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Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret

Faculty of Letters and Languages

Department of Foreign Languages

Section of English

*Gender Differences in Conversational styles : A
conversational analysis of mixed gender online chats*

*A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for the Requirements of
the Master Degree in Linguistics*

Submitted by:

Mr. Aouidat Lazhari

Ms Antouri Zineb

Supervised by:

Dr. Amina Abdelhadi

Board of Examiners

Dr . Khaled BELARBI

Dr. Amina ABDELHADI

Dr. Oussama FOUNES

Chairman

Supervisor

Examiner

University of Tiaret

University of Tiaret

University of Tiaret

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Dedication

I am dedicating this dissertation to the ones whom i wouldn't be here today writing this paper without them , my back bone , and positive role model " my parents". For their care ,advice and love .

To each member of my big family (Kada,Mohammed,Houssin,khadra,chahra,djmila,nawal,Ismahan) and their kids .for their encouragement .

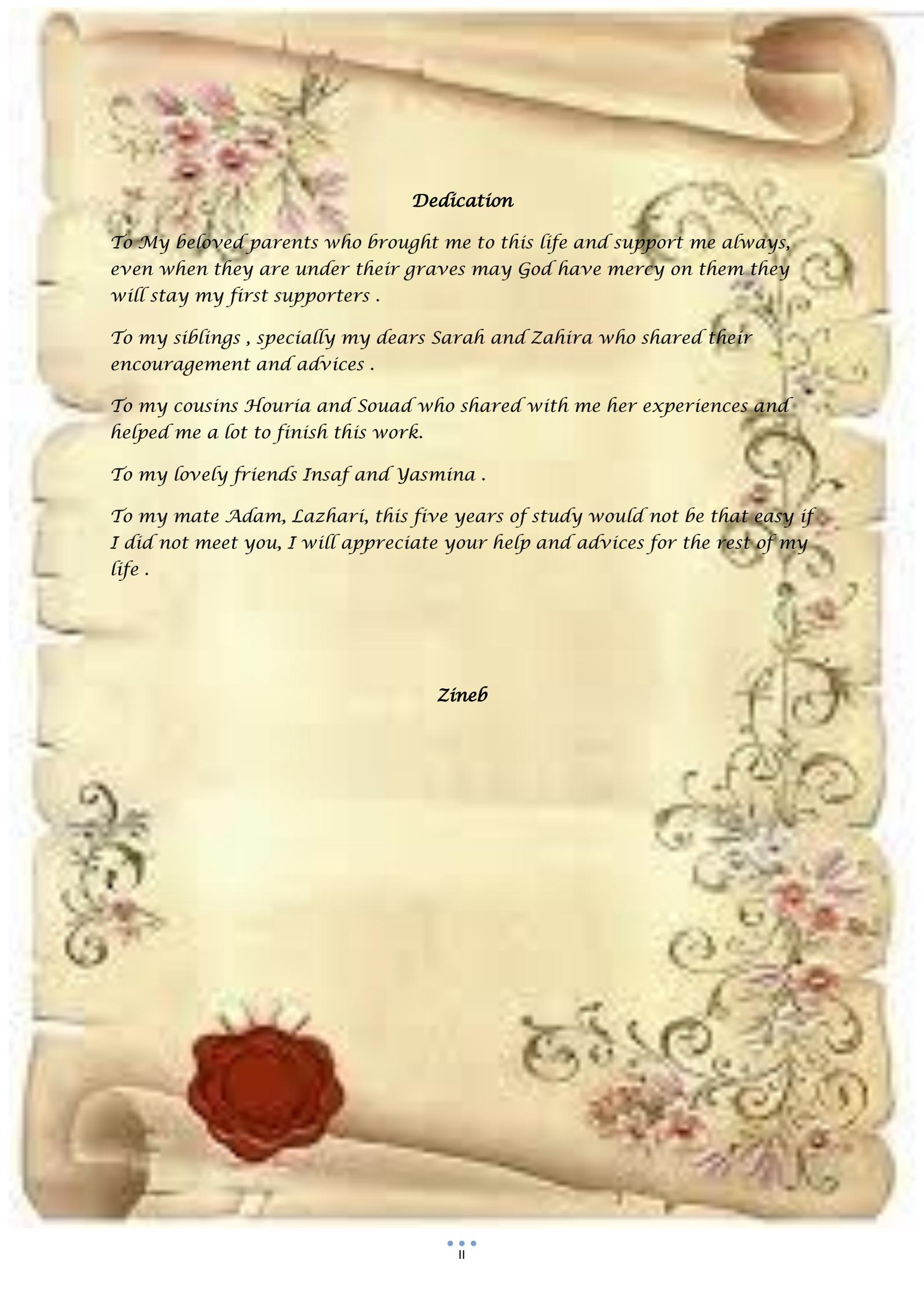
To my colleagues (Yassin, Hayat, Aya, Insaf,Fati, Nessrin) and to Djihan who I share this work with .

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To Our amazing supervisor Dr : Amina Abdelhadi .

Lazhari

A decorative scroll with floral patterns and a red wax seal. The scroll is unrolled, showing a central text area. The background is a light beige color with intricate floral and scrollwork designs in shades of pink, purple, and brown. A large, circular red wax seal is visible at the bottom left of the scroll. The text is written in a cursive, handwritten style.

Dedication

To My beloved parents who brought me to this life and support me always, even when they are under their graves may God have mercy on them they will stay my first supporters .

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Abstract

Online chat has become a necessity for majority of people. The conversational styles used in this type of social interaction inevitably reflect and maintain gender differences. The present research therefore is an attempt to both examine the conversational styles differences in mixed gender online chat and explore the reasons behind their use. The aim of this research is to provide additional evidence for the influence of gender variable on the use of different conversational styles in formal and informal conversations. To this end, a mixed method that combines between qualitative and quantitative approaches is opted. On this basis, the researchers seek to test the validity of what is hypothesized by including a variety of well- known methodological techniques. Besides to participant observation method, nine excerpts of online chats are selected to be analysed using conversation analysis and one hundred online questionnaires are distributed to second year Master female and male students at Ibn Khaldoun University. The research findings reveal that the respondents use different conversational styles in their daily online chat (including interruption, politeness, repair...), and this is because of many reasons including the social and cultural construction of gender in particular.

Key words: Gender, language, conversational styles, online chat and conversation analysis.

C A: conversation Analysis

F P P: First Pair Part

SCT: Sequence Closing Thirds

SP COM: Speech Community

S P P: Second Pair Part

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General Introduction

It is no news to anyone that language distinguishes human beings from animals. There are some very clever linguists whom one must just think of their words once more. Each has its own merits and its own achievements, but in the course of human language, Noam Chomsky has his own thought. In his book *Language and Mind* (2006), Chomsky went to prove that when we study human language, we are approaching what some might call the human essence, the distinctive qualities of mind that are, so far as we know, unique to man. Consistent with this, even people who are not linguists cannot deny that language is an essential human feature and perhaps in the words of Victoria Fromkin et al. (2003), more than any other attribute, language distinguishes them from animals. In any language, words are constructed in a certain way and the way of expressing those words has become different. Gender has been an essential variable for such linguistic differences. Additionally, its relation to language has become one of the major issues in sociolinguistics since the early 1970s. One of the pressing question in this area is « do men and women really talk differently? ». According to early work on language and gender, the language used by women is different from the language used by men. Given that much of what is written is about men and women's conversational styles in their daily conversations, this study highlights the need to re-examine the conversational styles that both genders respectively use when using chat rooms.

The key factor behind conducting this study is the indispensable role social networking sites have in students' lives. Nowadays, male and female students' daily interactions are taking place online; studies show that they spend about 4 hours per day using social media. In fact, this is a good reason to conduct such a research. On this basis, the following research questions are raised:

1. Research Questions

- a. Do males and females really use different conversational styles through online chat?
- b. What do these conversational styles consist of?
- c. How might we account for these differences in conversational styles?

2. Hypotheses

It can be hypothesised that :

- 1- men and women do use different conversational styles through online chat, women use

passive voice, empty adjectives, intensifiers and qualifiers. Besides, they talk more, use more emojis (smiles) to express their emotions. Whereas men use what is termed 'rough talk' through using more abbreviations, strong language, slang words and often emphasize their masculinity. They also use less standard forms than women. Concerning conversational styles again.

- 2- there may be some features like the choice of topics, the way transitions occur, genre, pace (rate of speech, lack of pauses and expressive paralinguistics (pitch and other changes in voice quality)).
- 3- Perhaps the reasons behind such differences in discourse strategies are related to cultural aspects and early gender socialisation.

3. Research Aims

Because this generation is so obsessed with the use of social media and chat rooms in particular, one important aim of this research is to examine the conversational styles female and male chatters use to maintain conversation and manage turn taking, repair and adjacency pair. More importantly, related to interactions in online chat; it is also our aim to investigate what these linguistic differences consist of and the reasons behind their use.

4. Significance of the study

Considering that the study of language and gender is worthy of attention, the findings of this research can be significant in this area of investigation. This study provides additional evidence for the influence of gender and gender patterns on the use of different conversational styles.

5. Research Methodology

Initially, the process of collecting data is based on an unstructured participant observation of the spaces of investigation. Moreover, for the collection of online chats, Second Year Master female and male students are asked for their consent to provide us with their mixed sex and same sex conversations via Facebook platform. After careful reading, nine online conversations are chosen and conversational analysis is opted for their analysis. For the same aims, the questionnaires are distributed to one hundred female and male informants of the same sample.

6. Research Process

This dissertation is divided into three chapters. The first chapter starts with a review of literature in which the main theories related to our topic are critically cited. It is dedicated

for questions of sex and gender, discussions of early work on gender and language as well as previous research on online communication. The second chapter presents the characteristics of the target population (participants) and the data collection instruments which are employed in this research, including unstructured observation, the collection of online chat and questionnaire. The last chapter is devoted to data analysis and discussion of the findings.

7. Limitations of this study

Although this study is conducted carefully, and to some extent it reaches its objectives, one important limitation must be noted and which is the quarantine our region has been under. It has prevented us from having face to face discussions with our supervisor and the selected respondents too. Second, the hesitation of the respondents to fill the questionnaires in time was also a big constraint.

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1.1. Introduction

One of the fundamental topics that have attracted the interest of many sociolinguists in the last few decades is the use of language by both men and women. In fact, it is widely recognised that language use is a marker of gender differences. In this vein, Tannen (1995) has pointed out that communication is not as simple as saying what you mean. How you say what you mean is crucial and differs from one person to another. Since using a language is a learned behaviour, how we talk and listen is deeply influenced by cultural expectations. Furthermore, language can be considered as a mirror to humans' emotions, feelings and desires. Henceforth, the use of expressions and words differ not only from one individual to another, but also from one gender to the other. Thus, what concerns us here is the most recent research that has contributed to the understanding of the relation between language and gender. This chapter then provides a rich related literature to gender differences in language use. It clarifies the confusing relation between gender and sex and as it is outlined in the content, it introduces stereotypes and gender role socialisation but always in relation to language. Following this, it considers the commonly cited previous theories concerned with the language men and women use and the language used about them. Then for the purposes of this dissertation, it was of a great importance to not ignore the profound connection between gender identity, community of practice and online communication.

1.2. Questions of Sex and Gender

From a sociolinguistic point of view, sex and gender are two different concepts in studying language. This view has been supported by many scholars. According to Mills (2003), sex includes the terms of masculinity and femininity which refers to the biological features that identify males and females, whereas gender refers to the social norms that society imposes on them. In fact, some scholars claim that masculinity is expressed in many ways including physical appearance, voice and behavior. In this regard, Eckert (2003: 10) argues that “sex is a biological categorization based primarily on reproductive potential, whereas gender is the social elaboration of biological sex”. In his point of view, masculinity or femininity is a social product. Gender then is a behaviour which is enforced by society on males and females. In this vein, Eckert states that:

“thus the very definition of the biological categories male and female, and people’s understanding of themselves and others as male or female, is ultimately social.” (2003:10)

Furthermore, Coates (1998) supports the view that doing and performing gender is presenting oneself as a “gendered being”. Along with the same line of thought, Sadiqi (2003) believes that the term gender was firstly used by linguists in social sciences. In this regard, Sadiqi further explains that the feminist movement of the 1960’s and 1970’s made a comparison between gender and sex. Gender is the construction of masculine and feminine categories in society. However, many scholars have pointed out that gender was seen as a biological sex from a historical point of view. This movement was called the essentialist movement. In this sense, Sadiqi states that gender from the essentialist view was defined by three major clusters of characteristics: innateness, strict binarism, and bipolarization. Gender was qualified as innate because the biological endowments were innate; it was binary given the strict binary opposition between men and women as two undifferentiated groups; and it was bipolar because human beings pertain to one of the two bipolar categories : male or female . On the other hand, later linguists (Zimmerman and West) consider gender as a social variable that should be taken into account in exploring society in addition to age and social class. Labov (1972) on his part argues that gender interacts with other social variables in constructing society. This movement was known as The Constructionist Approach. On their view, gender has been considered as a fluid and not a static notion. Sadiqi (2003) goes on to add that the main differences between these movements lie on the fact that the first makes a bridge between gender, ethnicity, age and class, whereas the later studies gender in separation from the previous categories. In its general terms, the already cited scholars try to bridge the

road between the constructionist and the essentialist. These arguments led to the emergence of many theories such as: the deficit, the dominance, the cultural model, social constructivist and the difference theory. These approaches argue for the relationship between language and gender.

