employed a concessive clause in his speech, it relatively indicates that the male sex would preferably be the one to use the concessive clause, which Boudersa (2018) affirms in his study on the use of F.A.Cs and as an indication of a higher degree of obligation having pre-posed information. Also, the correlation of the female sex to preferably use purpose finite adverbial clauses, as asserted by Boudersa, is noteworthy as Elle and Nova frequently used them in their discourse. Interestingly, Ali, Rick, and, Dale, who utilized a few conditional finite adverbial clauses, seemed to mostly use causal F.A.Cs in their sentences, which is contrary to Boudersa's conclusion.

Moreover, when it comes to sentence structures, the result of this study shows that male interactants tend to employ more interrogative sentences than females, which are opposed to Wahyuningsih's (2018) conclusion that the female sex uses more question-structured statements. However, in terms of grammar use, following Wahyuningsih's (2018) claims that women tend to observe language rules more than men, the female interactants in the present study can also be identified to observe correct

grammar use more than the males.

Vocabulary Use

Apart from grammatical choice, each gender has a tendency to use different lexis or words as well. In terms of vocabulary use, Ali uses the first-person singular pronoun 'I' which implies strong stance in expressing points or arguments, staples the relative pronoun 'that' with which he uses to link other concepts that he would like to include in each sentence and is occasionally used excessively, prefers referring to plural nouns, uses simple present and future tense to pertain to situations that he incorporates in his speech, uses basic adjectives to describe a particular subject, and have used 40 different content words or words which are categorized under nouns, adjectives, main verbs and adverbs.

Depicting Rick's vocabulary, he would also prefer to use the first-person singular pronoun 'I' to cite his ideas and express opinions which gives him added confidence in uttering his stand, selecting basic adjectives, opting to utilize simple present tense of the verb even to conditionals, frequently uses the modal 'can' to refer to ability as its purpose. However, he mistakenly used the word 'lately' instead of 'a while ago or earlier. Even much lesser than Ali, he was acknowledged to use 30 different content words in all of his discourse in both single-sex and mixed-sex conversations.

Although seemed to be the quietest among the three male interactants, Dale managed to use to first-person singular pronoun 'I' with which he uses to express his ideas. Contrary to how he behaves, the use of 'I' gives the impression that he is confident with his ideas. Similar to Ali and Rick's preference for the verb tense, he expresses this in simple present tense as well. In all of the conversations, he was accredited to use only 9 content words as he does not speak much and prefers just to whisper, smile, and nod.

Moreover, Elle appeared to prefer the plural first-person pronoun 'We' when expressing opinions rather than the first-person singular 'I,' which suggests a lesser command or confidence in asserting thoughts. She has used the pronoun 'I' only a few times in her speech and usually uses 'they' when referring to people in general. She has used basic adjective that most of them involves deep sense of emotion that is perceived to be very 'ladylike'. She was notable for using too much quantifier 'a lot' in her discourse, giving the impression of exaggerating figures but not giving the exact numbers. She mistakenly uses 'admist' instead of 'amidst' and was noted to use adverbs of degree as 'very very' and 'really really' as she desired to emphasize the degree of what is being described in an amplified way. She also uses relative adverbs 'where' and 'that' frequently in her sentences to extend her description of ideas and employs the use of 'that's why' as a cohesive device indicating effect instead of as a result, therefore, etc. and prefers to use simple present tense in asserting ideas and opinions. She then collectively used 104 different content words in her entire

speech, much more than the three male interactants.

Nova's preference seemed to be quite similar to Elle's as she also prefers to use the plural first-person pronoun 'We' in expressing ideas and thoughts and the third-person pronoun 'they' to refer to people in general. She uses 'that's why' as a cohesive device which is more frequent than Elle. She also prefers to use simple present tense in expressing opinions, unusually begins sentences with 'and' and 'and also' which is partly an indication of a supportive quality regarding the ideas of the one who spoke ahead of her and flowing pour of thoughts that she decided to intentionally use them to add some more ideas. She has utilized 79 different content words in both single and mixed-sex conversations.

Lastly, Lyn's use of vocabulary is similar to the use of the plural first-person pronoun 'We', indicating the lesser authority position in conversations. Just like Nova, she has a habit of starting sentences beginning with the supposedly coordinating conjunction 'so' that could also be considered as filler. She also employs the use of the word 'like' for two purposes; One is to compare ideas, and the other one is to buy her time in grasping for thoughts as a filler. She, however, prefers to use simple present tense and has produced 28 different content words in all of her speech.

