

THE MANNER OF SPEECH ACCORDING TO THE GENDER IN THE REGION OF TETOVA



Language and Gender

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Abstract

In this paper, we will look at some special words that change depending on the gender. We have focused on greetings, congratulations and curses as they are used by female and male gender, so the content is the same, but it differs by who is using it. To see this difference closely, we surveyed some young women and men, where through the questions that we asked them, we saw the difference in their dialect. Based on ideas, or thoughts the language and gender in the city of Tetovo, we have many different opinions where most of them are rooted on the patriarchal system, that the man’s word is above all, but from the work that we have done we see that young people have diluted this opinion by giving more rights to women’s speech and with this they have clearly changed the old opinion. Men think that women talk more in relation to them, they often call them “word machines”, that is, they only talk, while men are less talkative but more precise in what they say. When we refer to the special dialect as mentioned above, we see that women really have more expressions, they know how to give the greeting better, are more involved in a given situation and know better how to manage it with words, whether good or bad and with this they create, in most cases, a positive atmosphere, while men are more direct, they don’t say a lot and this often makes them look colder in different situations. All these speeches are also analyzed from the linguistic point of view.

INTRODUCTION

In this paper we talk about the language that is used between different genders. We will focus mainly on how men speak and how women speak on special occasions, i.e., when they greet each other, during greetings, curses, etc.

Social heterogeneity and diversity are always very closely related to each other, we can even say that they coexist in a parallel line with linguistic heterogeneity. Not in any case we can say that the ethnocultural and social community are homogeneous from the linguistic point of view, but the opposite is not the case either. So far, the studies show that there are five factors differentiating the linguistic behavior of the individuals of a social community. They are: *socio-economic class, level of education, age, gender and ethnic group*. The first two factors have a social character, while the other three have a natural character. Diversity factors will be: the differences by the gender and family and social environment (we are interested in that by gender).

This topic is opening a wider interest, since, by trying to discover the concepts related to language and gender, we are going deeper by connecting with extra-linguistic factors (cultural, social, etc.) which are present in the same human communication.

Teaching speech has played a very important role in general education. The separation of people into genders is not about how people are divided on the basis of sex into male and female,

¹ This paper was presented on the 5th International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference (IMSC-2022) held by The Association-Institute for English Language and American Studies, Tetovo, North Macedonia.

as a basic division, even this division goes by age, baby and child, teenager and youth, adult and elderly distinguishing, however, three linguistic or more precisely sociolinguistic generations,² where we have a difference in the proportion of men and women. We know that society has made a gender division of labor; men are the ones who deal more with physical work, while women, as always, deal more with housework, this also results in a division of language use in the field of vocabulary and of grammatical phraseology.³

Women and men even when they speak the same language, that is, they have the same dialect view (they belong to the same family), but their differences are also observed according to their sex. This traditional division of labor in itself has also been a social division in speaking, in the ways of expression, and of mastering one terminological sphere over another.

The distinction of people according to gender, i.e., male and female, is one of the most important variables of sociolinguistic study. From the studies that have been done until today, it turns out that there are many differences between the sexes and that women speak differently than men. This difference of women is also noticeable in the close family circle, so women speak differently from their husbands and even from their sons.

Gender Difference

In sociolinguistics of Gjovalin Shkurtaj it is briefly shown that in the dictionary of Eqrem Çabej we also find the euphemism “language of women”.⁴ There are also some other phrases based on the work that women do in doing housework, feeding children, cooking food, etc., and from this we have the phrases women’s work, women’s words, something that differs from men’s communication.

Distinguishing people by sex is one of the most important variables in sociolinguistics. Various studies and research that we have done for this paper show that women speak differently than men. Women have their lexematics, in everyday speech in general, especially for intimate parts and for phenomena of female life; meanwhile, the men, apart from the features in the way of expression in relation to women, they have their own expressions and words, which are used only by them and are considered “forbidden” for the other sex.⁵

Johnson (Johnson) says that earlier theories of gender and language use were based on the gender dichotomy, where male and female were in the opposite positions to each other.⁶ With this

² Shkurtaj, Gjovalin, *Sociolinguistikë e shqipes. Nga dialektologjia te etnografia e të folurit, Shtëpia botuese Morava, Tiranë, 2009, f.115.*