1.3. Language and Gender Stereotypes

Gender stereotype is a generalized view or preconception of attributes or characteristics processed, or the roles that are or should be performed, by members of a particular group. Stereotypes reflect general expectations about members of particular social group, however even if there is an overall difference between these groups, not all individual exemplars in these groups will necessarily differ from each other. The general stereotypes suggest that men are more aggressive, direct, confident, strict and violent, using harsher words and shorter phrases. Women are considered to be very calm, gentle, talkative, and better at describing things or situations, which is why they use more adjectives and pronouns. Gender stereotypes are the beliefs that people have about the characteristics of males and females. The content of these stereotypes varies over cultures and over time. These expectations are often related to the roles that the sexes fulfill in their culture. Gender stereotypes are collectively shared assumptions about the different ‘nature’ of men and women. Across cultures men are assumed to be aggressive, independent, and assertive whereas women are assumed to be emotional, sensitive, emphatic, and compliant. Contradictory evidence does not detract from such persuasions—immunity to empirical refutation is the very core of stereotypes and there are mechanisms to uphold them. Expectations guide the way observations are perceived, encoded, and interpreted, Gender stereotypes reflect normative notions of femininities and masculinities, women and men. Yet, like all aspects of gender, what constitutes stereotypical femininity or masculinity varies among cultures and over historical time. Gender stereotypes typically portray femininities and masculinities as binary opposites or dualisms, as, for example, between emotionality and rationality. Stereotypes misrepresent the groups they seek to describe. Stereotypes often persist even when the statistical realities they were once based on change. For example, the stereotype of woman as the homemaker has persisted even in countries where most women are in full-time paid employment. Gender stereotypes generalizations about the role of each gender are generally neither positive nor negative; they are simply inaccurate generalizations of the male and female attributes. Since each person has individual desires thoughts and feelings, regardless of their gender these stereotypes are incredibly simplistic and do not at all describe the attributes

of every person of each gender. While most people realize that stereotypes are untrue, many still make assumptions based on gender, there are many stereotypes we may all be guilty of , such as assuming that all women want to marry and have children, or that all men love sports, women are fragile and not strong enough, do not need to go to college, they are supposed to be submissive and do as they are told ,are not politicians never in charge, and love to sing and dance, and when it comes to men they are enjoy working on cars , do "dirty jobs" such as constructions and mechanics they are not secretaries , teachers, or cosmetologists, they enjoy the outdoor activities such as hiking, camping and fishing , they are husbands and in charge, always in the top and telling wives (women) what to do, definitely they do not cook , sew or do craft.

Gender stereotypes also affect speech. Males and females tend not only to speak differently, but to choose different topics as well. Men would rather discuss sports, computers or military topics, while women's world will most often revolve around mutual relationships, interpersonal events and emotions, with specific details and thorough descriptions (Tannen, 1994). Even when the topic is the same, men and women approach it from different perspectives. Furthermore, men are taught to observe the world as a hierarchical structure where it is important to have a dominating status, while women are taught to negotiate and make compromises. Men's style implies being more aggressive and assertive, while women are more sensitive and compassionate (Tannen, 1995). Furthermore, men tend to speak with higher tone and exclamations at business meetings, while women remain quiet, using sentences which usually end with a question mark.

1.4. Language and Gender Role Socialization

Gender socialization is learning to be one's self in gender polarized world, in other words, it is how to enact one's gender roles. A good example could be the context of Algerian culture: men are socialised to be more masculine and hide their feelings, while women are encouraged to express themselves and be the nurturing care-takers. Henslin (1999: 76) contends that "*an important part of socialization is the learning of culturally defined gender roles*". Gender socialization refers to the learning of behaviours and attitudes considered appropriate for a given sex, boys learn to be boys and girls learn to be girls. This learning happens by way of many different agents of socialization. The behaviour that is seen to be appropriate for each gender is largely determined by societal, cultural and economic values in a given society, it must be said that the family is an important agent to reinforce gender roles,

but there are other agents including friends, peers, school, work and the mass media. Therefore, it is worth mentioning that gender roles are reinforced through countless subtle and not so subtle ways. Men and women have had various roles in society through history, sometimes those roles were given by nature, but more often they were imposed by society.

What has remained unchanged is the idea of genders being different in the sense of their social responsibility, which has always been depicted through appropriate behaviours and acts. Gender socialization begins at a young age and affects physical health of men and women. First, men are encouraged to be brave, endure pain, confront danger, and protect their loved ones. They often have to achieve their masculine status with strenuous effort. This can deteriorate their physical health and make them more susceptible to injury. Men are also taught at a young age to “suck it up”, or “rub some dirt on it”. This leads to men under-reporting their illnesses or injuries, which negatively affects their health. Men are also taught to hide their emotions, which can lead to elevated levels of stress and can result in a weakened immune system, weight loss or weight gain, depression, sleeping disorders, drinking and strenuous exercises. As for women, they are socialized to be the responsible ones, the nurturers, and the caretakers. This can affect their physical health in many ways as well. It has been found that being a care-taker of someone with a chronic condition can cause high levels of stress and cortisol within the body, also known as care-taker syndrome. This can also affect a women’s physical health because it can lead to weight loss or gain, depression, sleep deprivation, sleeping disorders, drinking or exercising. Secondly, women have worked hard during their day jobs and when they come home to take care of their children. Again this can affect their physical health; they are taking care of other people and their families. Young boys and girls also learn by imitation and modeling. They learn about the ways by which they should act and look, according to their gender, from their peers and family. It is thought that a man should be strong and muscular and that girls are to always look pretty and put together. These things that are socialized at a young age affect boys’ and girls’ physical health, and the parents usually have the most control in what is being modeled to the children.

A large part of what children learn in schools has nothing to do with productive skills; rather they learn about proper behaviours and values, including messages about gender through what some researchers have called the “hidden curriculum”. In addition to their interactions with peers, children are also socialized by their school’s formal curriculum and teachers’ differential expectations of boys and girls. Researchers have found that teachers tend to call on boys more frequently and give them more personal attention, praise, and specific

feedback on their work. Teachers also indirectly socialize boys to be assertive and aggressive and girls to be quiet and polite by calling on girls less frequently and reprimanding girls more often than boys for speaking out of turn. Moreover, separating children into different groups, lines, and teams on the basis of gender continues to exacerbate the differential treatment given to boys and girls.

Media, including television and social media tools, is an absolutely important agent of gender socialization. Parents are beginning to lean on media more and more to occupy their children and teach them essential values, lessons, and skills. Additionally, media also helps socialize children into their gender identities through the portrayal of gender stereotyped behaviours and attitudes because media has enormous effects on our attitude and behaviour, notably in regards to aggression. It is an important contributor to the socialization process. This is particularly true with regards to gender. For instance in movies, women tend to have less significant roles than men. They are often portrayed as wives or mothers, rather than as main characters. Television commercials and other forms of advertising reinforce inequality and gender based stereotypes.

1.5. Language and Gender Theories

1.5.1. Deficit theory

The Deficit Approach by Robin Lakoff (1975) describes male language as stronger, more prestigious and more desirable. She argues that women are socialized into behaving like ladies (linguistically and in other ways too) and that this in turn keeps them in their place because ladylike precludes being “powerful”.

The deficit approach is considered as the first approach in studying language and gender. Initiated in the early 1970s, this approach sees women as disadvantaged as language users, with their language conflicting from an implicit male norm. The main protagonist of this theory was Robin Lakoff. The overall picture which emerges from Lakoff’s study is that women’s speech is generally inferior to men’s and reflects their sense of personal and social inferiority. Lakoff describes the way women’s speech style includes features which are expressive of uncertainty, lack of confidence and excessive deference or politeness“ (Lakoff in Finch: 2003, p.137).

Robin Lakoff proposed that American women were largely confined to soften their expression of opinion through such devices as:

- a. Tag questions (“this election mess is terrible, isn’t it?”) and rising intonation on declaratives (A: “When will dinner be ready?”B: “Six o’clock?”)
- b. The use of various kinds of hedges (“That’s kinda sad”or “y’know”)
- c. Boosters or amplifiers (“I’m so glad you’re here”)
- d. Indirection (saying “Well, I’ve got a dentist appointment then” in order to convey a reluctance to meet at some proposed time and perhaps to request that the other person propose an alternative time).
- e. Diminutives (*panties*)
- f. Euphemism (avoiding profanities by using expressions like piffle, or heck; using circumlocutions like *go to the bathroom* to avoid “vulgar” or tabooed expressions)
- g. Conventional politeness; especially forms that mark respect for the addressee. (Language and Gender, 2003: 158)

In her point of view, Jespersen (1922) claims that women’s language having almost no taste since females are more refined in their speech, they also use less coarse and gross expressions, whereas men are forced to be restricted to women’s speech style would quickly be reduced to a state of boredom due to the nature of women’s conversation. These views clearly illustrate how women are seen as being linguistically deficient in comparison to men. Lakoff puts vocabulary where there are differences at the grammatical level. Furthermore, she puts out that women have more words to describe colour, while men find colour as unworldly and trivial. In contrast, men have a larger vocabulary towards sport and economics.

1.5.2 The Dominance Theory

Five years after *Language and Woman’s Place*, a rather more hard-hitting book ‘Dale Spender’s *Man Made Language* (1980)’ came out. This book is often cited as an example of the ‘dominance’ framework. The dominance theory stands for men’s power and dominance of women. Females’ submissive role in society is being reflected in language according to those

who believe this to be the truth. This theory claims that in mixed-sex conversations, men are more likely to interrupt than women. Besides, linguistic differences between men and women were triggered by inequitable power relations between the two sexes. It was Lakoff who was considered as the founding mother of “the dominance theory”. She argues that the main difference between male and female lies in the inequality of power between them. Men use what power they have to dominate each other Lakoff (1975) adopts the position that men are dominant and women lack power. According to Lakoff, women are obliged to exhibit qualities of weakness and are subordinate towards men. In her view, men’s dominance is the cause of their superiority in society and women’s subordinate to men. She further observes that women use a language which contains specific Linguistic features that indicate uncertainty and lack of authority. However, this idea was criticised on the basis that it deals with sex differences as a result of the feminist movement which appears side by side with the movement which was against racism. In its general sense, the dominance theory or what is also called power-based theory posits the view that men and women are believed to inhabit a cultural and linguistic world, where power and status are unequally distributed. In other words, this theory focuses on male dominance and gender division. However, Lakoff’s point of view, concerning women’s powerlessness and tentativeness, has been criticised by many scholars. In this regard, Wardhaugh argues that: “dominance clearly fails as a universal explanation of gendered language differences”.

1.5.3. The Difference Theory

The idea that men and women grow up in different cultures, social and linguistic worlds was the basis of the difference theory, in other words, the difference theory suggests that women’s ways of speaking reflect the social and linguistic norms of the specifically female subcultures in which most of us spend our formative years, Cameron states (2004). In the same vein Tannen (1995) maintains that boys and girls have deficient cultures, therefore, they use language differently. Maltz and Borker (1982) argued that men and women build different gender subcultures. Boys and girls learn to do different things with words in conversation; in those two cultures .Crawford (1995 :1) posits that “men and women are fated to misunderstand each other unless they recognize their deeply socialized differences”. Crawford goes on to describe how the fundamental differences between women and men shape the way they talk. According to Crawford again, these differences are located within individuals and are different in personality traits, skills, beliefs, attitudes or goals’ in the same

stream. In the same vein, Talbot (2010) affirms that behaviour previously perceived as men's efforts to dominate women is reinterpreted as a cross cultural phenomenon.