Concurring with Wahyuningsih (2018), who stated that women were fond of expressing their emotions by using vivid words and were categorized by excessive use of hyperbole (exaggeration) particularly in the form of intensives that men seldom used, the present study described the female interactants to use adjectives which involve a deep sense of emotion as perfect, unfair, poor etc., and by using excessive quantifier 'a lot' and adverbs 'very' and 'really' in disproportionate manner signifying an overemphasis which is in contrast with how men used the language.

Also, the description of the interactants agrees with the conclusion made by Wahyuningsih (2018) that women preferred to use first person plural pronouns to express something while men are more likely focused on using first person singular pronoun and the second person pronoun. This also indicates that the use of the first-person plural pronoun 'I' proclaims high self-assurance of one's own opinion presented in a conversation while the first-person plural pronoun 'We' asserts lesser conviction, enunciating certainty.

Communication Style

Regarding speech features, Ali was found to have a naturally strong and authoritative tone. However, he stammers and uses fillers and hand gestures to support his claims and opinions, particularly by pointing fingers, creating a partition using both hands to separate contrast ideas, and unconsciously blinking his eyes when self-correcting. Moreover, as distinctively noted, he used to pull his shirt down or put his small body bag at his back to prepare himself before speaking. He also applies a slight sarcastic tone when he is challenging or opposing

an argument and seldom uses eye contact in mixed conversations, has employed code-switching once with the purpose of instructing one male interactant and is more serious in partaking in a mixed-sex conversation and found to be more comfortable in talking with fellow male participants who are also his cousins. In terms of hedging, he has employed such a feature three times in his speech in mixed-sex conversations, which studies suggest have been used mostly by women to sound more polite and friendly in conversations. Ali's hedges, on the contrary, are exposed to be his peculiar way of being gentle with the female interactants as it is their first encounter.

On the other hand, Rick's communication style of expressing his thoughts is relatively similar with Ali in terms of tone, which is strong and commands submission to his arguments. He emphasizes his points and uses hand gestures, which usually is widely spread out, shifts to humorous communication patterns whenever he runs out of ideas in the middle of speaking to fill his unspoken thoughts, laughs, stops talking, and volunteers others also when out of thoughts. He possesses humorous traits among the three male interactants that lead the other interactants to be more relaxed even in the midst of exchanging arguments. Having used code-switching twice in mixed conversation, he is resilient in insisting on his opinions and distinctively nods in a reciprocate manner when self-correcting. He has used hedging twice in mixed-sex conversations to sound less direct and refer to uncertain numbers.

Furthermore, Dale did not talk much and can be seen as quiet in mixed conversation. He sounds hesitant and uncertain, as seen in his eye gazes and body movements, hides doubtfulness through smiling and being silent, and seems to just whisper, smile, and nod to the other male participants to fill in reluctance in L2 use and courage to express his viewpoint. However, when he delivers his dialog, it is somehow expressive of how he desires everyone to accept it as true. His voice is loud enough, although he lacks eye contact. In terms of hedging, only one was identified due to the limited sentences he produces.

Elle, in the same category, is fluent in the use of English language. She spoke intelligently compared to other participants as she also observed correct grammar and was very fluid; however, she lacked authority and conviction in her tone of voice. Although she usually initiates the conversation, she shows body movements by putting her hands inside her pockets, fixing her clothes and mask, and sitting unrelaxed, which indicates hesitation. She focuses more on asserting and explaining her standpoints rather than questioning other interactants' ideas and continues to expound and talk more about her stance. Her use of hedges is exceptionally excessive; instead of directly referring to an exact number of people, objects, or ideas, she uses hedges and her staple language style of using 'a lot of'.

In a similar situation, Nova shows active and eager

participation in both single and mixed-sex conversations, conveys her opinions by asserting and disagreeing with ideas that she finds contrasting to hers, uses questioning to support her statements, and calls for a challenge that shows her protest to accept her views and was found to speak in haste when her thoughts were overflowing and slow down when hesitant. She also uses fillers that either repeat her words or phrases or pronounce words much longer than normal. She was most likely to follow Elle's assertions, would probably take the floor enthusiastically, and was found to use hand gestures and gazes that signify doubt and authority. She also employs blank gazes even when she is talking, which implies discerning thoughts and checking whether ideas are probable or not. Her tone is uncertain, which sometimes expresses conviction, then goes unstable that she loses her loud voice to suggest authority and then changes her speed of talking that uncertainty can be inferred. In terms of hedging, she has employed few, using some and a lot to mean indefinite figures and descriptions, similarly giving the slight impression of uncertainty.

