

An Analysis of Gender Differences in Language of Pakistani Drama Serial “Sun Yaara” with Reference to Genderlect Theory

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Original Article

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Abstract

The research endeavors to find the differences in the language of males and females and the effects of these differences on the minds of the people. The objective of the study is to explore the differences between the language of men and women in Pakistani drama “Sun Yaara”. Deborah Tannen’s Genderlect theory is used as a framework and data is collected from the dialogues of the Pakistani drama serial “Sun Yaara”. A qualitative approach is used to analyze the data. The results show that females use language differently than males because language is influenced by culture, the media, the social group and thoughts patterns. The findings of the research can be effective for the students to understand the differences of language in society.

Keywords: Language differences, Men and Women, Pakistani drama, Genderlect theory.

Introduction

The term Gender comes from the Latin word “Genus” which refers to race, or general sort of people. Analytical differences between men and women disclose disparities or differences to some extent. The behavior, attitudes, and norms of males and females and their relationship with one another are characteristics of men and women that are constructed by society. The term drama comes from the Greek word “Dran” meaning “action” which is derived from ‘to do’. Drama is a composed work that describes a story through action and speech. In short, drama is a piece of written text presented through dialogues and have attractive and impactful aspects in it.

Television dramas are a source of information that represent the culture and ideology of a particular area of society (Coudry, 2004). “Drama is a holistic way people are taught and affected” (Gans, 2008). Drama is a series of actions that especially tell us meaningful stories and has great effects on viewers. The effects of dramas can be seen anywhere and everywhere. It plays a vital role to guide women because a huge number of the population liked to watch Pakistani dramas. In a patriarchal society, men’s language has power as compared to women’s language as it has been shown through media but Tannen (1990) stated this misconception that men have power to speak. The language material of Pakistani dramas builds the image of women as rather inferior and diminishes and has shown the factors that females are dependent on the male gender (Kaul and Sahni 2010). It is stated “Media is the mirror of the society” (Rehm, 2011). Pakistan TV channels broadcast various dramas that have a huge impact on the language

of both genders and play a great role in presenting different cultural aspects. In the present era, television dramas are popular as they engage the attention of people.

Television dramas affect the audience majorly by reforming their attitudes and ideas towards gender. So, it is the need of the hour to view the contribution of media in order to construct the gender role. In a few Pakistani dramas, the elements of gender differences have been shown through language and power. Men are assertive and confident and women are talkative, express their feelings, emotional, and less confident. Television dramas portray women as deflated and inferior and show their dependency on men (Kaul & Sahni 2010).

Gender is basically socially constructed roles and responsibilities of males and females in Pakistan. These roles and responsibilities are assigned by families, society, and culture. William (1995) asserts that gender roles can be connected to the beliefs of males and females in a particular society. According to these assigned roles males are involved in task-oriented work and females are interested in building relationships. Gender differences are raised on the basis of conversations between males and females. Tannen (1990) stated that communication between men and women is as different as two different cultural dialects. She further suggests that their conversation is multicultural and miscommunication befall because of cultural differences not on the basis of superiority and inferiority. Culture always play a very important role in building communication between both male and female because comprehension of the world is based upon its culture. Gender differences occur on the ground of communication, particular perceptions of specific society, tendencies, and capabilities of both male and female.

Language is linked to the power and ideas of a particular society. A specific idea has specific information for the public. It is stated that women are talkative, provide detailed information, and need sympathy from people. Women use more proverbs than men and use such words that indicate women's language is less powerful and confused. On the other hand, Men are assertive and confident and their language has power. Mills (2003) asserted gender interaction with one another through polite and impolite ways. She was focused on the behaviors of males and females concerning politeness. After a critical analysis of Brown and Levinson's model (1987), Mills claimed that women tend to behave politely and sometimes they are treated in an impolite way. Hence, politeness is observed as a prime evaluation tool to examine men's and women utterances in society.

The importance of television dramas is clear to society. Its reality cannot be refused that television dramas have left a great impact on our daily life in many ways. Pakistani entertainment channels broadcast several serials that have a huge impact on male and female languages and also play a crucial role in presenting different cultural aspects. Moreover, a number of Pakistani dramas showed basic features of gender differences through language and power. Men are assertive and confident but they are also talkative, show feelings, and sometimes need sympathy too as women. We cannot associate these aspects with just women. In today's time males and females are considered as wheels of the cart but women are not shown equal as to men. Writers of Pakistani dramas portrayed the male gender as dominant and the image of the female gender set less confident and are not equal to men.