The difference theory has focused on women's superiority over men concerning behaviour, style and cooperation. For Sadiqi (2004), the difference theory has focused on women's superiority over men concerning behaviour, style and cooperation. Sadiqi writes that women's behaviour and style were celebrated and highlighted as positive and cooperative in terms of patterns of speech, women differ from men, plus female are superior in some linguistics domains. Sadiqi (2004) continues saying that women were said to be better conversationalists for a number of reasons: (a) their elicitory strategies aimed at raising the level of conversation for all participants, (b) they sought support in language, a strategy that was basically different from men's upmanship (Tannen 1990), and (c) they learned different behaviors from men as part of their social differentiation from playgroups onwards (Maltz and Borker 1982, Tannen 1990, Thorne 1993).

Given these characteristics of women's conversations, each sex needed to value the style of the other sex and women needed not be blamed for expressing their social roles (Tannen 1990). This theory leads to that men and women live in different cultural worlds, this results in different ways of speaking. To put it simply, since there are different rules that govern the behaviour of two subcultures, the relationship between male and female is different, even though they live in the same environment. Thus, it emphasises that social and physical separation from their childhood causes different languages and beliefs in males and females. It is also necessary to mention that linguistic variation is considered as an interesting domain in investigation of gender differences. Wardhaugh (2006) claims that the main differences between males and females lie in the intonation of their voices, vocabulary choice, the use of gestures and paralinguistic systems. He further argues that women spend most of their time talking about home and families whereas men are more attracted towards sports, political issues, business and taxes. Later studies, including those of Bergvall (1996), Bing (1996) and Freed (1996), insist on the idea that they should focus on the similarities of both sexes instead of differences.

1.5.4. The Social Constructionist Theory

Since the previous theories has been criticised, researchers found that the constructionist is the response to many of their questions, guiding them to rethink about a new theory about language and gender. Consequently, this wave has attracted more attention towards understanding gender as a constitutive factor in building social identities. In this matter; Freeman states that language use as shaping understanding of the social world. He also adds that language plays a crucial role in shaping relations and constructing social identities. Likewise Cameron (1992 :16) argues that social identities are constructed during the process of interaction between men and women. Linguists interested in analyzing the constitution of gender identities/gender relations need to look beyond lexical choice analysis which is represented as doing what, to who is and under what circumstances and with what consequences. Actually, Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003) maintain that the main principles of the constructivist model lie on the scholars' perception of gender as a social construct. Agreeing on this notion, Freeman and Mc Elhinny observe that studying the activity of both man and women allows the understanding of language as constituting reality. Therefore, research has moved from studying differences between men and women in terms of position towards research on similarities and differences of their speech. Thus, this would move language use towards the field of constructing gender differences as a social category. Gender differences are limited to some aspects of social life including class, race ethnicity to mention but few. Sunderland (2004) sees that in comparison to dominance theory, social constructionist theory of language and gender provides a model framework for the study of language and gender, Sunderland (2004) concludes that the construction goes “beyond words spoken and written”.

1.6. Gender Differences at Linguistic Levels

It is worth mentioning that there are differences between men and women in terms of written and spoken language. This idea has been supported by many sociolinguistic works as we will see in the following titles.

1.6.1. Gender Differences in Spoken Language

Lakoff (1975) pointed out in her study about the English language used by men and women, that boys use what she calls “rough talk” or active voice, whereas girls use passive form, in other words female’s language consists of empty adjectives, qualifiers and intensifiers, hedges, tag questions and polite forms. Men employ stronger expressions such as “shit!” or “damn” whereas women use weaker and sweet sounding swear words such as “goodness” or “oh dear”. Even they cannot use the language of each other since it is viewed inappropriate especially for male, women use their own unique vocabulary including adverbs and adjectives. Following this, Jespersen (1992: 251) points out that:

“Women have smaller vocabularies, show extensive use of certain adjectives and adverbs, more often than men break off without finishing their sentences, because they start talking without having thought out what they are going to say and produce less complex sentences”

1.6.2. Gender Differences in Written Language

Gender differences in written language research are limited in comparison to spoken form. That what should be noted in phonology and intonation cannot be always applied for research on spoken language. But that has not held back some scholars from studying these different types of discourse while other scholars focused on some specific linguistic characteristics such as adverbs, nouns, repetition of words and synonyms. Concerning this Gyllgard (2006) tested the gender differences in the use of linguistics features. He declares that there is always a problem in the investigation of written language; furthermore, he observes that women in order to show their superiority over men they tend to use literature, that is to say females show their intellectual abilities which men lack. Henceforth, boys are

less successful than girls in writing and reading. Along with the same line of thought, Brown (1994) assumes that when males grow older they will show no interest in writing and see it as a female's activity. Following this, Millard (1997) claims that boys have a poor and not detailed writing style in comparison to that of girls' style, because they rely on their experiences in reading, not like boys who rely on TV and computer games. Further, Kanaris (1999) states that women tend to lengthen their expressions when they write. Which include wider range of adjective and more subordinate clauses. She adds that girls use the pronoun (we) more, and boys are attracted to the use of (I). Women writers are more skilled in their writing, whereas men writers are seen as "event-oriented". Milosevic and Daniels (2000) observe that girls' style of writing marks their good behaviour, rather than their good work. Moreover, they argue that male writers choose to read is rarely what they are required to write.

Just in the few last decades the research on written differences between genders has gained scholarly attention. Research conducted by Trudgill(1972), Lakoff(1975), Labov (1990) and Coates (1998) are deemed as the most important works in this area of study.

1.7. Gender and Online Communication Differences

If we talk about male and female communication, there is a stereotype in society that females tend to be more linguistically polite than males who are straightforward and powerful. According to Holmes (2001), females tend to speak less forcefully than males while males tend to swear much more than females. For example, Holmes stated that many researchers found that in male conversations, the content of the talk focused on sports, aggression, competition, teasing and doing things, on the other hand, in female conversations, it was focused on the self, feelings, affiliations with others, home and family. They agree that males speak more than females do. It is also reported that females use more polite forms and more compliments than males. A lot of the studies have shown that males often dominate a conversation compared to female. In an experimental study of conversation in same and mixed-gender groups of college students (1976); it was found that male had more personal orientation in a mixed-gender groups setting, spoke to individuals more often, talked more about themselves and their feelings, while in all-male setting they were more focused to the expression of competition and status. However, females in mixed-gender group settings had minimum contact with other female and let male to dominate the conversation. Females in groups with males tend to affirm themselves or assume leadership. In the 1990s, when

language on the internet was first discussed by sociolinguists, it was assumed that gender roles would be more equalized as the communication form was more anonymous than traditional or face-to-face communication (Baron, 2004). Women were more daring and argumentative than men. He explains that some of the reasons for women to vary from the female style may have been due to the context of communication with women trying to get dominance over male users by sending messages with effort to try and compensate for their regarded lower status to men.

This finding contrasts with traditional communication stereotype that said women are less dominant than men. Herring (2003) found that in discussions on the internet by chatters, men tended to post longer messages and often to be the ones who start and end conversations in mixed-gender groups. In contrast, women tend to post relatively short messages. Herring (2003) also stated that women are more likely to thank, appreciate, apologize and tend to be bothered by violations of politeness. On the contrary, men generally tend to care less about politeness; they break the online rules of behaviours and tend to be more noticed about threats to freedom of expression than appear with others' social face so that men and women can have different style of communication in any kind of setting. Male style is characterized by argumentation: put-down, strong, often contentions assertions, lengthy and frequent postings, self promotion and sarcasm. While female style tends to be reassuring by using expressions of appreciation, thanking, and community-building welcome. Besides being helpful and contributing in the form of suggestions (Herring, 1994).

1.7.1. Online Communication

Considering the coming of electronic media, there were as it was two sorts of communication, verbal, and non verbal but with the entry of the World Wide Web there are plenty of strategies that individuals can presently communicate with each other. The online communication definition nowadays, alludes to how individuals as well as computers communicate with each other through a computer arrange and the web. Not a shocking figure ; individuals are turning more to online communication than the conventional shapes due to its numerous focal points just like the adaptability it gives for the individual to communicate over the world with somebody else. Guardians and children and friends and kin living in several corners of the world have been brought together by the tap of a button. This frame of communication moreover gives use to users who are more comfortable

communicating their contemplations by putting them down on paper meaning writing on the chat window or the e-mail; than fair talking their contemplations out. It too gives an opportunity for an individual to alter and redress what they need to communicate.

Since online communication is recorded, it can be put away for afterward reference and has been known to be of significance particularly related to legitimate perspectives online communication spares a parcel of time as well since the users include a flawlessly carry it on whereas doing other things as compared to verbal communication where both parties need to be display.

In general, online communication refers to the ways in which individuals as well as computers can communicate with each other over a computer network, such as the internet. These ways include: chat rooms, emails, instant messaging, and social networking sites.

1.7.2. Online Communication Features

- a. Online communication makes a kind of semi-Speech that's between speaking and composing, and comparable to face-to face intelligent. According to (Lee S.J :2009) ;
- b. It may be a way of data trade , which is abnormal, compared to face-to-face interaction, however they are discussions, as expressed by (Gem : 2003) ;
- c. The nearness of shortened forms , unconventional punctuation and incorrect spelling, as well as the use of visual like emojis, as detailed by Lee, L Toyoda.& Harrison (2002);
- d. It depends on both writing and reading aptitudes Abram's (2003) states that it is different frame of verbal talk in its composed scripts. Hence, users may require more time for the comprehension of the input and the output;
- e. Linguistic economy seen through abbreviations, clippings, orthographic reduction, shortening, ellipsis, as stated by Ferrara, Brunner, and Whitemore, 1991; Murry, 1990; Werry, 1996);

f. Averianava (2012 :15) states that the one of the kind etymological and iconographic features of electronic composing include but are not restricted to imaginative abbreviation (acronyms, logograms, letter-numeral hybrids and letters- morpheme substitutes, vowel deletion, etc) Emoticons abbreviated rearranged language structure disregard of capitalisation rules, etc;

g. The creation of modern implies to communicate feelings and facial expressions. They invited linguistic gadgets like onomatopoeia (e.g.: LOL = laugh out loud) and keyboard symbols, smiles (e.g.: :), <3). They are commonly used in E-discourse to make up for the absence of paralinguistic features of real time communication. (Lee, 2001, 2006).

1.7.3. Main Online Communication Tools

Among the exceptionally essential communication tools accessible in any online environment, we have:

1.7.3.1. Social Networking

Social networking, according to the site little trade, is all about creating bunches, trading data, in expansion to being a major portion of social life in the cutting edge world. Social networking is a priceless instrument for web showcasing since it provides user friendly and profoundly open stage upon which to exchange information on items and administrations for illustration on the off chance that somebody likes a commentary on your business web journal or site , he may choose to share it with his companions (friends) on Facebook , Twitter, etc.

a. Facebook :

Facebook is a popular free social networking website that allows registered users to create profiles, upload photos and videos, send messages and keep in touch with friends, family and colleagues. The site, which is available in 37 different languages was originally designed for college students, but is now open to anyone above 13 years of age. Each Facebook profile has a “wall” where friends can post comments. Since the wall is viewable by

the entire user's friends wall posts are basically a public conversation. Therefore, it is usually best not to write personal messages on your friend's wall. Instead you can send a private message, which will show up in his or her private inbox, similar to an e-mail message.

b. Twitter :

It is social networking website, which allows users to publish short messages that are visible to other users. These messages are known as tweets, and can only be 140 characters or less in length. Users have found many different uses for twitter, including basic communication between friends and family, a way to publicize an event, or as a customer relations tool for companies to communicate with their customers. Twitter was founded in 2006, and as of 2008 twitter was estimated to have between 4 and 5 million users, and was the third most popular social networking site after Facebook and Myspace.

c. Instagram :

Instagram is an American photo and video sharing social networking service owned by Facebook .it was created by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger and launched in 2010 October .it allows you also to use filters and send messages to friends .

1.7.3.2. Instant Messaging:

Instant messaging, often shortened to IM or IM'ing, is the exchange of near real-time messages through a stand-alone application or embedded software. Unlike chat rooms with many users engaging in multiple and overlapping conversations, IM sessions usually take place between two users in a private, back-and-forth style of communication.

a. WhatsApp:

WhatsApp launched in 2009 and quickly became one of the most-popular messaging apps in existence—it's now up to 1.5 billion monthly users from over 180 countries, with 60 billion messages sent every day. WhatsApp is free and allows you to sidestep international calling rates by making audio and video calls over Wi-Fi or data. For ease-of-use and security, it's hard to beat.

b. Messenger:

Facebook messenger is a free mobile messaging app used for instant messaging, sharing photos, videos, audio recordings and for group chats. The app which is free to download can be used to communicate with your friends on Facebook and with your phone contacts.

c. Viber:

Viber, a mobile messenger app that allows users to make phone calls and send text messages and images for free, also gives up plenty of free user data to anyone who wants to listen. According to researchers from the University of New Haven in Connecticut, US, Viber's app sends user messages in unencrypted form- including photos, videos, doodles, and location images . Viber recently a major milestone : 100 million cocurrent users.