Finally, Lyn, preferred to only speak in minimal quantity. Her tone is doubtful and lacks authority, and she has employed code-switching a few times in her discourse to express thoughts that she cannot enunciate using L2. She participates by usually supporting ideas by nodding her head and typically affirms instead of stating her own, easily laughs when somebody tells jokes or communicates a comic dialog, and usually employs body movements and glances that signal a lack of confidence and hesitation to express thoughts and opinions. Due to limited dialog, hedging was not found in her speech.

Acknowledging Lakoff's (1975) deficit model describing women's language style which contains features like being expressive of uncertainty, absence of confidence, and excess respect and politeness, picking hedges, rising intonation and use of tag questions, the female interactants in this study were found to express the same speech features as identified in their uncertain tone, doubtful eye glances, body movements which are communicative of the absence of conviction and picking variety of hedges which is indicative of speculative language.

While this is the case, Graham (2018) claims that men are more likely to provide answers as the females ask questions. In the contrary, the results of the interactants' description showed the opposite. The male interactants usually ask questions and the female interactants typically answers through explaining and informing. He also added that female speakers show more animated behavior, including quantity and intensity of eye contact, gestures, facial impressions, and body movement which is quite opposite with the outcome of the present study. The male interactants were the ones with animated behavior, employing hand gestures and body movements more intensively than the female interactants who only moved modestly while talking. Although, when it comes to eye contact, the male interactants were observed to avoid eye contact following Berbari's (2019) assertion that while

culture demands men to perform dominance, supremacy, and status, direct eye contact shows a deeper level of emotion. However, the females were indeed more likely to use a broader range of pitch and tonal distinctions, while men give the impression of being more dramatic orally and more likely to tell stories and jokes, as observed in the study.

Fascinatingly, it was also found in the analysis of the interactants' speech styles that the males would always prefer non-verbal communication and were more comfortable when engaged with the same sex rather than in mixed conversations. They could understand each other even by just nodding, eye contact, and body movements, which is the opposite of how the female interactants would want their conversation to flow, which is by comfortably engaged in chatting with the same sex.

2. What are the gender differences in the second language speech production and communicative strategies of the selected Grade 8 students of Baco National High School in terms of (a) Amount of talk, (b) Turn-taking system, and (c) Conversational elements?

Amount of Talk

This study found that female interactants produced more words than males. Elle, who is a female, had the highest amount of words, which contributed 955 words in mixed-sex conversation and 266 words in single-sex conversation, followed by Nova, who is also a female, with 643 words tallied in mixed-sex conversation and 127 in single-sex conversation. The next interactant who had the third highest amount of words is Ali, who contributed 304 words, which will not tantamount to Elle's even by a third, and only 15 clearly recognizable words in single-sex conversation. It was followed by Rick, who had 213 words in mixed-sex conversation and was found to have no clear and recognizable words in the all-male conversation. For this reason, the male interactants preferred to just whisper at each other and use non-verbal communication strategies when talking and discussing a particular topic. As a result, the researcher could not tally even one recognizable word from the recorded all-male conversation. Another noteworthy account is that they do comprehend each other's ideas by just nodding and looking at each other's eyes. Because this study aims to investigate a natural response from the interactants, the researcher has allowed them to communicate in their own way.

After Rick, the next is Lyn who has produced 95 words in the mixed-sex conversation and only 30 in the all-female conversation which is far lesser compared to the other two female interactants. This could suggest that although most women are more verbose than male, as this study suggests, there are considered few who either prefer to talk minimally or are just hesitant in expressing themselves not only in the English language but also with other unknown factors, which is not the scope of this study. Lastly, the quietest interactant would be Dale, who only produced 39 words in the mixed conversation, and

no recognizable word from the all-male conversation was identified, which, in an odd way, the same with Rick, who communicates with fellow male interactants mostly with non-verbal cues.

Although quite a few studies suggest that males take more than their fair portion of time, as Stokoe (2021) claimed, the findings in this study showed that females were indeed more verbose than males, producing more words in 1,693 in total compared to 556 words overall by males for the 20-minute mixed-sex conversations.

Turn-Taking System

While turn-taking has also been a significant part of studies on men's and women's differences, this study reveals a significant difference in terms of the interactants' turn-taking system. Interestingly, Nova has the highest number of complete turns, which she recorded 17 in mixed-sex conversations and no complete turns in single-sex due to overlaps. She was followed by Elle, who registered 14 complete turns in mixed-sex conversations and recorded no complete turn in single-sex due to overlaps. Next is Rick, who recorded eight (8) complete turns in mixed-sex conversation and one in single-sex, followed by Ali, who recorded only fewer by one, with Rick's total number of complete turns in mixed-sex conversation and the same one complete turn in single-sex. Moreover, Lyn recorded 3 complete turns in mixed-sex and no complete turns in single-sex conversation due to overlaps just the same with Nova. Because of limited produced sentences in both conversations, Dale recorded only two complete turns, just the same as the other boys who had one each.