Problem Statement

The aims of the study were focused to show up the differences in the language of men and women and the effects of the language of both genders on the minds of individuals and society. In Pakistani dramas, the image of women is shown as submissive and men are depicted as dominant by their use of language and actions.

Objectives

In today's world media plays a very vital role in constructing the ideologies of people and informing us about the various aspects of society and representing the cultures of different societies. The essential feature of any drama is entertainment and the language that is used to represent culture indicate the differences of both genders and issues happening in our society at various levels.

- To explore the differences in the language of both males and females in Pakistani drama.
- To highlight the effects of language on men and women in society through the Pakistani drama "Sun Yara".

Research Questions

There are some major questions that would be answered in this research.

- What are the major effects of language on men and women in society through Pakistani drama?
- How male language is different from the female language in different Pakistani cultures through the picture of drama?

Significance of the Research

Dramas are a source of entertainment, represent culture, and are part of the profession. It is the responsibility of the writers to write authentic content about the culture and genders because most people love to watch drama serials and it affects their thoughts and perception. The significance of the study is to encourage the students to think and act creatively, thus developing critical thinking to understand the differences in language among genders. It will help to bring change in the language use, themes, and differences in language among genders. In Pakistani dramas, writers do more focus on gender stereotypes through language. Dramas should focus on the equality of both gender (male & female) and their equal roles play in society instead of portraying women as inferior and men as superior and powerful through their speech. The study highlighted the different factors of male and female language through the evidence of Pakistani drama and it has shown that all men have not had the same aspects of assertiveness, confidence, and power. Sometimes they need someone to share things, they are talkative and expressive.

Literature Review

Role of Media

Renzetti and Curran said that whatever we receive from media is filled with specific merits and standards, comprising a lot about gender. In simple words, the mass media play role specifically in gender. Media plays a very positive as well as negative role in society Anastasio et al. (1999, p. 155) stated that the media which spread details and generates social norms, most probably has the potential to construct links as well as demolish them. Media especially Television is evaluated as powerful in its part in maintaining controlling beliefs like leadership which can be a motivation in manipulating concepts about females (Duerst-Lahti, 2002).

An approved idea about media is that it considered what occurs in the community. Diamantopoulou (2000, para 21), explained that it cannot be misjudged the potential of the

present-day, information media to form the mindset, point of view, and manners of the entire community. In the media industry, it is very important to establish stability among males and females at all stages. The approach to gender-specific indicated by Maltz and Borker (1998) that men and women may have a perception of as association between two separate numbers of cultural people since they need to interact in commonly gender-specific peer interconnection during infancy. Ahmar, Director of a Pakistani Civil Society Organization – UKS asserted that media occupation has generally been a men-controlled one in Pakistan. Females are less acted in the media because of short room situations and erotic biases in the workroom.

Women Representation in Media

Normally all over Asia, females have been depicted in all kinds of media as sufferers, submissive, supporting, slaughtering, and depersonalizing souls. This not just incorrectly portray females lives, responsibilities, and practices inside this region, but in other societies as well where contributions of women are repeatedly abandoned. Mass communication show men and women in a stereotypical way. Often it predicts that males are crucial for their wisdom and individuality, and females are vital for their common glamour and body shape. Males are usually presented as humorless and alienated, but females are presented as kind and simple. Therefore, it does not produce an equal image of females with mixed lives and endowment to the community in this converting world.

Javed (2003) proclaimed that in print and broadcast media, we have cleared pictures of females as fragile, immature, supported by men, housewives, trustful and illogical. Such contribution induces that women's roles in the community, nevertheless of their education, are merely domestic and less intellectual. Furthermore, it shows females as inferior and unable to make decisions and not able to play a role in any crucial things. Zafar Abbas, Resident Editor, Dawn, stated he is not pleased with the depiction of gender matters, in the state media. He further declared that Television is presenting gender affairs in a pessimistic way. Females build above 50 percent of people and they have the right that they should be treated kindly. But electronic media is portraying females as sex signs while they are playing the role and proving themselves in other fields of life as well. So, he argued that females' contributions and their part should be accepted.

Gender Disparities in Language

Gender is reconstructed by the strengths of collectivization and legalization. Discrimination formed on gender, race, and social class is hardly classified. In addition, gender disparity is legalized by conceptual reports that highlight females' and males' distinctions, but devalue the processes in which these disparities create imbalance.