1.8. Language of Online Communication

As John Paolillo puts it, in his introduction to a paper on the virtual speech community; 'if we are to understand truly how the internet might shape our language, then it is essential that we seek to understand how different varieties of language are used on the internet (cited in Crystal : 2011). It is critical to note that web could be a predominately a composed medium which is related to talking as we might see; typically why numerous writers have called internet language as written speech. It could be a composed electronic talk that's exceptionally frequently studied as if it was composing talking. It is additionally called Netspeak Communication; it is formed from Net to refer to web and speak which includes written as well as talking . It can be an alternative to electronic talk when the emphasis is on the interactive and dialogue elements, internet language, or computer mediated communication when the focus in on the medium itself.

It is important to revive our information around the nature of spoken and written language and the component that separate them. Discourse may be a time-bound unconstrained, face-to-face, socially intelligently, freely organized immediately revisable and prosodically wealthy. On the other hand, writing in typically space-bound contrived, outwardly decontextulized, genuinely communicative, elaborately structured, repeatedly revisable and graphically wealthy (Crystal D, 2011). However , it is basic to note confound

between Netspeak and face-to-face communication ,they are divers since the previous need the unconstrained feedback. Messages sent by means of the net are total and unidirectional .the moment contrast is that the first is slower in cadence of interaction which can be from a moment to a longer period. Third, Nestspeak needed all the paralinguistic signals which are pivotal in face-to-face interaction ,however they presented what is called emoji and emoticons .As a result, the ways individuals associated have changed and it is no longer essential to meet face-to-face , one can communicate through e-mails, chat, video conferences, and social systems this can be ‘online communication’ age .

1. 11. Conclusion

Throughout the first chapter, we tried to summarise the most important scholarly investigations in the field of gender and language. In fact, differences in language have been viewed differently due to many reasons. This fact leads to the emergence of many theories and approaches which provide a fertile soil for investigating gender in relation to language. The most important works are leaded by feminist scholars. We have also dealt with males and females differences in using spoken and written language, and since they communicate differently in non virtual life, this reflects how they communicate using social media platforms. They post different things, prefer certain platforms and even use language differently.

Although much of what may be written is about how it is possible to talk about men/women, what they do and should do and how they act and should act, in pursuit of our stated intent therefore, this chapter highlights the need to re-examine the ways in which individuals construct and maintain their identities in practice (CofP).We note at once how it is of great importance to not ignore the profound connection between gender identity and online communication, pointing out that performativity is central to any discussion of online communication.

II. Chapter Two: Research Methodology

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2.1. Introduction

This chapter aims at describing the research sample and the adopted methodology to conduct this research. Put it simply, choosing the most appropriate means of research is certainly a matter of many factors; the subject of the research itself should ultimately determine the methods used. The subject of this work calls for an integration of three common data collection techniques: participant observation of mixed gender online chat, structured questionnaire (to both female and male master students) and an analysis of nine selected online conversations.

2.2. Description of the Sample

It must be noticed that the way samples are selected is very important for the validity of academic research. In fact, the selected sample should be representative for the whole population. Relating this to our study, our target population includes respondents from the same educational backgrounds but different gender. The participants of this research are second year English Master Students studying at Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret, Algeria. The total number is hundred respondents, thirty of them are males and the other seventy are females. The age variable of the participants is not included but again their gender is of great importance.

The informants of this research did not only help answering the questionnaire, but they were also asked to provide us with some excerpts of their online passages. Actually, they were not reluctant to collaborate with us and participate in this research.

2.3. Data Collection Methods

The decision about which methodological tools to use for the data collection is definitely guided by the research questions and objectives. With the purpose of answering the research questions, testing the hypotheses and meeting the objectives of this study, we felt the need to mix both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative method involves the use of statistical methods in order to give a general description of the phenomenon at hand, whereas qualitative method gives more detailed description of events. To illustrate, the data is gathered both quantitatively using a students' questionnaire, and qualitatively using participant observation and an analysis of some students' online conversations.

2.3.1. Participant Observation

Participant observation is a qualitative method in which the researcher takes part in the daily activities, rituals, inter-actions, and events of a group of people as one of the means of learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their routines and their culture.

We as researchers integrated in the daily activities of our sample taking objective notes about what is observed concerning the research problem being investigated.

2.3.2. Master Students' Questionnaire

Researchers agree that a questionnaire is a series of written questions that particular persons would answer for the sake of gathering information. Moreover, items of questionnaires should be clearly and plainly stated in order to motivate the respondents to provide more information. Questionnaire method has several advantages. The common ones can be summed up in the following points:

- Almost all educated people are familiar with questionnaires, and know how to complete them.
- The respondents' opinions are not influenced by the researcher's viewpoints.
- Questionnaires are easy to analyse.

For these reasons and others, questionnaire instrument is used in this study. As described above, thirty questionnaires are distributed to second year Master male students and seventy questionnaires distributed to the opposite gender (second year Master female students).

It is of paramount importance to mention that questionnaires, though they are widely used by researchers for the sake of investigating peoples' attitudes, they have some disadvantages; one of which is the lack of qualitative depth to the answers and the resultant superficiality. In addition, other limitations can be highlighted:

- Written questionnaires lack some helping features like gestures and other visual clues, and personal contact which can affect the respondents.
- Sometimes questionnaires are not completed by the persons we want.
- Some respondents may not give the questionnaires back.

So, as already mentioned, the best pursuit of our research questions requires the use of another tool so that each completes the other.

2.3.2.1. Pilot Study

To examine the feasibility, clarity and efficiency of the designed questionnaire, we distributed it first to some students. Their feedback helped much in the improvement of the final structure of the questionnaire addressed for the whole sample.

2.3.3. Online Conversation Analysis

Given the reason stated above, we employed a different approach for accomplishing our task. It is the analysis of the nine selected students' online chats using conversational analysis.

Studies that apply the concepts of conversation analysis to a particular form of interaction, such as online chat, are rare. It is evident that internet chat is a form of social interaction and follows the rules governing social interaction as such. Internet chat is a kind of conversation, because in it, thoughts and words are exchanged while not necessarily in talk. CA provides a well-established methodology and a robust set of results for the systematic description of oral language practices in various contexts. Being convinced of this, we used conversation analysis in the present study to examine the following nine important features:

1. Turn taking:

One of the fundamental aspects that make conversations orderly is the procedure of turn taking. When two or more people interact, one way in which turn taking can be handled is through explicit selection of an interlocutor, as when a teacher selects a student to answer a question. When a person speaks after another, he or she does so most of the time by self-selecting. This occurs at precise points in conversation in which one speaker starts talking exactly when the other speaker stops, without any significant overlaps or pauses.

2. Greetings:

Speakers perform the social action of greeting in two main ways: They either post different messages to each person in the room, or more frequently greet the entire room using more general structures and lexical items. This strategy is a less personal way of packaging the action of greeting, but it is also linguistically, a more economical way of performing the

action. The latter strategy is very typical in the web chat context, where it is important to convey a maximum of information in the shortest way possible.

3. Adjacency pair:

An adjacency pair is composed of two turns produced by different speakers which are placed adjacently and where the second utterance is identified as related to the first. Adjacency pairs include the following patterns: question/answer; complaint/denial; offer/accept; request/grant; compliment/rejection; challenge/rejection, instruct/receipt, etc. Adjacency pairs are fundamental units of conversation organization and a key way in which meanings are communicated and interested in conversation. They consist of first pair part and second pair part. Each pair part is identified by looking at the utterance as produced by the speaker and the hearer. Adjacency Pairs also help maintain the role of both the speaker and the learner and avoid them from abusing their turn as conversation is going.

4. Repair:

Repair is the mechanism (recognition, identification, and resolution) by which definite trouble sources in communication are dealing with. During a general conversation, when speakers make mistakes or try to rephrase his statement, the process called repair. The repair process has started just after the realization of any miscommunication or misunderstanding, and this would last until the speaker clears his position, he keeps the turn. Repair process describes how to initiate the repair mechanism (self / other), who resolve the issue (self /other) and who pointed out the issue in his turn or others' turn. The repair process can be done at three stages, one, immediately by the speakers, second, initiated by other, third, by his next turn.

5. Sequence expansion:

Sequence expansion allows talk which is made up of more than a single adjacency pair to be constructed and understood as performing the same basic action and the various additional elements are as doing interactional work related to the basic action underway.

a. Pre-expansion: an adjacency pair that may be understood as preliminary to the main course of action.

b. *Insert expansion*: an adjacency pair that comes between the FPP and SPP of the base adjacency pair. Insert expansions also interrupt the activity under way, but are still relevant to that action.

c. *Post-expansion*: a turn or an adjacency pair that comes after, but is still tied to, the base adjacency pair. There are two types: minimal and non-minimal. Minimal expansion is also termed sequence closing thirds, because it is a single turn after the base SPP (hence third) that does not project any further talk beyond their turn (hence closing).

6. Silence:

Every part of conversations has a meaning, including a short humming and even the absence of words or silence. In the situation where the counterpart has not grabbed where the conversation is heading, silence most likely occurred. In this kind of situation, silence means that the participants have not reached an agreement about the topic of the talk. It is in contrast with the interruption that commonly occurs when the speakers have agreed on the topic and when they are in the process of negotiating their judgment and knowledge. Silence rarely occurs in the smooth conversations. It can occur throughout the entire speech act but in what context it is happening depends what the silence means. Three different aspects can be implied through silence:

- Pause: A period of silence within a speaker's turn.
- Gap: A period of silence between turns.
- Lapse: A period of silence when no sequence is in progress: the current speaker stops talking, does not select a next speaker, and no one self selects. Lapses are commonly associated with visual or other forms of disengagement between speakers, even if these periods are brief.

7. Overlap:

The term 'overlap' relates to a state where a number of individuals start speaking simultaneously and interrupting each other. In such events, people come up with some solution. Schegloff (2000) brought up with a mechanism comprising three steps.

- a. There must be turn-taking.
- b. Places to used resources,

- c. Interactional process to use these resources.

Overlap can be positive many times; it gives competition and cooperation during the conversation. There are two types of overlap, first its continuers or assessments and the second type is questions and statement. Almost all the conversation observed, it concluded that these overlaps are not interrupting but helping the conversation.

10. Interruption:

Interruption is often described as evil intention to cut the flow of the current speaker's speech and to grab the floor to make one's own points. There are three most obvious reasons for interruptions in a conversation: speaker B is under the impression that speaker A has nothing more to say; speaker B feels he or she is well informed and speaker A need not elaborate on the topic; speaker B wants to speak at a particular point in the ongoing talk before it is too late.. However, interruption cannot be regarded as an attempt to control the floor and gain domination. It, in the contrary, can be regarded as a mark of lively and collaborative conversation.

Conversation analysis helps providing a focus not only on how speakers' utterances are constructed prosodically, grammatically, and lexically – turn design – but also on how speakers overwhelmingly cooperate in an orderly taking of turns, and how these turns are sequenced into sets of actions, as adjacent pairs and more extended sequences.

2.4. Ethical Consideration in Research

Ethical issues arise in all types of research. Indeed, the relationship between the researcher and the respondent raises a number of ethical questions. As a result, before designing any research, the researcher should take into consideration the ethical research which may face him/her during data collection. For this reason, we as researchers tried to avoid investigating a sensitive topic and we took into consideration the personal life and privacy of the participants.

Moreover, in our research, we asked kindly our participants for their consent to fill the questionnaire and their consent also was important to take captured images, and screenshots from their own Facebook conversation. In short, we guarantee their anonymity and confidentiality.

2.3.5. Conclusion

This chapter provides a general overview of the research methodology employed in this study and the ethics taken through all its steps. In the chapter that follows, analysis and interpretation of the data collected are presented. This begins with an analysis of the questionnaire addressed to students then an analysis of the nine selected online conversations.

III. Chapter Three: Data Analysis and Discussion of the Findings

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3.1. Introduction

This chapter presents how the study is conducted and how the analysis is made; detailing what is already alluded to in the above general introduction. Its aim is to bridge the gap between the theoretical and the practical frameworks paying attention and adhering to the appropriate methodological and conceptual terms that were mentioned in the previous chapters.