The results of this study conclude that female interactants recorded more complete turns in mixed-sex conversation, which is in contrast with Graham's (2018) assertions that men talk more and supposedly have more complete turns. In this study, it was also remarkably noteworthy that all female interactants had no complete turns in the all-female conversation due to overlaps. As keenly observed by the researcher, the female interactants were more comfortable exchanging ideas, resulting in successive overlaps that each turn has not been completed. As it was also recorded, there were no recognized overlaps during the male interactants' single-sex conversation, while the females recorded no complete turns but registered 11 overlaps for Elle, 10 for Nova, and 6 for Lyn in their all-female conversation. It could be inferred that while male interactants use non-verbal communication styles such as whispering, nodding, and having eye contact, the females spent their time talking comfortably, resulting in the non-completion of turns in their conversation.

Graham (2018) added that disruptions are evenly distributed when women exchange conversations with other women. Just the same, when men converse with other men, interruptions are consistently distributed. Yet, when both sexes talk with one another, nearly all of the interruptions are carried out by male speakers. This conclusion is irrefutably congruent with the result of the present study that in terms of interruptions, the

males interrupt more. It was tallied that Ali has the most interruptions, equated to four interruptions, followed by Rick, who only interrupted once, and Elle, who also tallied one interruption and is the only female interactant to have interrupted in mixed conversation. On the other hand, as mentioned in this study, the interruptions of males in single-sex conversation were evenly distributed registering one interruption made by Ali, Rick, and Dale while it was in contrast results that in all-female conversation, only Elle has made an interruption.

Following the claims of Pazkadian & Tootkaboni (2018) that women since birth have the innate ability to be advantageous in language and have dominated men in several areas of grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary, among others, it was construed that this study put men in dominance with conversational strategies used in a mixed-gender conversation context as they are the ones who interrupt and overlap more proclaiming that they have supremacy in the conversation although the female interactants recorded more complete in turns in the mixed-sex conversation. It also correlates with Lakoff (1975) and her Dominance Approach that designates men who are more likely to interrupt than women when involved in such conversation.

Conversational Elements

As the differences in how conversations are carried out through these elements still remain a matter to study, this study augments to show a substantial difference in how the interactants exchange dialogues, performing the acts of questioning, instructing, correcting, conforming, informing, disagreeing, repair, code-switching, and hedging.

Regarding questioning, there is only a little difference as the results recorded the male interactants to be only up by one question structure in the mixed-gender conversation. As described in the previous table, particularly in sentence structure, the purpose of questioning in mixed-sex conversation is probably not to ask for information or to confirm a presupposed answer but to challenge the assertion of the male or female counterpart. While there were 6 acts of questioning performed by the males in mixed conversation, only 2 acts of recognizable questioning produced by Ali were recorded for the all-male conversation as they have their unique way of conversing, as mentioned in the previous discussion. Fascinatingly, among the female interactants, only Nova performed four acts of questioning in the mixed-sex conversation and two for the single-sex, not demeaning one act of questioning by Lyn. This indicates that both sexes possess questioning elements in both conversation categories, embedding the purpose of stipulating ideas provided only that males often perform it a bit more frequently than females.

Another conversational element found in both conversations is instructing and correcting, which are more likely to be performed by the males as recorded in the table, registering one act only made by Ali for instructing

and correcting. The rest were not detected to perform the act, most likely because the conversation took place in their first encounter where they were still adjusting to the environment and situation, and the females were not likely to instruct or correct as it is considered direct and offensive to the person being corrected and instructed during the conversation.

Amusingly, in terms of conforming and disagreeing ideas, the results were justified as no interactant performed a conforming act in the mixed-sex conversation except Dale, who seemed to have been confused about whether he would agree or disagree. The rest of the interactants only employed the act during the single-sex conversation, recording five acts overall for the males and 14 acts for the females. This is to conclude that in mixed-sex conversations, both sexes are less likely to agree on ideas with their counterpart. Also, the female interactants, as they recorded more acts in the single-sex conversation, are more likely to conform ideas with their fellow female interactants more frequently than males do.

The next conversational element found in the recorded conversation is Informing, where the female interactants undeniably dominated males as they recorded 14 acts overall compared to six acts of the males summed up in the mixed-sex conversation and continues to tally higher even in a single-sex conversation where only Dale was recognized to perform in single-sex dialogues.

