
University of Ziane Achour – Djelfa

Faculty of Letters, Foreign Languages and Arts,

Department of Foreign Languages



A presentation in:

Age and gender

Subtitles:

- Gender exclusive speech differences.
- Explanations of women's linguistic behaviour.
- Age grading features of language.
- Age grading and language change.

Instructor's Name:

Dr. Abla Kadi

Students Name:

Ben Tardjallah Rihab - M'hamedi Lina Djanet - Atallaoui Amina - Edeb Zohra

AGE AND GENDER:

Age: the period of time someone has been alive or something has existed.

Gender: refers to the characteristics of women, men, girls and boys that are socially constructed.

1- Gender exclusive speech differences:

Exclusive: Something that is exclusive is used or owned by only one person or group.

- Woman and man do not speak in exactly the same way as each other in any community. The Amazon Indians provide an extreme example:

★ Tayana is a young Amazonian Indian woman from the north-west Amazon Basin. She lives with her husband and children and a number of other families in a longhouse beside the river. The language of her longhouse is Tuyuka, which is the language of all the men in this tribe, and the language she uses to talk to her children. She comes from a different tribe and her first language is Desano. She uses Desano to her husband, and he replies in Tuyuka.

→ in any longhouse the language used by a child's mother is different from her father's language, because men must marry outside their own tribe, and each tribe is distinguished by a different language. In this community, women and men speak different languages .

- In communities where the language is shared by woman and man, they do not use completely different forms. They use different quantities or frequencies of the same forms.

1- Differences in pronunciation:

Phonological differences between the speech of men and women have been noted in a variety of languages. Usually women's pronunciation is better than men's, such as the pronunciation of "-ing" .

Generally speaking, girls exhibit a better ability in language. woman tend to be more standard.

In Gros Ventre North American Indian tribe; 'bread' is

[kja'tsa] for women and [dʒa'tsa] for men.

In Djelfa society, woman and man pronounce the French letter " R» differently.

2 - woman speaks with details, while man speaks in general.

3 - Differences in compliments:

_ woman gives compliments to each others on appearance. example:

your eye makeup is brilliant

_ man seldom use them .

4 - Differences in vocabulary items: For the same item man and woman have different names. For example:

Traditional standard Japanese / Djelfa society:

woman's form

man's form

otoosan

oyaji

father

بابا

الحاج

father

5 - Differences in asking questions:

_ woman asks in politer way. example: would you please help me.

_ man asks in direct way. example: give me a hand.

6 - Differences in word shape:

In North American Indian language, some words used by man are longer than the equivalent words used by woman. The man's form sometimes adds a suffix. example:

woman's form.

man's form

yaa.

yaa_ na

person

7 - Differences in intensifiers and empty adjectives:

intensifiers: adverbs or adverbial phrases that strengthen the meaning of other expressions and show emphasis. such as: absolutely, completely, too, at all.

Empty adjectives: effective adjectives that express feelings with no significant. like: divine, charming, sweet, adorable.

_ woman uses more intensifiers and empty adjectives than man do. for example: woman → she was so upset. I felt extremely sorry for her .

8 - Differences in using gestures:

- woman uses gestures when speaking, but man do not.

2-Explanation of Women's Linguistic Behaviour:

Sociolinguists tried to explain why women speak differently than men. They studied the linguistic behavior of women using more standard forms than men and came up with 4 explanations:

1. Social status
2. Role in society
3. Status as a subordinate group
4. Speech expressing masculinity

1-Social Status:

Sociolinguists claim that women believe that the way they speak signals their social class background or social status in community. They are more status- Conscious than men. So women use more standard forms than men

because standard forms are prestigious and usually associated with people from a higher class. **For example:** using

- . Hyper correct' grammar, e.g. consistent use of standard verb forms.
- . 'Super polite' forms, e.g. indirect requests, euphemisms.
- . Avoidance of strong swear words, e.g. fudge, my goodness.
- . Emphatic stress, e.g. it was a BRILLIANT performance.

2- Woman's Role as Guardian of Society's Values:

Society tends to expect "better" behavior from women than from men.

- Little boys are generally allowed more freedom than little girls.
- Misbehavior from boys are tolerated where girls are more quickly corrected. Similarly, rule-breaking of any kind by women is frowned upon more severely than rule-breaking by men.
- So, society expects women to speak and behave more correctly and standardly than men because they are serving as models for children's speech

For example: cursing is very tolerated thing for boys, and they can even speak with a high voice, while for girls it is forbidden for them.

3-Subordinate Groups Must Be Polite:

Sociolinguists proposed that people who are subordinate must be polite and that is why women use more standard forms than men.

- It is argued that "women, as a subordinate group, must avoid offending men – and so they must speak carefully and politely".