3.2. Research design

This research aims at examining the different conversational styles female and male chatters use in their daily online chats and the reasons behind their use. To achieve these aims, a mixed method is the suitable methodology. We opt to have both quantitative and qualitative methods using a questionnaire distributed to a sample consisting of one hundred second year female and male Master students studying at Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret. In addition to this quantitative tool, two qualitative methods are employed: participant observation and an analysis of online chats. For the collection of online chats, students from the same sample (second year English Master Students) provide us with their mixed gender online chats that are selected on the basis of the criteria identified. The nine selected excerpts are analysed using conversation analysis.

3.3. Data Analysis

As it is already stated, the process of collecting data is based on three methodological instruments: participant observation, online questionnaire and analysis of mixed gender online chats.

3.3.1. Participant Observation

In the present study, we integrated in the daily activities of our sample taking objective notes about every single detail which might help to obtain the necessary data about the research problem. We observed our own mixed gender online chats as well as those of our sample. The main findings of this tool are that males and females do use different

conversational styles in their online chats. Differences are mainly the choice of topics and the strategies to develop it. This can be related to the gender variable.

3.3.2. Questionnaire Analysis

The designed questionnaire contains 13 different questions. Each question tends to achieve a specific objective. Below is the analysis of each question separately:

1. Personal information (please refer to the Appendix)

Relevant with our research problem, the respondents were asked only about their gender.

Gender	Number of students	Percentage %
Male	30	30%
Female	70	70%
Total	100	100%

Table 1: The distribution of the sample

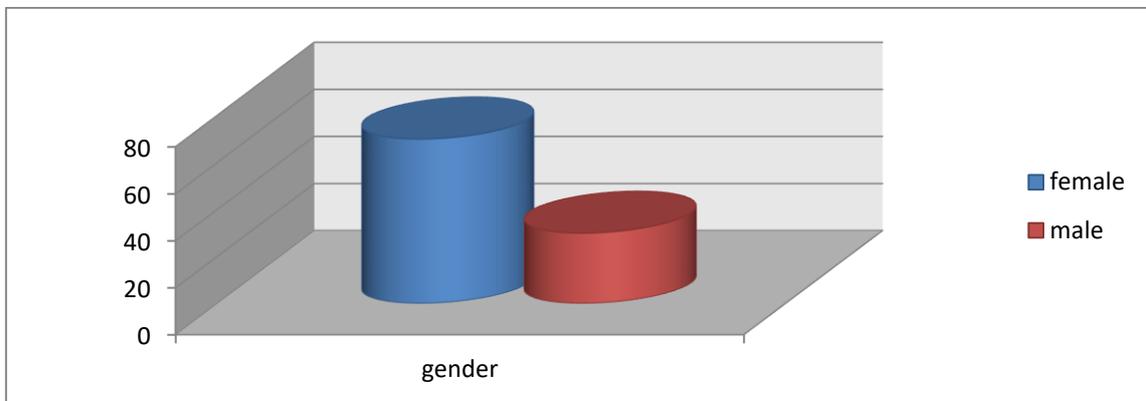


Figure 1: The distribution of the sample

The sample is not very evenly split between female and male students. The data presented in the table (1.1) indicates that the majority of the respondents are female students (70%), while male students constitute only (30%). One thing is certain: it was difficult to find male students to fill in the detailed questionnaires, besides; immediately after sending them the questionnaires, they appeared to show a very limited curiosity to know about the issue

.Even the ones who showed interests on the topic they made a delay when it came to answering the questionnaire, that is why we resent it to more females.

Question 2: How often do you chat online?

Gender	Daily	Four hours per day	Rarely	Percentage (%)	Total
Male	22	7	1	30%	30
Female	51	10	9	70%	70

Table 2: Frequency of chatting online

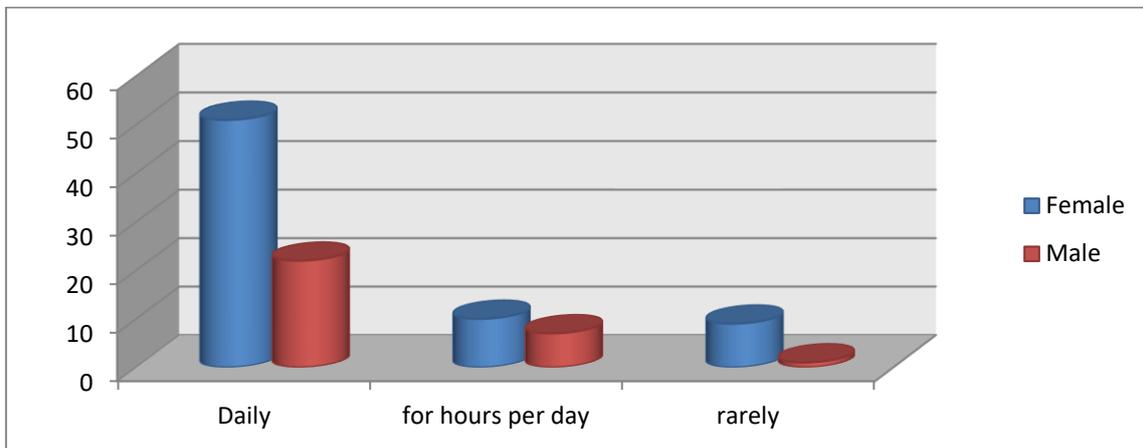


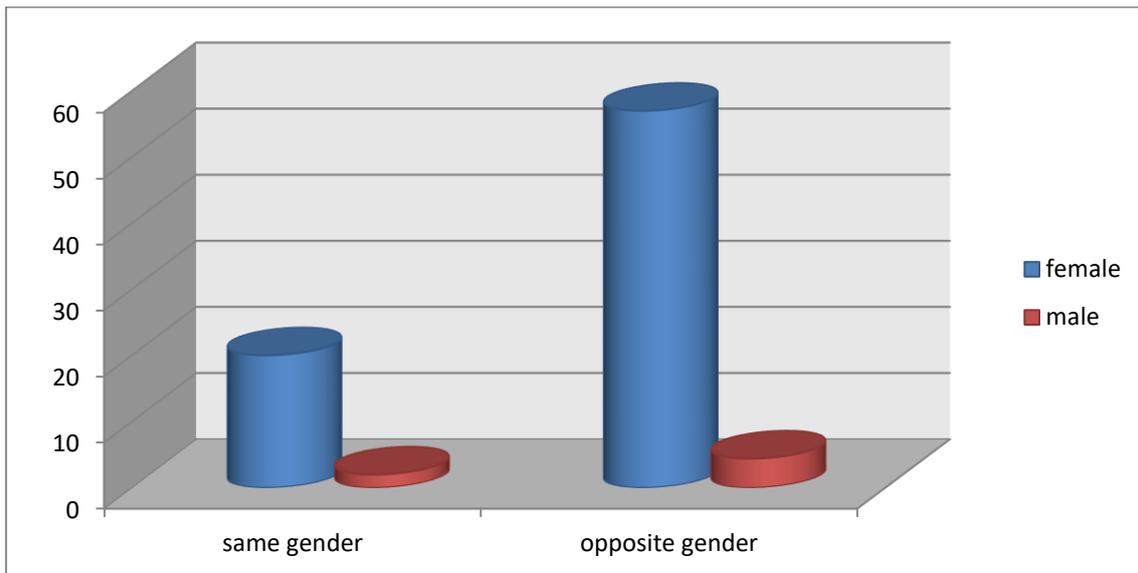
Figure 2: Frequency of chatting online

The majority of participants (73) from both genders reported that they always chat online with their mates and this means they do daily, however (17) students also from both genders notified that they chat for few hours per day, while (10) of them opted for rarely chat.

Question 3: Do you prefer participating in same gender or mixed gender online chat? why ?

Gender	Number of students who chat with the same gender	Number of students who chat with the opposite gender	Percentage (%)	Total
Female	20	57	77%	77
Male	2	21	23%	23

□ **Table 3:** Students' preferences when chatting



□ **Figure 3:** Students' preferences when chatting

Most of the informants claimed that they interacted with their opposite gender. The females were the majority, they constitute (77%). Male were (21) and some of them preferred the same gender to engage in conversation (22) students split into (2) males and (21) females. The respondents therefore varied in the responses by opting to interact with a male, a female or both and when it comes to the reason behind these preference for the majority who chose to chat with both genders said (it does not make any difference for them, male or female all the matter is the topics they are dealing with) and think the conversation will be more exciting. The other half thinks it is more important and comfortable for them to chat with the same gender.

Question 4: Do you use the same speech style when chatting online with male and/or female partners? Why ?

Gender	Number of student use the same speech	Number of student use different speech	Percentage (%)	Total
Female	18	52	70%	70
Male	6	14	30%	30

Table 4: Shifting the style with the opposite gender

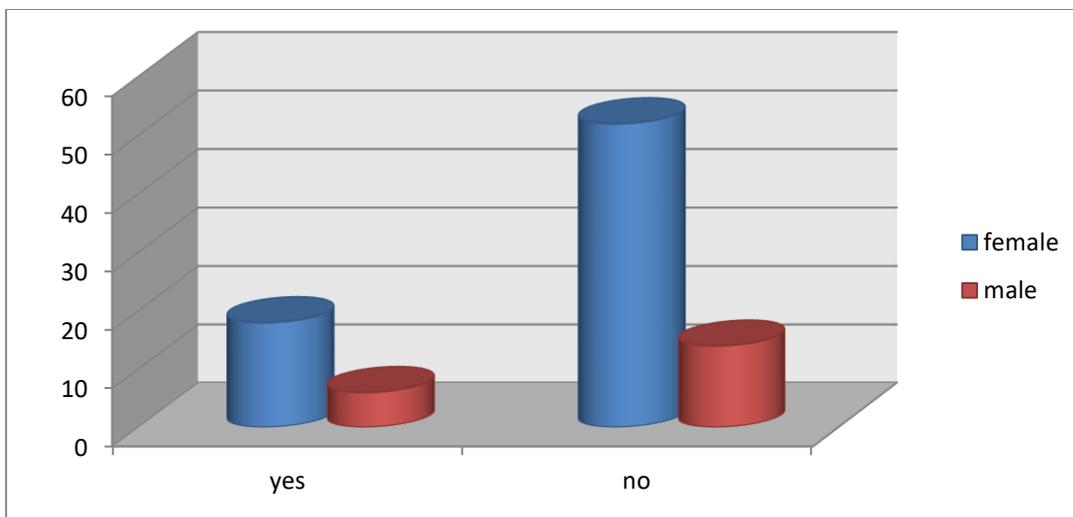


Figure 4: Shifting the style with the opposite gender

The majority of participants (76) stated that they shift their style of communication with the opposite gender, (62) of them are females, while the (14) are males. However, only (24) students (18) (both females and (6) males) claimed that they do not change their speech style with the opposite-gender. This shift in the style due to the gender factor, in other way, interacting with males is not the same thing as with females this is what our informants pointed out after we asked for an explanation.

Question 5: Do you notice any conversational differences when it comes to online mixed-gender chat ?

Gender	Notice the differences	Do not notice any differences	Percentage (%)	Total
Female	67	2	69%	69
Male	25	5	30%	30

Table 5. Speech differences in mixed-gender conversations

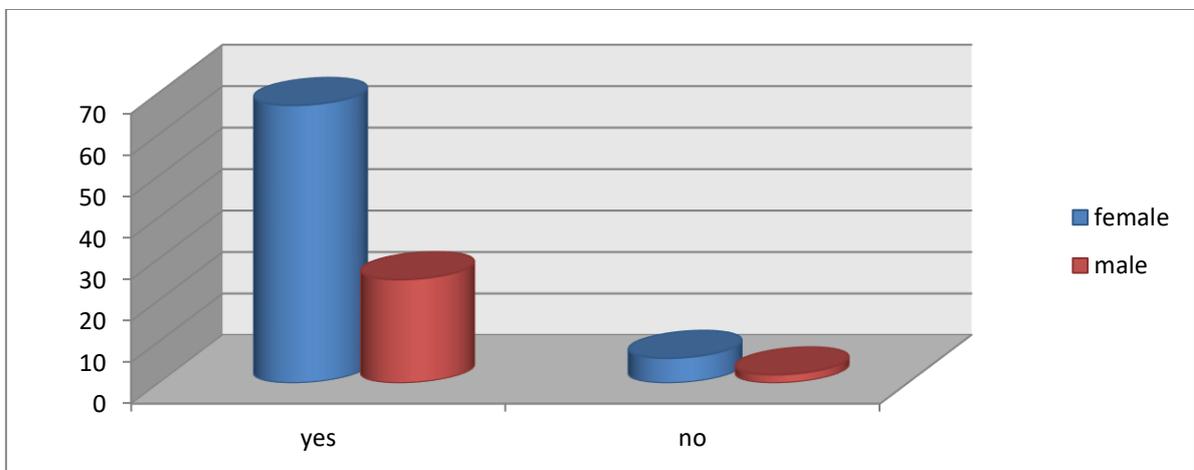


Figure 5. Speech differences in mixed-gender conversations

The majority of students (92) claimed that they notice speech differences in mixed-gender conversation. More female (67) feel such differences than males (25), however (6) female students and (2) other males do not notice these differences. Those who opted for 'yes' were asked to justify and explain. All male students who claimed to notice differences in speech justified that they were aware of differences in speech between genders. Women have shown a greater tendency to believe that there is a particular disparity between their linguistic behavior and that of men due to the interests, needs and topics of discussion of each gender group.