Lakoff (1995) considered language applied by males and females that we use in our everyday life. For instance, one of Lakoff's demonstrations picked out various implications of the word "aggressive" when it involved a man and a woman; in the initial case optimistic, and a second bit ominous. Tannen (1992) suggested that young ladies and boys were brought up in different societies.

According to Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, (1993) language is the first way by which a person sustains past meanings and creates new ones. Language acts as a vital part of the formation of social factors. The language differences occur due to the difference in culture and the area where males and females bring up and their interaction with peer groups. The female's use of words is different because of the environment of the community that urges her to use such elements in the language.

Research Gap

A few studies have been focused on Pakistani dramas and they highlighted the gender differences in language and also focused on the roles of men and women in society. Similarly, females' and males' language use differ according to their culture and the environment where they were brought up. No study has been conducted on the Pakistani drama serial "Sun Yara". This study focuses on the language of males and females. It is said that men are assertive and confident whereas women are less confident, emotional, and talkative. Therefore, this research will find out if such differences exist in their language, or if language use differs because of their environment and culture.

Research Methodology

The study design is qualitative which is applied for data collection and analysis to manage with the space and nature of this study. Cresswell (2011), stated that this method is used to examine and comprehend the intended idea and keeping time and money safe. So, research workers investigate and analyze the dissimilarities between males' and females' speech who live in the same society.

Theoretical Framework**Genderlect theory by Deborah Tannen (1990)**

In order to analyze the gender disparities in language, Deborah Tannen's theory is used as a frame work. According to the Tannen's theory, language differences take place in males' and females' speech because they belong to different culture and societies and brought up in different environment. That's why, language differences occur in their speech. it is wrong to say that men's language is superior and women's language is inferior. Because language differ according to the culture and the Deborah environment where they live. Moreover, Tannen's different theory negates the statement that men have speech aspects that make them superior and confident and women have different speech aspects that show them inferior, less confident and emotional and polite. The focal point of this theory is use of language of both genders differs and there are also certain features linked to particular gender. Additionally, she described six points for men's and women's language. Those six points are males like to get status and women like to obtain support, males manifest independence whereas female manifest intimacy, males habitually offer advice whereas females comprehend everything, men share information with others while females show feelings, males order and females propose and men always develop conflict whereas female compromise.

Sample

Pakistani drama serial "Sun Yaara" had been selected. Random sampling is used as a sampling technique because 15 episodes were chosen randomly.

Data Collection

Data was collected from Pakistani drama serial "Sun Yaara". This drama was aired on Pakistani TV channel ARY Digital and episodes were selected/taken from YouTube. This is Urdu drama and relevant material was taken from 15 episodes randomly and translated into English language.

Data Analysis**Status vs Support**

Men use speech style that convey power and dominance, while women tend to use language that consistently support their partners.

Saif belongs to middle class family and does a job in a private company. He is an independent man. He is actually a typical man who believes on certain things like if you less meet others and talk them politely, it will reduce your respect in his in-laws. And he always holds his head high when he meet Lala Rukh's family. He thinks this attitude will increase his respect and establish his terror. It was his love marriage with Lala Rukh, who was from a rich family. He shows his different behavior because of difference of status.

On the other hand, Lali support her husband by saying he is busy in his work and the workload is increasing day by day. Tannen (1990) asserts that females in society always try to support their husbands, and this is most vital thing for them. Lala Rukh is doing the same. She is supported her husband by telling his busy routine to her mother and aunt. Her mother wants to ask her the actual reason of not coming with her husband, she hides everything because she is now a married woman who has to support her husband and her in-laws to save or build her house.

Independence Vs Intimacy

Men are seen independent in nature and live their lives independently. On the other hand, females are emotional and attach with their close relations.

Saif lives his life according to his terms without depending on others. According to Deborah Tannen (1990), men like Saif finds life as a competition, in which they attempt to maintain their importance and avoid any possibility of failure. His marriage with Lala Rukh was a love marriage. But after marriage, their relationship is based upon a contract on the condition: Lala Rukh's niece Hina is supposed to marry Mohib, who is Saif's brother. However, Lali's parents have rejected Mohib's proposal since Hina is already engaged to Afaq. Subsequently, a misunderstanding is created by Tania, who is Saif's sister. As a result, Saif refrains from building a strong bond with his wife because he believes against his principles.

Information Vs Feelings

In the society, males' language provides information and women's language express emotions. So, above mentioned dialogues show these elements of language.