- Use polite speech.
- Protect women's 'face'.

4- Vernacular Forms Express Machismo

Machismo: An aggressive male behavior that emphasizes the importance of being strong rather than being intelligent and sensitive.

- Men prefer vernacular forms because they carry masculinity and toughness and that is why women prefer not to use them.
- Standards forms, by definition, tend to be associated with female values and femininity.

3- Age grading features of language:

According to sociolinguists, age grading is a phenomenon in which the individuals in community change /alter their speech habits as they are growing up.

Age plays a vital role as a factor that affects people's linguistic choices. By analyzing children, teenagers and adults' speeches, sociolinguists found that language has AGE GRADED FEATURE .

These age graded features show the differences among different individuals in terms of: pitch range, vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar.

.1 Pitch range:

there are physical, social and cultural factors that contribute to the pitch range. Usually children have no clear pitch and it is difficult to guess

whether this child is boy or girl. for example, when a child talking on phone, we cannot guess the gender. Once the children reach puberty, they develop different pitches and these pitches reflect their physical growth. Boys' vocal cords grow faster and bigger than girls' at puberty, Men's head and lungs are also larger than women's, just as older peoples are bigger than children's .SO AS A result, male voices sound lower in pitch than women's just as adult voices sound deeper than children's

2. Vocabulary:

when scholars studied the differences when producing speech in terms of vocabulary between children ,teenagers, and adults ,they found out that teenagers tend to use more swear words than children and adults ,they also found out the slang of young people is totally different from the slang of older people .For example, young people use the terms "SWEET","COOL",and "AWESOME" to describe something that they approved of ;on the other hand ,older people use the terms "BOSKER"and "BONZER"(the Australian slang)

3.- Pronunciation:

sociolinguists also agreed that the way of pronunciation of words can help us to guess the age of the person. For instance, in British English, the pronunciation of the word "often "as/' ɒf.ən/ is old fashioned and it is pronounced by older people unlike teenagers who pronounce it as /' ɒf.tən/

.4 .Grammar:

children are different from adults and teenagers in terms of grammar. Children generally tend to overgeneralize the grammatical rules unlike adults and teenagers, for instance, they add "ed" when they conjugate the verbs in the past like (learned ,writed....)

4-Age grading and language change:

1- age-grading:

it is a term that was introduced by the sociolinguists William Labov. It is a phenomenon in which speakers in a community gradually alter and modify their speech habits and their linguistic behavior as they get older, this change is repeated in every generation. It has been shown, that in speech communities, it is normal for speakers to modify their speech in the direction of the acrolect as they approach middle-age, and then to revert to less prestigious speech patterns after they reach retirement age.

2. language change:

Language change is investigated through two types of studies which are:

1. Apparent time study of language change:

(Synchronic study) It focuses on a comparison between the speech patterns of different age groups in the same speech community at a certain moment in time. for instance, they compare between the speech of younger people and older within the same speech community at a certain moment in time.

2 .Real time study of language change:

(dychronic study) it focuses on detecting change not in apparent time but in real time. The speech of different age groups in specific community is compared at different moments in time in order to detect historical change in the community. Language change in real time can be illustrated by the repetition of a community study. That is, the linguistic variation in a speech community is reinvestigated in a new study undertaken after a certain amount of time. Significant deviations from the originally found speech patterns within this community are interpreted as signs of linguistic change over time.

3.language change in different age groups:

(how language changes as we grow up): the sociolinguists found that the change of language does not occur only at the level of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation, but also at the level of formality and style. Sociolinguists categorized age groups into four categories:

1.Children:

When children first acquire their native language, they learn language in the way of their mother and fathers and people who are surround them. When the sociolinguists investigated the speech pattern of this age group, they found that children make up their own words, they'd not have clear pronunciation and they do not have clear pitches.

2.Adolescents:

Adolescence is a transitional period when children become adolescents and move away from their family identity and adopt norms that are different from the one they have acquired to express themselves as individuals.

During this period, the sociolinguists found out that Adolescents are less conservative in the use of language and tend to speak with an increased use of slang, informal language, swear words and more prestigious language to express themselves. But these features recede as they become adults for instance, after interviewing 17-year olds in West Yorkshire 1, Gary Ives theorized that teenager-specific language includes:

- 1.frequent slang
- 2.colloquial word choices/ non-standard
- 3.forms of English
- 4.taboo words and subjects
- 5.dialect words
- 6.Experimentation with new words

3.Adults:

Adults are more conservative in their use of linguistic variables. This has been attributed to the desired use of standard language, which is used in the workplace. **4.Older adults/elderly:**

when middle-aged adults get retired, they tend to have less formal speech after they used to be conservative. the other changes that the

sociolinguists observed are hesitation, more searching for words, less volume and less speed.