Question 6: If yes, could these differences lead to misunderstanding in communication?

Gender	Believe it leads to misunderstanding	Do not believe it lead to misunderstanding	Percentage (%)	Total
Female	65	6	71%	71
Male	26	3	29%	29

Table 6: Mixed-gender conversations lead to misunderstanding

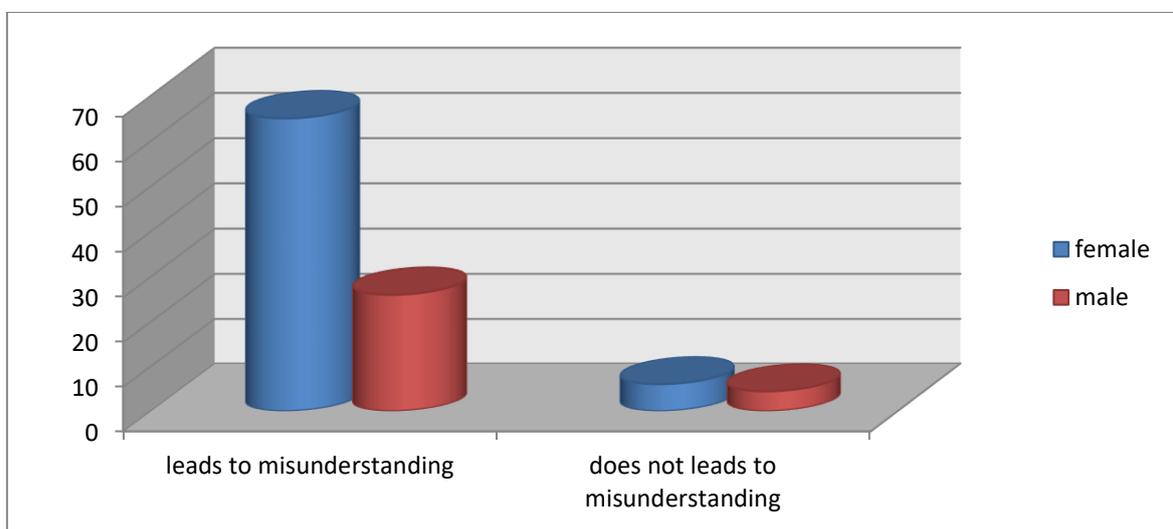
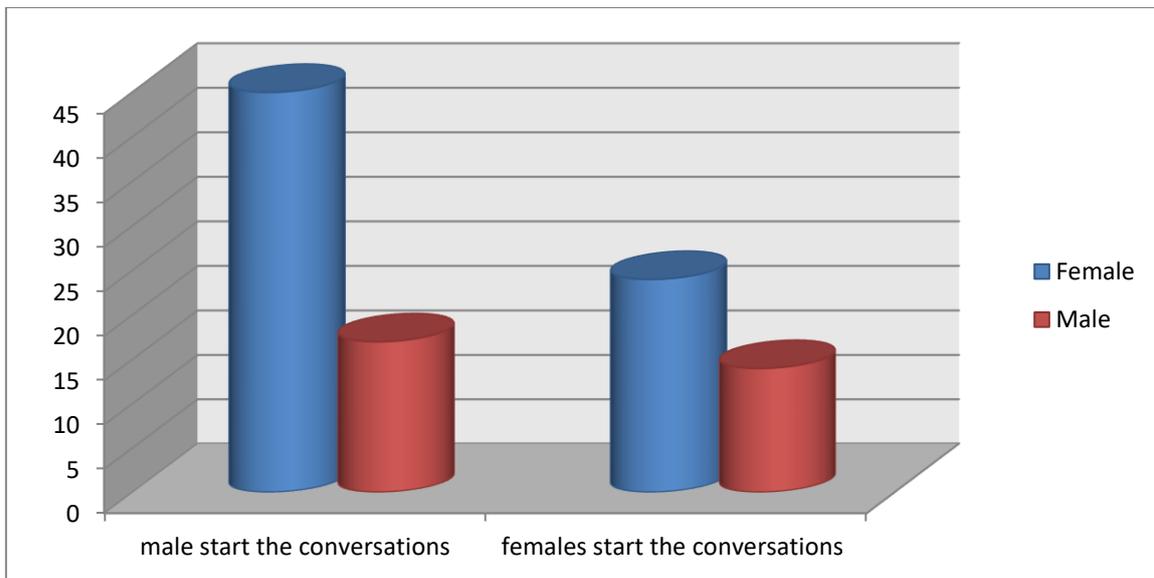


Figure 6: Mixed-gender conversations lead to misunderstanding

The majority of the students (91) agreed on mixed-gender conversations lead to misunderstanding (65) females and (26) males who opted to 'yes' as an answer. As for the ones who thought such speech differences does not lead to misunderstanding, three male and six female informants chose 'No'. This indicates that many misunderstandings are caused by speech differences in mixed-gender conversations. Students were asked to give an example. Some males said they lived through a misinterpretation of the kind words and ways in which women colleagues speak to attract them. Some women said men tend to use strong words that women misinterpret as blame or impose their opinions.

Question 7: Who is more likely to initiate topics during online mixed gender chat?

Gender	Student who think male start the topic	Student who think female start the topic	Percentage (%)	Total
Female	45	24	69%	69
Male	17	13	30%	30

Table 7: Initiating topics during online mixed gender chat**Figure 7:** Initiating topics during online mixed gender chat

(99%) was the percentage of students answering this question, (62) of the students stated that males are most likely to initiate topics, and these students have been divided into (45) females and (17) males , while (38) others see that females are the ones who start the conversations (14) males and (24) females agreed on that .

Question 8: Who do you think interrupt more during online mixed-gender conversations?

Gender	Female interrupt more	Male interrupt more	Percentage (%)	Total
Female	56	21	77%	77
Male	17	6	23%	23

Table 8: Interruption during mixed-gender conversations

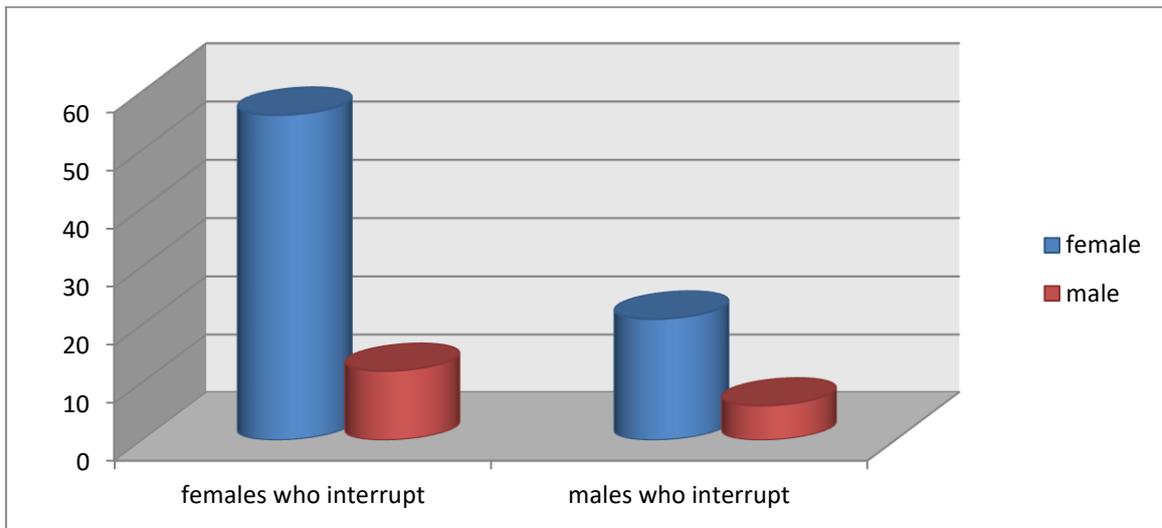


Figure 8: Interruption during mixed-gender conversations

In this question the answers were not so close, (77%) stated that females are known for their interruption during mixed-gender conversations more than males with (56) females admitting that along with (17) males, while (21) thinks male are the ones who interrupt the most (21) females and (6) males .after asking for an explanation both genders said that female nature of being talkative and seeking for attention is behind these interruptions.

Question 9: Who are the most likely to remain silent during mixed-gender online conversations?

Gender	Student who stated males remain silent	Student who stated female remain silent	Percentage (%)	Total
Male	38	32	70%	70
Female	15	15	30%	30

Table 9: Remaining silent in mixed-gender conversations

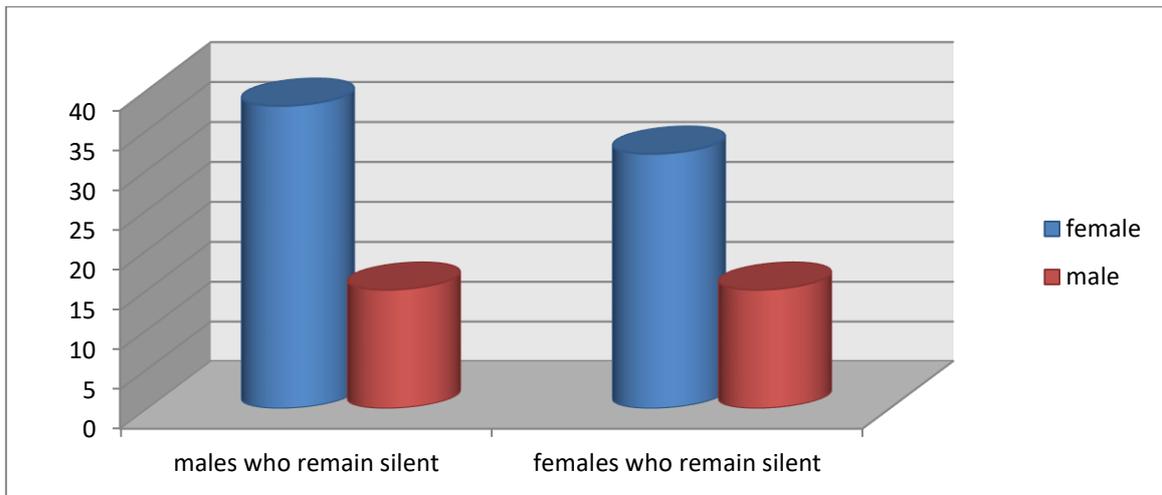
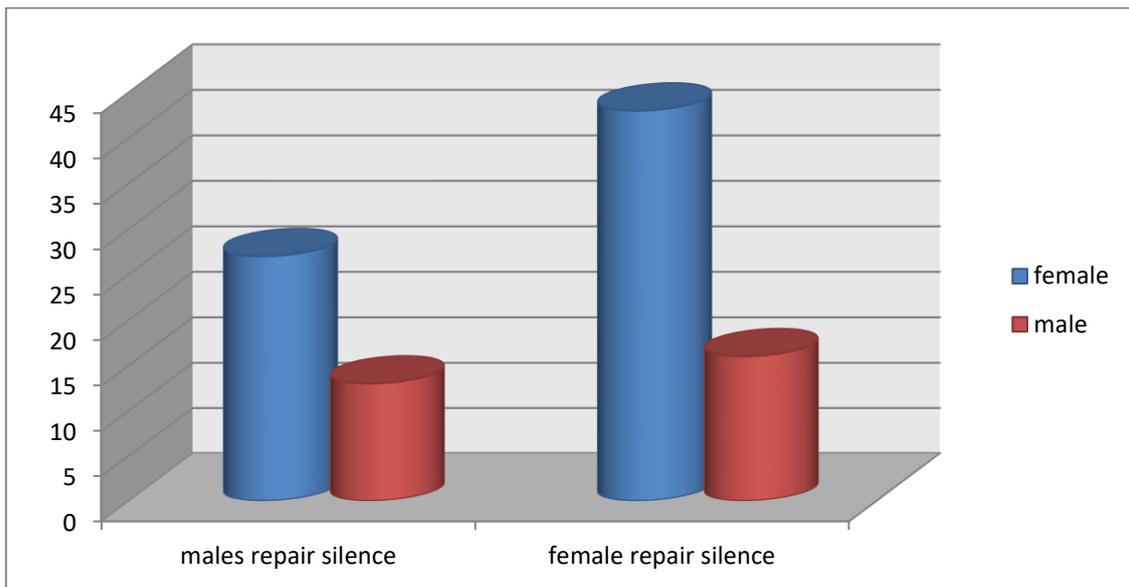


Figure 9: Remaining silent in mixed-gender conversations

(70%) females answered the questions while only (30%) males did, (38) females see that males remain silent while the other half of them which is (32) said females are the ones remain silent. Boys did agree with them, (30) boys split into half (15) stated that males are silent while the left (15) suggested that females remain silent during mixed-gender conversations. For the explanation to their answers some believe boys do not talk too much, while others see that it depends on the topics.

