

GENDER DIFFERENCES OF STUDENTS' WRITING ABILITY IN DESCRIPTIVE TEXT

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Abstract

Language has an important role to a group of people. The connection between language and society is called sociolinguistic. Nowadays, sociolinguistic has involved many significant research topics. One of them is gender and language. Studies about gender differences have been done for many years in EFL context. The current research analyze gender differences in senior high school students writing ability. The purpose of this research is to find the linguistics features that male and female students tend to use and to find out the gender differences reflected on the students writing ability. The researcher used qualitative design and document analysis research as the approach based on Ary et al. (2010). The subject of this research was one class of X MIPA 2 at MAN 6 Jombang. The source of the data is students writing assignments, while the data is the word that were wrote by all of the students in class X MIPA 2 which is contain the types linguistics features based on Mulac theory. The researcher found 4 linguistics features use by students. The finding was most used linguistics features in their descriptive text is *locative* and *reference to quantity*. That the purpose was to show the location of the object and to show the amount of something.

Key words; Gender differences, linguistics features, and writing.

Introduction

According to Wardhaugh (2006:13) Sociolinguistics is the study that concerned in investigating the relationships between language and society in understanding of the structure and function of the languages in communication. Nowadays, sociolinguistic has involved many significant research topics. One of them is gender and language. Gender and language describe how men and women different when they interact. The interaction between men and women can be done by spoken or written form. Since publication of Lakoff classic work in 1975, there are variety of perspectives in language and gender. The study of gender is significant with study of language. It aims to explore the differences between men and women. Do men and women use language differently? This question is commonly asked.

The different between men and women discussed as gender, not *sex*. Because *sex* is to very large extent biologically whereas gender is a social construct involving the whole of genetic, psychological, social, and cultural differences between males and females (Wardhaugh, 2006:315). Means that gender is something that cannot be avoided, it is part of the way in which people are ordered around with each community doing different things.

Writing is one of the ways that people communicate and convey their ideas. According to Brown (2000:232) writing are dealing with productive skill, it make any output and doing some action. Writing has an important role in every language. It can be used to convey information without face to face interaction. Teaching writing in English as Foreign Language (EFL) classroom is dominated by process of writing. In English as Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms, writing is considered as a challenging subject. There are various types of text in teaching writing such as; Descriptive text, narrative text, recount text, report text, and several other types of text. One of the text that should be taught in senior high

school student is descriptive text. Descriptive text is a kind of text which describes a person, place, or a particular object.

In this research, the researcher focuses on analyzed gender differences between male and female students in writing. The researcher are interested in conducting research on gender because the researcher are curious whether gender also influences student writing. This reason is also because when the teacher gives a stimulus in the form of a story about action films, many male students respond but there are also some female students who respond. However, when the teacher gives a stimulus in the form of a romantic story, most female students respond strongly. Even though, there are also some male students who respond. Therefore, researchers conducted research on gender differences in student writing.

Gender, as one of the main variables of learning, it plays a vital role in writing. There is a link between language and gender. Therefore, men and women use language differently. Knowing gender differences is very important, especially in EFL class. As in Mahmud & Nur, (2018), they reveal that main characteristic of male and female students in their learning strategies and the reason for the differences by interview the students. Teacher or educators must be able to create and design the learning methods, tests, and also course books. Considering with this issue, this research aims to find out to find out the linguistics feature that used by male and female students and also the gender differences reflected on the students writing ability. This research use 6 linguistics features mentioned by Mulac, et al, (2001). The linguistics features are divided into male language style and female language style. In male language style there is *judgmental adjective*, *reference to quantity*, *locative* and *"I" reference*. Whereas in the female language style there are *intensive adverbs* and *hedges*.