³ Bhasin, Kamla. *Të kuptosh përkatësinë gjinore, Tiranë, 2006, f. 10.*

⁴ Shkurtaj, Gjovalin, *Sociolinguistikë e shqipes. Nga dialektologjia te etnografia e të folurit, Shtëpia botuese Morava, Tiranë, 2009, f.116.*

⁵ Bhasin, Kamla. *Të kuptosh përkatësinë gjinore, Tiranë, 2006, f.6.*

⁶ Johnson, S., & Meinhof, U. H., *Language and masculinity, Oxford, 1999, p.310.*

theory, we see that both genders use the same linguistic resource for communication and use the same communication systems. So, during the use of the language between the sexes, some elements are placed on top of each other, and as a result the communication between male and female, in addition to different elements, shows also some common elements.

- Difference Model

The purpose of this model is to see how men and women develop in different subcultures and reflect different social organizations. In this regard, we also have the opinion of Talbot, who claims that: the behaviors previously perceived as men's attempt to dominate women have been reinterpreted as an "inter-cultural" phenomenon.⁷ Crawford shows that fundamental differences between women and men shape the way they talk.⁸ These differences belong to the individual and are reflected in the personality traits, the individual's goals, faith, etc.

- Dominance Model

This model shows that; in conversations between the two sexes, there is a possibility that men interrupt the conversation more times than women, and based on the dominant/dominance model, language is considered a patriarchal manifestation of the social order.⁹ In conclusion, it turns out that men try to dominate the conversation. So, the question arises, does this interruption created by the male gender is an expression of dominance? Is there an interest or perhaps a conversational involvement with this interruption? The answer to these questions is that men have the desire to dominate the conversation and all this is done because they want to dominate the conversation, this phenomenon is also present in the male gender of the city of Tetova.

- Model of Discourse or Linguistic Behavior

The models we mentioned are very similar to each other and each one has received a negative or positive evaluation. We can freely say that they have been a motive to study feminism in earlier times. Now, we have different opinions of linguists who try to study gender and language, emphasizing in particular the way in which discourse helps to construct gender identity.¹⁰

Meanwhile, sociolinguistics has historically suggested that people speak in ways that reflect personality and other individual traits.¹¹ Such a model focuses more on men and creates

⁷ Tablot, M., *Language and Gender - An Introduction*. USA, 2010, p.115.

⁸ Holmes, J., *Review of: Talking Difference - on gender and language*. Cambridge, 1997, pp. 430-433.

⁹ Lakoff, R., *Language and Woman's Place*, Cambridge, 1973, p.40.

¹⁰ Cameron, D., *Gender and Language Ideologies* in Holmes and Meyerhoff 'Handbook of Language and Gender', Oxford, 2003, p.159.

¹¹ Thorne, B., *Review of: Language and Woman's Place by Robin Lakoff*, Chicago, 1976, pp.744-746.

interdisciplinary study opportunities in a number of fields of study such as cultural, sociological and psychological studies.

The Legend about Gender and Language in Tetovo

Relying on ideas, or thoughts on language and gender, in the city of Tetova we have many different opinions, most of them we can say are rooted and based on the patriarchal system that the man's word is the basis, but from the youth we clearly see that some approaches have changed, giving right to the female gender as well, which also has a decisive role in this environment.

Always referring to Bhasini, who has some very fair approaches in this regard, she states that language is gendered and all gender differences that are reflected in language are created by society.¹² This is just her opinion, but based on reality, because there are many stereotypes like, women talk a lot, but this has never been proven, and we can even say that often the opposite is reflected, where we hear that men talk more than women.

Gender language represents a very important element, as we come to understand that men and women have separate subsystems, where these two systems run parallel to each other. Why do we say two subsystems? Because men have a language with which they communicate with each other. Women, too, have their own language style for communication.

This can be better explained, that we have a common language, i.e., a standard language and a special "male" and "female" jargon.

Women and men in their relationship are more limited in expression, or we can say that they use a language that is generalizing.

In this part, we will base our observations on the differences in the linguistic behavior of young people in the city of Tetova.

The first point that we have noticed in this observation was that whether there is a marked difference in the speech of girls and that of boys. The biggest differences will appear in polite words from both sexes, as these words are a very good indicator that shows the connection of an individual with the social circle or with the outside world.¹³ However, we noticed a lot of other expressions related to the emotional side, to the family and friendly relationship between individuals, that is, how they are expressed in these cases.