In the scene, Roshni is worried because of her father, who had a heart attack. She was sitting next to her father and crying. Because daughters have an emotional attachment to their parents, as Roshni was the only child and her father was very important to her. After the death of her mother, she did not want to lose her father. That's why she was crying and worried about his health. Talal is also in the same room. Here Talal is providing information by differentiating between brave and cowardly people as he is dominating Roshni because she is being emotional. That's why Talal's words carry information and Roshni expresses feelings as females are attached to close relations. It also shows that males do not express feelings. They can control their emotions.

Advice Vs Understanding

Men always tend to advice females in order to show that they have greater knowledge and females' speech style express their understanding behavior.

In the dialogue, Talal is talking to Roshni. Roshni is his cousin's daughter. She is very emotional but cooperative and not too much interested in studies. Talal links intelligence, wisdom, and maturity with the study. Suddenly, Talal and Roshni confront each other, and a clash. He said to her ironically if she did more diplomas and gained degrees, then maybe she would have been

able to see things clearly or intellectually. In the next dialogue, he is advising Roshni to come inside and change her clothes. Otherwise, she will be ill. In both dialogues, Talal advises her to change and tells her the disadvantages of taking a bath in the rain. And he asked her to pursue more diplomas and gain degrees, which could help her to become intelligent and mature.

Conflicts Vs Compromise

Most of the men often use language that cause conflicts among relations as their language show power whereas women always try to compromise with the situations.

Saif is a person who always creates conflicts over small things. He is an independent man who lives his life according to his own ways. He is a very rude man quite opposite to his wife Lala Rukh. He gets frustrated very soon and cannot control his anger which causes conflicts. On the other hand, Lala Rukh always understands things and compromises on them in order to save her married life and try to build a strong bond with her husband Saif.

Order Vs Propose

Men tend to assert orders to females and women just propose the things. Above dialogues help to analyze this aspect.

Saif's Sister Tania like Lali's brother Talal and falsely accused him to get marry with him. Saif order Lala Rukh to make every effort to get marry Tania to Talal. He warned his wife if she will not do this then she will never live the rest of his life with her husband Saif again. He consistently gives importance to his work over his family and often ends calls by stating that he is busy. He thinks that he has numerous tasks to complete, considering them more important than spending time with his family and wife. Even at home, he often seems busy doing his work on Laptop.

Therefore, the dialogues show that Saif orders his wife and force her to obey his orders whether they are right or wrong, possible or impossible. On the other hand, Lala Rukh tries her best to make him understand the situation and wants to explain things for a better solution but Saif does not hear her words. So, Lala Rukh proposes things but Saif just orders.

Findings and Discussion

Findings

The study found that both men and women are talkative, and the differences in can be attributed to thought patterns, geographical area, and the social groups where they spent most of their time. The study proved through the dialogues of the drama serial "Sun Yaara" that, these differences existed in the language of men and women.

This study established the result through the genderlect theory that in society males often expressed their power to do anything while women are not able to do certain things. In some cases, females need to obey the orders of their male fellows. Otherwise, women experience hardships for the whole of their lives. So, the above statements show independent perspectives of men and male dominance. On the other hand, it shows the kind-hearted nature of women.

Discussion

The analysis of this study shows that there are differences in the languages of males and females but these differences are not based on superiority or inferiority bases but differences occur in language because of different cultures. Tannen (1990) asserts that males and females have distinct vocabularies, resulting in different perspectives and experiences. The study

demonstrates that cultural and social factors contribute to differences in speech patterns between males and females.

Previous research had discovered that men are serious and less talkative whereas women are talkative. The research analyzed the characters of drama through the dialogues and presented the view that men's language mostly carried Rapport style including the independent nature of men due to high status, and conflict attitudes whereas women's language consisted of Report style including asking questions, talkative, and compromising behavior. However, this study negates those findings by presenting evidence that contradicts the previous research. For instance, in the drama, the male character Khurram stands out as being very different from other male characters in terms of his talkativeness, and seriousness. He does not conscious of the social group or status and power. He spends all his time with his family, where most members are females. He understands the situations and feelings of others, and he cares about their emotions. He does not want to hurt others to maintain his status. His personality does not exude seriousness and power to dominate others. Mustafa is another piece of evidence, who is also talkative. He is a man who understands feelings and cares about other's feelings. He feels sorry whenever he finds his mistakes even in front of females. His and Khurram's thinking patterns and language are almost the same. He also believes to live a happy life.