This research is attempted to prove that the differences do exist in senior high school student's descriptive writing. Descriptive text was chosen because this research was conducted on 10th grade senior high school students at MAN 6 JOMBANG. And for the data was taken from one class at X MIPA 2, which is in one class consists of 32 students. The data of this research are words in students' descriptive text. But, this research only take 9 male and 12 female writing assignment because the other students was not collected their assignment. It is to reveal their differences in writing. The differences in language use between men and women will be indicates from the way they use language in writing. This research is expected to be useful for researchers who want to conduct the research about gender differences in writing ability focus on descriptive text. As the result of this research, the researcher can give knowledge and information to the reader for gender differences.

Method

This research used qualitative research that is designed to obtain information to determine the nature of the situation and to objectively describe what is in the current research based on Ary et al. (2010:424). This research used document analysis method because it is appropriate to the objectives of the research which focused on the gender differences which examined on students' writing ability and also this research focuses on linguistics features that used by students in their writing assignments. The source of data in this research would be taken from 10th grade students at MAN 6 JOMBANG. The data that analyzed are words that consist of linguistics features mentioned by Mulac, et al, (2001). The research instrument was the researcher himself as the primary instrument and observation sheet. The data of this research collected in the some steps, such as, Researcher asks students writing assignment contains of descriptive text to the teacher. The researcher read those descriptive texts and looked for the linguistics features. After that, underline words that contain of linguistics features. Then, the researcher begins to analyze the data based on observation sheet. After find the linguistics features, researcher try to made reflection between students writing and the theory. To

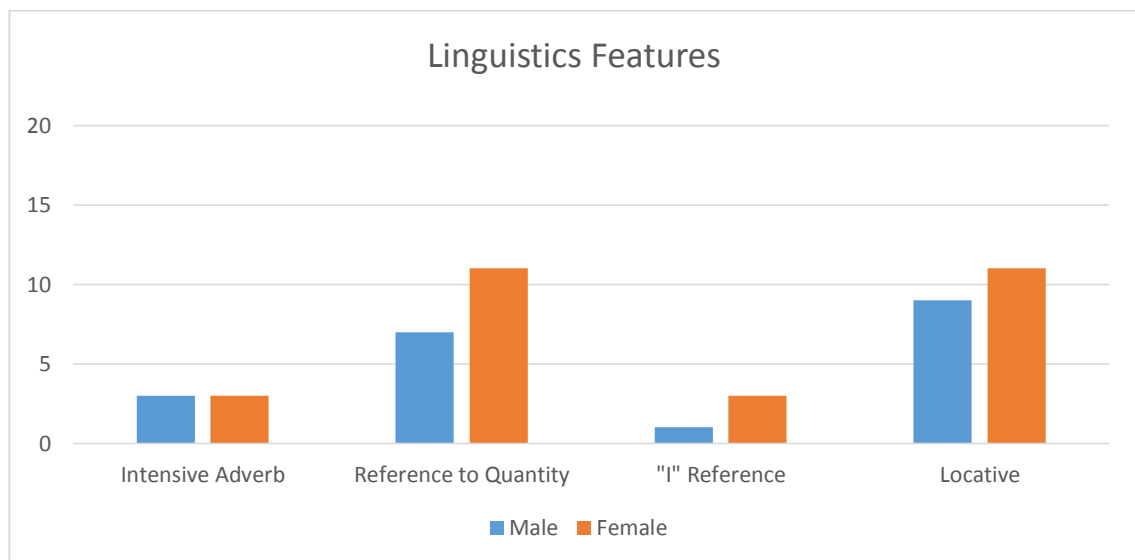
validate the data the researcher use *member checking* to determine the accuracy of the qualitative findings through taking the findings back to participants.