As a second important point in this paper is the cultural and social concept in the creation of gender changes in expression. The author can freely say at this point that the researches about the

¹² Bhasin, K., *Të kuptosh përkatësinë gjinore*, Tiranë, 2006, f. 23.

¹³ Drass, K. A., *The Effect of Gender Identity on Conversation* Author, United States, 1986, p.234.

literature on this topic in the Albanian language are very few, the Albanians have tried very little to study the manner of expression of men and women, but we will try to give a real analysis of this issue.

We are presenting the differences during greetings and congratulations in the man/woman relationship and we saw that in Tetovo women use more expressions to greet and congratulate someone compared to men who do it only to fulfill an obligation and even often forget it, not paying attention to it. All this is done by very short phrases compared to women, they only use greetings, *good morning, goodbye* some very short exclamations, while women express themselves in longer phrases that give importance to the occasion and in them we see that we have a preservation of the popular language in greetings and congratulations like; *welcome, be happy and become a neighborhood, may your soul be happy, light my life, etc.*, we see that women are expressed more beautifully than men.

In addition to the difference that occurs during greetings and congratulations, a great difference also occurs during the expression of curses where we clearly see a great differentiation in the discourse of women against men.

Curses have a great antiquity in their formation, they have been passed down from generation to generation and are mainly created by phraseological forms, which makes them more special and with a certain color in lecture.

Being a kind of phraseology, we automatically understand that they were created by the people and passed down through the generations. And no one other than women has been able to preserve and use this curse better. In the following the author is marking some curses which belong to the part of Tetova:

*Puna jote u laftë me gjak! Mallkim (die); I dhash prej gjirit të vet, ia zëntë frymën! Mallk. (to suffocate and die); Të këndoftë zogu i zi, të plast trolli! Mallk. (So you die and the cuckoo sings to you); T'i hëngërt brinjët trualli i Sharrit! Mallk. (To die and be forgotten); Pushka të laftë! Mallk. (to die); Mos ia pafsh bojën! Mallk. (To disappear and not be seen with your eyes); Iu shoft pragu! Mallk. (Have no heirs); Kurrë or Zot, mos iu shtofshin gjelat e pulat! Mos preft kërthizë në vatër, dy bashkë kurrë! Kur or Zot mos i bëftë ai shkularaku, po rrah e rërë, rrebeshe e përshesh bëftë tërë jetën e jetës o Zot, mos e lë të gjallë në Sharr për ibret e kiamet, po këputja kryet si gjelit!*¹⁴ Mallk. (This is a curse that essentially has death).

All this is preserved only by the language of women, since men very rarely use curses, even if you stop and ask them, most of them say that they have never used them in their life.

¹⁴ Marrë nga romani i Murat Isakut "Plagët", Shb. Shkupi, Prishtinë, 1975.

Conclusion

From all that we analyzed, we see that we have a common language which, in addition to being divided into dialects and sub-dialects, undergoes another division, as in this case we have the language that refers to the female gender and the language that refers to the male gender.

The language that is used by women is a little richer compared to the language of men, since women are generally known to be more talkative than the other sex, we will see this by referring to thinkers of different times how they see this relationship.

Aristotle: “A man’s courage is shown when he commands, and a woman’s when she obeys”.

Rodney Dnagerfield: “I haven’t talked to my wife for years; I didn’t want to stop her”.

From this we see that it is more or less true that men think that women talk more in relation to them, the same opinion also happens in our society, being a patriarchal or masculine society, the opinion remains the same. From all this we can’t prove scientifically which opinion is true. The author doesn’t want to leave it with the opinion of how men think about women; she will also combine two opinions about how women think about women:

Margaret Thacher: “If you ask for words, ask a man, and if you ask for deeds, ask a woman!”

Ruth Badar Ginsburg: “Women have their place where decisions are made, not to be treated unfairly.”

It doesn’t take much guesswork, because we see that everything that is created is only from in what conditions we grew up in and how we manage to conceive things.

From the author’s perspective, but also that of our society in general, despite the fact that we are a patriarchal society, is that women are the pillars of the household, it is the hand that rocks the cradle, etc. When saying this, the author wants to point out that the language first started to be used by women communicating with their children and thus developed further.

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