Considering the results of the present study regarding the description of each interactant in terms of their sentence structures that mark the females as more inclined in explaining and asserting, this category is parallel with such outcomes. Elle, who has produced the most number of words in this study, gained the most informing acts in both mixed and single-sex conversation, tallying eight and four, respectively. She was followed by Nova who recorded five in mixed-sex and two in single-sex conversation. While Rick registered three in mixed-sex conversations and none recognized in single-sex, Ali recorded two in mixed-sex and also none recognized in single-sex conversations. Last to mention is Dale, who logged one act for each conversation, and Lyn, who recorded one informing act in mixed conversation and none recognized in the single-sex conversation. The results imply that females tend to be more informative than males in both single-sex and mixed-sex conversations, parallel to how females are categorized as more verbose than males.

Another element that needs to be studied regarding differences in conversation is repair. Although only two acts were spotted performed by Elle and Nova and the rest had none, the results try to illustrate that the females are most likely to perform the act in terms of repairing misunderstandings or clarifying misheard speech. This could indicate uncertainty with what one has understood in the conversation. While females certainly do not mind doing it for the sake of explicating concepts, males instinctively consider it a weak trait.

On the other hand, code-switching is a conversational style that a second language user uses when he/she

cannot express the concepts he/she would like to convey in the target language. In the present study, this act was performed by both genders in different numbers. Altogether, the male interactants performed it five times in mixed-sex conversations, tallying one for Ali and Dale each and three for Rick as no recognizable act in the single-sex. While this is the case, only Lyn has performed code-switching among the female interactants in the mixed-sex conversation and oddly performed by Elle once in the single-sex. This could mean that in mixed-sex conversations, the males are more likely to use code-switching than females, who try to follow the rules of using the second language until the end. Because the language of the male interactants in their all-male conversation is not recognized clearly by the researcher, it is not certain whether they employ the act of code-switching in their discourse.

Lastly, despite the numerous definitions of hedging, language research has come to allocate a sign of language by approaches for which speakers take prudent steps to safeguard themselves from the negative imprint of their idioms or to shield themselves or their conversationalists from any impairment to the idea of face caused by their utterances. It also indicates uncertainty and politeness as one way to become friendly and welcome other people's perspectives.

As concluded by most studies on hedges, women are more likely to use hedging in their speech. This seemed to be undisputable since the results in this study indicate that female interactants have recorded 60 acts of hedging overall in mixed-conversation, making Elle have the most numbers of hedges with 40 acts, Nova with 12 and Lyn with eight, respectively, while males to have only registered 21 acts altogether in which Ali recorded 13, Rick with seven and Dale with only one and 21 acts of hedging in single-sex conversation while the males appeared to have not recorded any use of hedges due to unclear all-male conversation.

In this circumstance, it is undeniably the females who pick hedges, while the males do so too, but not as frequently as the females. This could suggest that in second language use, the females were more likely to bid congenial relationships but were also found to be more uncertain and hesitant in conversing, even with both genders.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion, men and women are found to communicate differently, as women are inarguably more verbose than men. Also, men interrupt and overlap more than women in mixed-sex conversations, while women overlap with the same sex more frequently, resulting in the non-completion of turns, whereas in single-sex conversations, interruptions are almost evenly distributed. The study also found that men proclaim their dominance by using conversational strategies such as interrupting and overlapping, while women tend to talk more to ascend in mixed-sex conversations. Moreover, both sexes tend to be more comfortable in expressing

themselves when conversing with the same sex however, men are more inclined to use non-verbal language to the same sex to comprehend each other. Lastly, men's conversational styles are more likely to question, instruct, correct, disagree, and switch codes, while women tend to execute conforming, informing, repairing, and hedging.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions drawn, English teachers may use this study to serve as a basis for understanding the conversational styles of male and female students. There should also be an educational curriculum on gender-based teaching strategies (GBTS), with the differences found in this study concerning gender, which must resolve issues inside the classroom, such as the lack of active performance of both genders in verbal terms. Moreover, schools should utilize gender-sensitive and differentiated teaching strategies to resolve bias-related issues. As Ibsen (2020) conveys, there is a hidden curriculum that conveys unconsciously and indirectly gender bias. As men and women tend to learn languages differently and with women to their advantage, instructional methods implementing more tasks like visual aids or auditory exercises that males are given a fair chance should be employed in Language Teaching (LT) as most language strategies and approaches nowadays tend to only jive with female sex' language learning styles.

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