Question 10: Who is more likely to repair online conversation after silence?

Gender	Number of students said male who repair the silence	Number of students said that female repair the silence	Percentage (%)	Total
Female	27	43	70%	70
Male	13	16	29%	29

Figure 10: ???**Figure 10: repairing silence during mixed-gender conversations**

The majority of the students who answered this question were females. They constitute (70%) versus (29%) males, (27) females stated that males are the ones who repair the silence, obverse (13) males who thinks the same, however (43) females believe females should repair the silence during the mixed-gender conversations , the remain (16) males opted to (female repair the silence.

Question 11: Who avoids slang/taboo, aggressive language, and insults during online mixed-gender chat ?

Gender	Number of students stated that male avoid slang/taboo words	Number of students stated that Female avoid slang/taboo words	Percentage (%)	Total
Female	11	59	70%	70
Male	4	26	30%	30

Table 11: Avoiding slang and taboo language

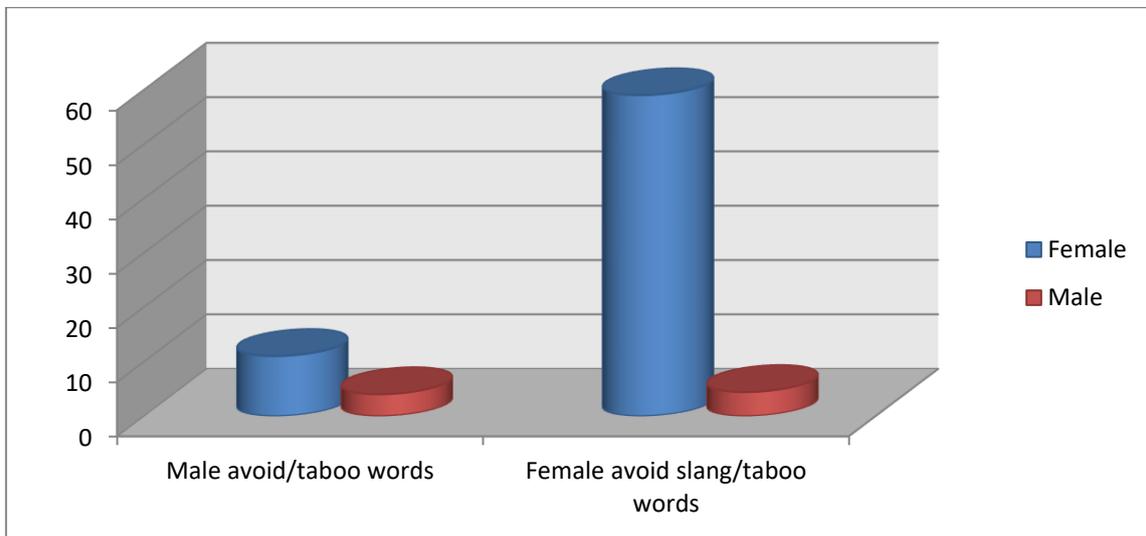
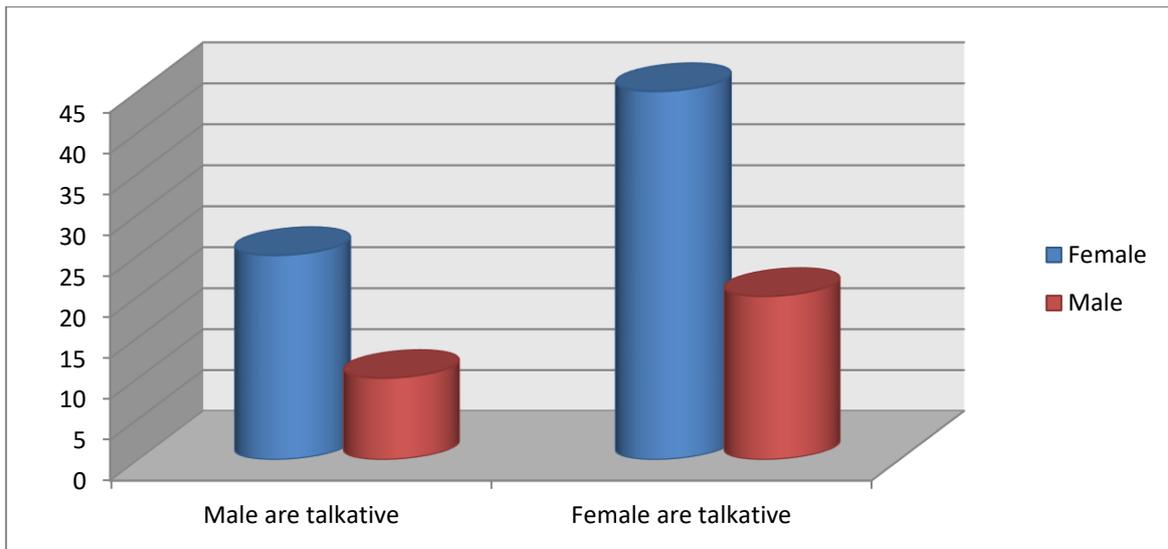


Figure 11: Avoiding slang and taboo language

(70%) females answered this question, (59) of them stated that they are the ones who avoid the slang and taboo language, however (11) of them think the opposite which is male avoid more taboo words. On the other hand, males with (30%) think the same way. To illustrate, (4) declared that males avoid the slang and taboo language while (26) of them believe females are more likely to avoid such a speech style.

Question 12: Who speaks a lot during online mixed-gender conversations?

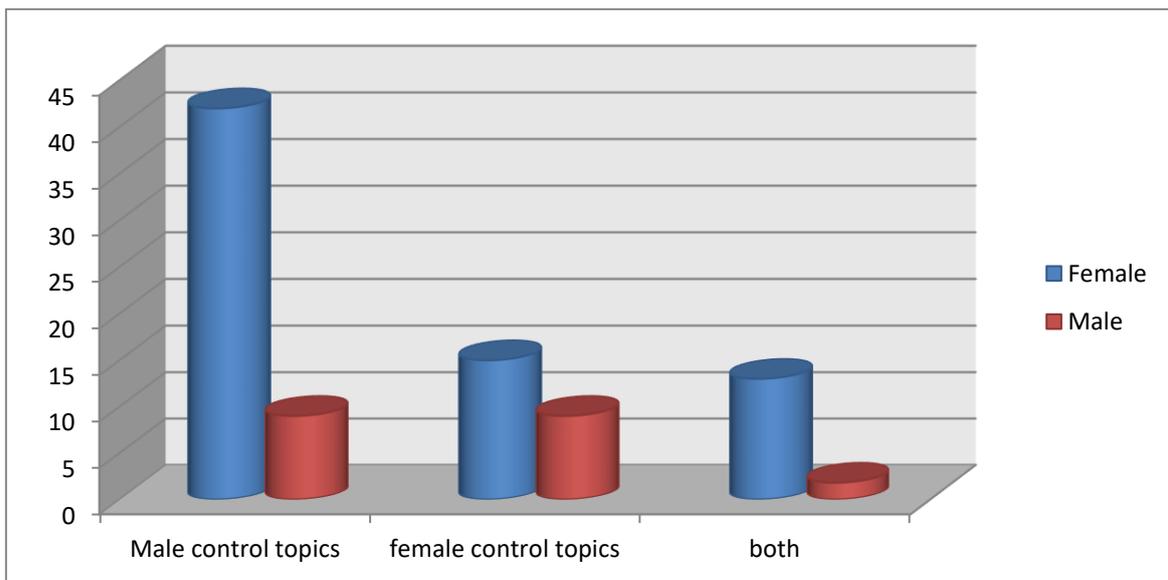
Gender	Number of students saying male are talkative	Number of student saying female are talkative	Percentage (%)	Total
Female	25	45	70%	70
Male	10	20	30%	30

Table 12: Speaking a lot during mixed-gender online conversations**Figure 12:** speaking more during mixed-gender online conversations

The answer to question is not different from the last one, when it comes to the numbers and the statistics, (70%) females answered the question. (45) of them agreed with the stereotype idea of women speaking a lot, while (25) of them think it is just a myth and in fact males talk more, whereas male with (30%) , (20) of them seem sure that females talk a lot more than them during the mixed gender conversations , but (10) of them completely disagree and stated that males are talkative.

Question 13: In online mixed-gender chat, who do you think control the topics?

Gender	Student who said male control the topic	Student who said female control topic	Student who said both	Percentage (%)	Total
Female	42	15	13	70%	70
Male	9	9	12	30%	30

Table 13: Controlling topics during mixed-gender online chat**Figure 13:** Controlling topics during mixed-gender online chat

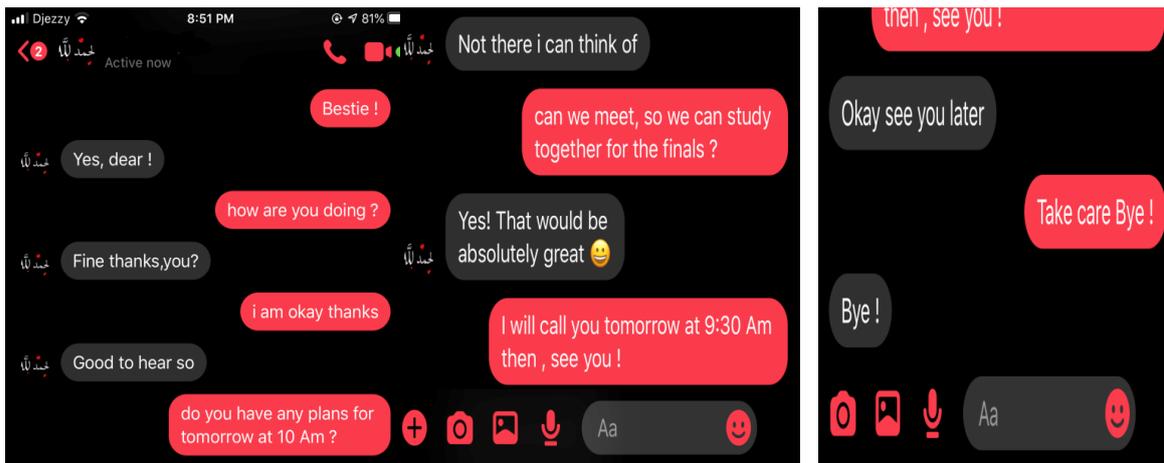
(70%) females have answered this question with three response , (42) of them believe that male are known by controlling the topics ,while (15) of female see themselves the ones who do. However (13) of them show no interest and stated that both genders can control the conversations. For the males (30%) the responses were equal (9) to (9) while the ones who think it is both are (12) .When it comes to the explanation, some said (males control the topic because they are dominant and because they are MEN!) and for the ones who said both can control they think it depends on the topic and according to the charisma the strong personality and here it can be both, males or females.