Result and Discussion

The findings are the result of data analysis in gender differences in writing descriptive text at MAN 6 Jombang students. The data presented are the result from observation sheet. Findings of the research data are presented below:

1. Linguistics features used by male and female students

From the analysis, researcher conclude into chart that show the use of the linguistics features as below:



The present findings are the researcher found that male and female student use 4 linguistics features (intensive adverb, references to quantity, “I” reference, and locative) except 2 linguistics features (judgmental adjective & hedges) in writing descriptive text. The result was revealed to answer statement of the problem 1. This chart indicates how many male and female students use the linguistics features from total 21 students. From this chart 3 male and 3 female students use intensive adverb, 7 male and 11 female use reference to quantity, only 1 male use “I” reference, for the last 9 male and 11 female use locative.

a. Intensive adverb

This linguistics features used by 3 from 9 male students (M3, M6, and M7) and 3 from 12 female students (F3, F5, and F6). This linguistics features, Mulac, et al, (2001) categorized it into female language feature. In this finding both male and female use this linguistics features in same way. In students writing found that 7 word related to this linguistics features. Students used intensive adverb to emphasis the condition of something, such as in finding M3.D2, M6.D2, M7.D2, M7.D5, F3.D1, F5.D2, and F6.D4. For example in finding M3.D2 “The place is very beautiful.” word “very” here use to emphasis the view of the place. F6.D4 “The yard is very spacious and clean”. Word “very” here use to emphasis the conditions of the place. According to Mulac, et al, (2001) this linguistics features are use more by female. This is because, female language style are elaborate. They use intensive adverb to elaborate their idea. The difference between male and female students in using intensive adverb here is, male students use intensive adverb when they show the view of the place. While female students use intensive adverbs to indicate the condition of the place.

b. Reference to quantity

This linguistics features used by 7 from 9 male students (M1, M2, M4, M5, M6, M7 and M8) and 11 from 12 female students (F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6, F7, F8, F9, F10, and F12). According to Mulac (2001) categorized this feature to male language feature. But in this findings both male and female used this feature are the same. There are 29 word related to this linguistics features. References to quantity that used by male and female student are both in the term of any amount, and measurement. This linguistics features found in finding M1.D2, M2.D3, M2.D5, M2.D6, M4.D2, M4.D3, M4.D4, M5.D2, M5.D4, M6.D3, M7.D3, M7.D5, M8.D2, M8.D3, F1.D3, F2.D2, F3.D3, F4.D1, F4.D3, F4.D4, F5.D3, F6.D5, F7.D2, F8.D2, F9.D3, F10.D1, F10.D3, F12.D2, and F12.D3. For example in finding F1.D3 “Many people pray and read Al-Qur’an.” This underline word show the amount of visitor and people. Both male and female students use this linguistics features because they use to show the amount of something. In this case, they use reference to quantity mostly at showing the amount of visitor or people that visit the place. Even this linguistics features indicates male language feature, both male and female students use it.

c. “I” reference

This feature only used by 1 from 9 male students (M7) and 3 from 12 female students (F3, F9, and F11) use this feature. This is different from Mulac, et al, (2001) that categorized “I” reference as male language feature. But this finding is same with Ishikawa (2015) that found female student use more pronouns than male students. “I” reference used by student here refers to the first person singular pronoun. It indicates the position of the writer. In students writing found 4 word related to “I” reference they are: M7.D4, F3.D2, F9.D4, and F11.D3. For the example in M7.D4 “I use jacket when go there.” word “I” in students writing refers to the first person as the writer and explain what he/she does. These findings indicate that female students prefer to express their presence in their writings. Therefore they use personal pronouns more in their writing. Additionally, although “I” references were rated relatively personal, there is sense that “personal” may related to women’s language style as well. By contrast, Mulac, et al (2001) state that “I” reference appear to reflect an ego-centric orientation as male languages. Whereas, female language style are relatively socio-centric, oriented to others’ psychological states and to relationships. In example F11.D3 “if there are more or less I apologize.” It is indicate that female use “I” reference to show their emphatic.