Moreover, another character in the drama serial, Talal, is a serious man who is conscious about his status. He does not spend time with his family and is indifferent to the feelings and emotions of others. The most important things to him are his status, his rules, and his personality. So, this study has proven that there are no differences between the speeches of males and females. The aspects of talkativeness and seriousness develop in one's personality due to culture and social groups, as social development shapes the personality and thinking patterns of individuals.

In society, males show their dominance over females especially on their wives. One of the characters of the drama Saif is the best example of male dominance. He is a man who always believes that respect increases by less meeting people. Therefore, he does not use to go to his in-laws with his wife. He just goes there whenever he is invited. So, this shows male dominance. But Lala Rukh is opposite to her husband. She always supports him in front of relatives at functions and also against her family by making excuses for his busy routine.

Another piece of evidence is Talal. His character also shows male dominance because he always devalues females. He finds himself superior based on being well-educated and considers that he has more knowledge than females. Furthermore, he mostly says to his wife that she is stupid, dim-witted, and emotional.

The above explanation proves that people in the community misunderstand the discussion of both genders. They were raised in a particular society, therefore, their language is different from each other. The behavior of males and females are set up by the society. That's why, their language reflects differences. These differences are socially constructed and are not based on superiority or inferiority bases. Due to cross-cultural communication, their use of language, use of vocabulary, and perspectives are distinct from each other, and therefore, their conversation carries different speech styles. The above results have been found through the application of genderlect theory on the randomly selected dialogues of the characters in the drama.

Conclusion

In today's world, media is the most influential factor that contributes a lot to learning things, changing mindsets, and exploring different cultures of various societies. Especially, dramas, a large number of the population watch dramas in Pakistan. The study explored various aspects of men's and women's language that express the differentiation between them. The study described the language differences between men and women by observing the dialogues from Pakistani dramas. It highlighted the effects of language in society. The study has explored that language use varies from person to person and according to their culture. It depends upon the environment in which they are raised and the social groups where they spend most of their time. Deborah Tannen (1990) states that males and females have different speech styles that manifest their culture.

Men want to assert their position against others and in front of their females by expressing their status. They use more informative language than women and show that they are more knowledgeable and have a high status while women have less status and knowledge. They consider themselves more successful than women.

Males engage in self-maintenance through the use of Rapport talk while females assert Report talk. Females confess their mistakes and try to describe their position. Tannen (1990) states that females choose words that manifest conversation, and suggestions to sustain connection in comparison to males. Women, by nature, tend to display politeness and use such language that promotes unity and leave an enduring impact on folk's mind.

This research highlighted the important element that both men and women are talkative. It is not only women, who like to talk more. But men also talk more. Moreover, talkativeness in one's personality develops by spending time in social groups. Some men are serious in nature because they are brought up in a culture where people do not suppose to talk much. In that culture, males assert themselves as successful and they have the strength to do anything that they think, makes them superior. And those males who are talkative, learn and adopt this habit from the culture where they were raised up.

In short, language differences can also affect the relationship between males and females. To build good relations both genders need to compromise with the situations and need to change the behaviors of each other. The research also found that in a male-dominance society, relationships cannot survive for a long time. Males can be changed their thinking patterns and use of language regardless of the concern of status and power. Because status conscious men destroy their relations because they are concerned for their power and status. The study demonstrates the above factors that help the students to understand the issues and differences of language among males and females and the effects of language on the minds of people. Media is another important part that changes the thinking patterns of viewers.

Future Implications

The study has explored awareness for the students to understand the language differences between both genders and issues that are being created because of the differences in the language. This research has selected an Urdu drama serial to analyze the differences. Future researchers can organize their research on the language of media that affects the minds of the people. They can take the drama of another culture and research it. Moreover, they can select drama from other TV channels and in another regional language. They can apply another theory

of language to analyze the language differences between males and females. Furthermore, the power of men and their assertiveness can be challenged.

Recommendations

In future following steps can be taken:

By using comparative studies with other Pakistani drama serials or international television shows to identify commonalities and differences in gender language use.

By analyzing the effectiveness of language interventions and modifications aimed at promoting gender equality and challenging stereotypes within the drama.

Research can be conducted on the potential influences of the drama's language on real-life communication patterns among viewers.

These recommendations will help to expand knowledge and understanding of gender differences in language and contribute to the broader discussion on language, gender, and media representation in Pakistani society.

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