d. Locative

For this feature all 9 male students (M1, M2, M3, M4, M5, M6, M7, M8, and M9) and 11 from 12 female students (F1, F2, F4, F5, F6, F7, F8, F9, F10, F11, and F12). Linguistics features of locative here show the location or the position of the object. In writing, they are word that indicate this linguistics features. This linguistics features found in finding M1.D1, M1.D3, M2.D1, M2.D2, M2.D4, M2.D6, M3.D1, M4.D1, M4.D3, M4.D5, M5.D1, M5.D3, M6.D1, M7.D1, M8.D1, M8.D2, M9.D1, M9.D2, M9.D3, F1.D1, F1.D2, F2.D1, F2.D3, F2.D4, F4.D2, F5.D1, F6.D1, F6.D2, F6.D3, F6.D5, F6.D6, F7.D1, F8.D1, F9.D1, F9.D2, F10.D1, F10.D2, F11.D1, F11.D2, F12.D1, and F12.D2. The example in finding M3.D1 “Keplaksari Park is located in Jombang area.” This underline word “Jombang area” indicate the location of Keplaksari Park. This linguistics features are the most used by students in writing descriptive text. Surely both male and female students use this linguistics features. Even Mulac, et al (2001) categorize this linguistics features belong to male language style. In descriptive text this linguistics features are used by both male and female students. Because the subject is descriptive of place.

2. Gender differences reflected in writing descriptive text between male and female students.

Linguistics features used by students in their writing. It indicates the style that they use in their writing. Male language feature are perceived relatively direct, succinct, personal,

and instrumental. Whereas female language features are perceived relatively indirect, elaborate, and affective. In finding reference to quantity are perceived to be relatively direct. Reference to quantity used as reference to any mention of amount, a unit of measurement, and could be in the terms of degree comparisons. In example “So many kind vegetable, meat, and fish.” they use reference to quantity to mention the amount of vegetable, meat, and fish. In this finding show that 7 from 9 male and 11 from 12 female use this feature. It means that both of them use male language style in their writing.

Another linguistics features that used more often by students is locative. This linguistics features are perceived to be relatively direct. It means this linguistics features indicate as male language feature. Locative used to show the location or position of the object. In examples “Pasar Kedung Maling is located at Jl. Kemakmuran.” they use locative to show the location of Pasar Kedung Maling. In this finding, all of 9 male students and 11 from 12 female students use this linguistics features. It means that both of students use male language style in their writing.

Students also use intensive adverb and “I” reference. But only a few students use this linguistics features. 3 from 9 male and 3 from 12 female students use intensive adverb in their writing. They use intensive adverb only when they want to emphasis something. In example “The place is very beautiful.” This linguistics features used by student to emphasis the conditions of the place that is very beautiful. The difference between male and female students in using intensive adverb here is, male students use intensive adverb when they show the view of the place. While female students use intensive adverbs to indicate the condition of the place. For “I” reference, only 1 from 9 male and 3 from 12 female students use this linguistics features. They use it when they want to show what they do as writer. In example “I use jacket when go there.” This linguistics features show the writer as first person is doing something, in this example the writer show that he wears a jacket.

Conclusion

Based on the result of this research, researcher concludes that in MAN 6 Jombang, class X MIPA 2 used 4 linguistics features. This feature was found in students writing. For the linguistics features male students and female students use all of them. From 21 students in class X MIPA 2 the most used linguistics features in their descriptive text is *locative* and *reference to quantity*. They use *locative* more often to show the location of the object. In example “Keplaksari Park is located in Jombang area.” In this example linguistics features of locative is used to show the location of Keplaksari Park. For *reference to quantity* are often used to show the amount of something. In example “There is 2 swimming pool there.” This example use *reference to quantity* to show the amount of swimming pool.

The linguistics features of *locative* and *reference to quantity* indicates as male language style. And almost all of the students in class X MIPA 2 use this feature. It can be conclude that in this class, students are dominated with male language feature in writing descriptive text. This could be happen because the data was taken from uncontrolled condition. So, the students write the descriptive text by their own ability. And might be the treatments of the teacher are different.

From the conclusion above, the researcher would like to give some suggestions for the next researcher who wants to conduct the same research. The language used between men and women are different. The easiest way to know the differences is from speaking and the activity of the students. Consider that different factors exclude gender may also affect students writing. So the next researcher can try to analyze using any different instrument and subject. Different treatment might be needed to reveal their differences in writing. May this research be helpful and give beneficial reference to English language learning especially in sociolinguistic.

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