3.3.3. Online Conversations Analysis

After several readings of the collected online chats, nine excerpts were selected on the basis of the criteria identified in the second chapter and others. Here is a selection of students' online chats and their analysis using conversation analysis:

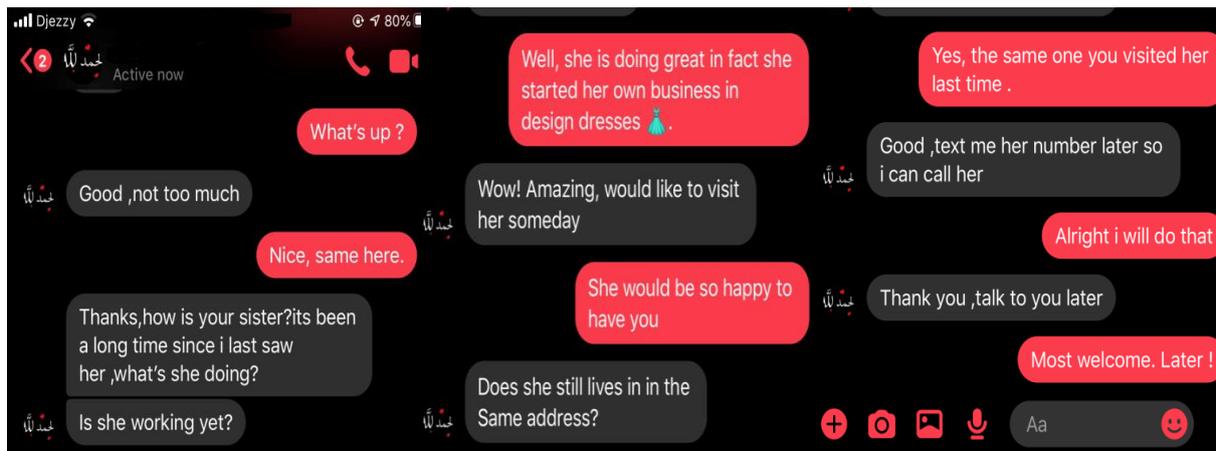
- *Red color:* male speaker
- *Black color:* female speaker

1. Adjacency pair



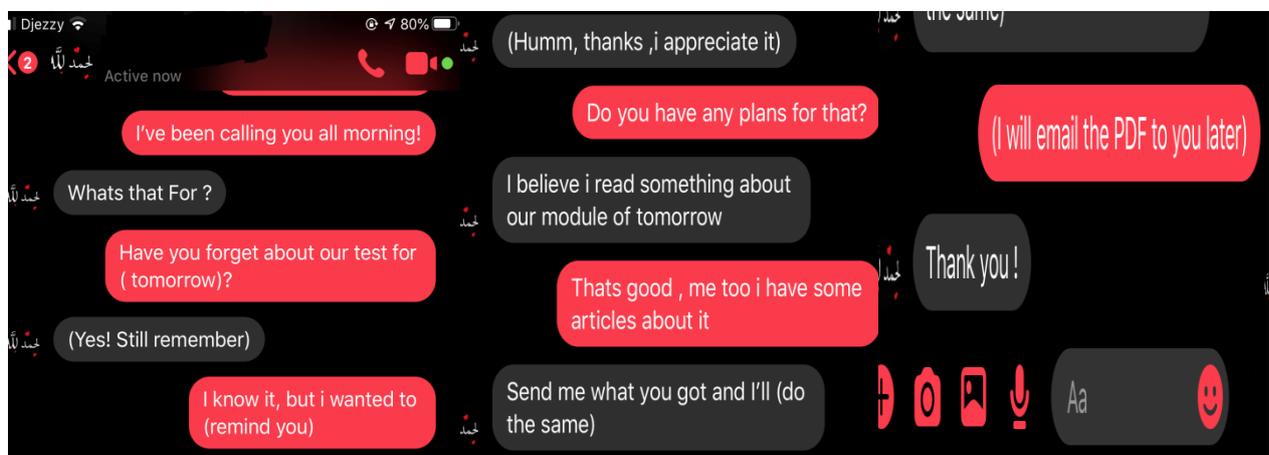
At first, we notice the presence of these words :(bestie – yes, dear) between both the sender and receiver (male and female), then they move to a (question – answer). After that, the male suggests an offer which the female accepts (offer- acceptance). The male is the one who most selected in the first pair and female took the second pair as we can see that the first part selected the second part in each of the pairs , next action as well, it thus sets up a transition relevance and expectation which the next speaker (female) in this case fulfills. Each one of the adjacency pairs is subsequent utterance which constitutes a conversational exchange; the utterance of speaker (male) makes a particular kind of response very likely. The last two sections were for closing the conversation, and it refers to the conversational procedure by which the two of them agree to discontinue the conversation.

2. Turn taking



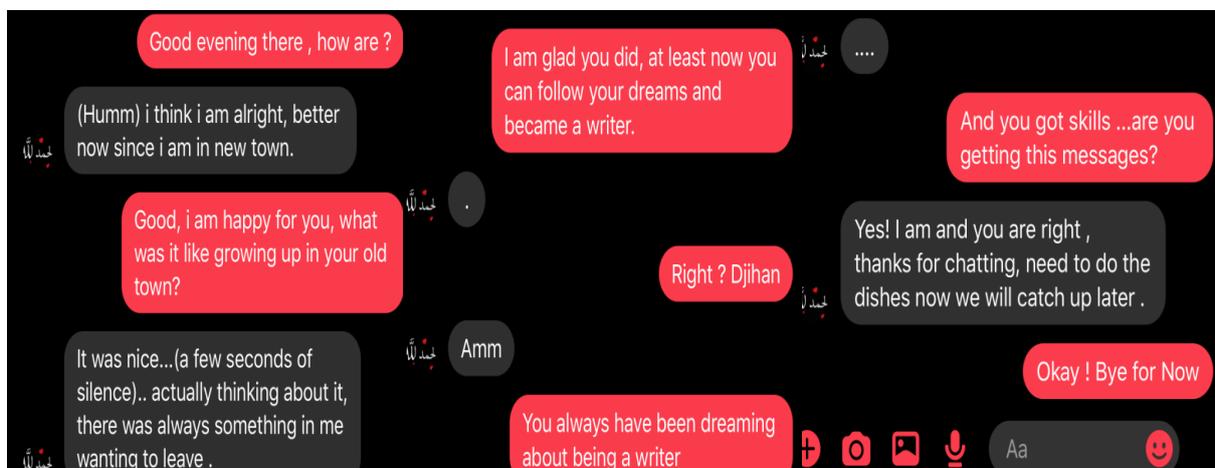
In the above mixed gender online chat, both male and female respondents use turn taking so orderly and in a good respectful way, in a manner in which orderly conversation normally takes place. The conversation is opened with a question and an answer; this represents the pairs of turn taking. It is noticed that the male is taking the turn orderly while female prefers self selected and other selected turn taking. Females are the most who do not respect the turn taking. The male speaker asks some questions and the female partner answers which an (other selection) is in turn taking, the way how the conversation is structured sets the turn for the next speaker. While in (how is your sister, what's she doing? she still working yet?) here it is a (self selected), the male speaker does not ask her to make an attribution, but she is interested in his sister so she speaking up when there is an opportunity . Turn taking in this case of online conversation is quite difficult to be recognized because there is no face to face interaction, no eye gaze or body movement or gestures.

3. Interruption



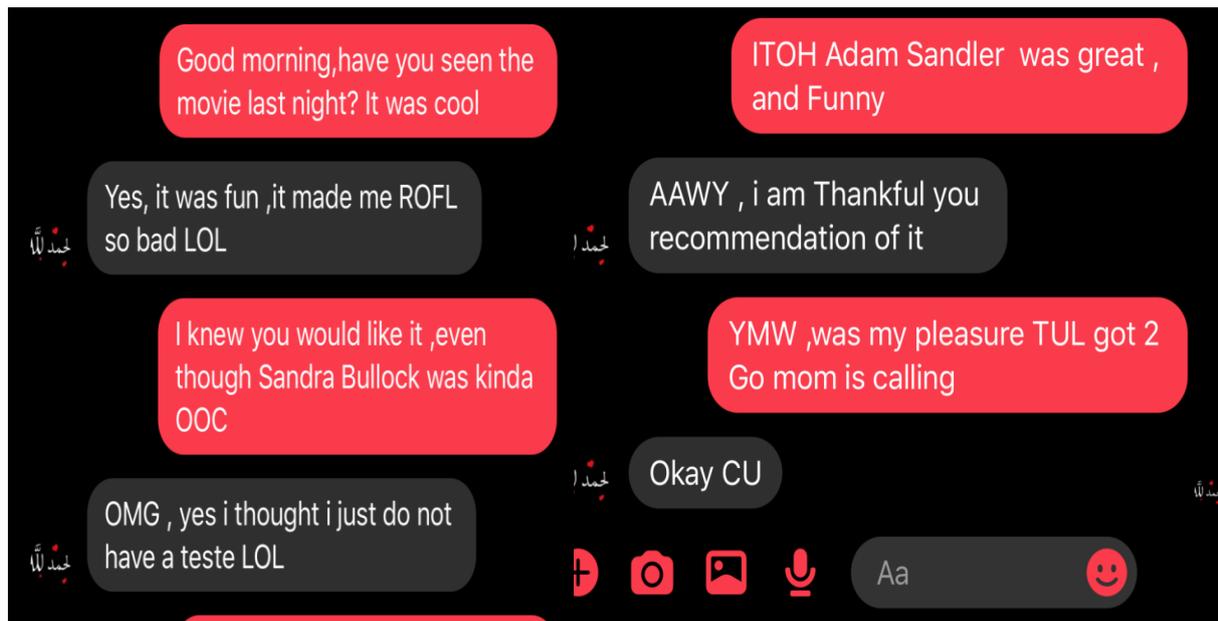
This passage between female and male speakers is about an educational topic “a test”. Both mixed gender participants want to show as much enthusiastic involvement as practicable, they tend to interrupt more but they do not have the intention to cut off the others. They simply have the feeling that an opinion or objection cannot wait for the convenient moment. As it is observed, the female partner is the one who interrupts first may be because she feels nervous due to time pressure, and also she interrupts in an effort to more efficiently move the conversation forward. To cut it short, the male interrupts her in order to silent her and make a closure to the conversation.

4. Silence



In this passage there is a good amount of silence during the conversation between male and female participants. The female participant experiences silence by using one of the technique (silence sounds) (hum) which been used to give more space for herself to think about an appropriate answer, and to show interest in the male’s question. In the second time, she got into her silence mode because she is given that space to talk so she is preparing her answer. In the last part we notice that the female respondent remains silent for long and the male is speaking instead, she goes into the silent mode again and the male speaker is making that particular conversation one sided means only interested in talking, also that made her got bored, and that is clear when she prefers ending the conversation right away.

5. Abbreviation



In this online chat, male and female participants use abbreviated forms. Generally people use abbreviations to make the conversation faster and make comments immediate. Worthy of notice is these abbreviated forms used by both parts of the conversation:

ROFL = rolling on the floor laughing

ITOH = in the other hand

LOL = laughing out loud

AAWY = absolutely agree with you

OOC = out of character

YMW = you are most welcome

OMG = oh my god

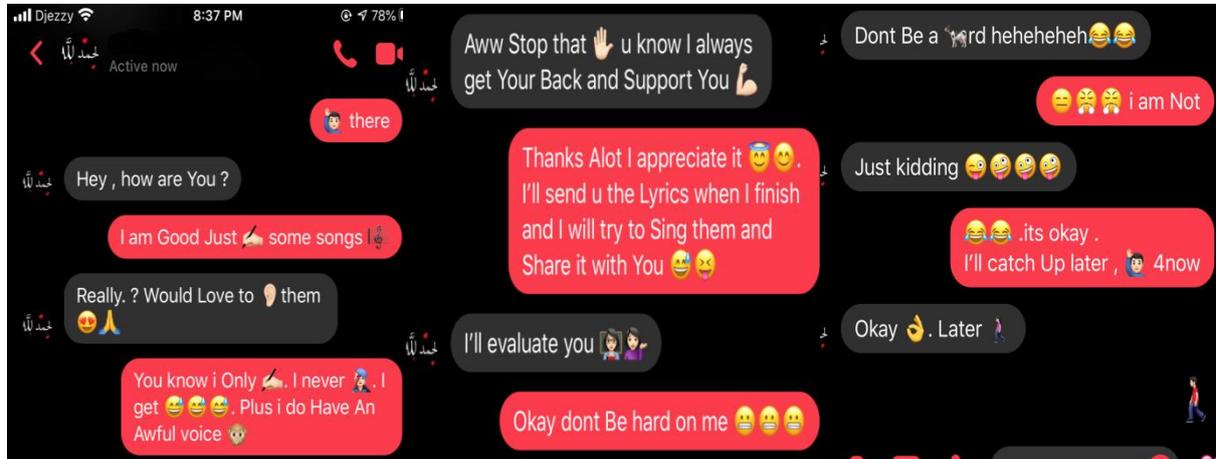
TUL = talk to you later

LOL= laugh out loud

CU = see you

6. Emoticons

Emoticons are symbols used together to shape icons that represent emotions, emoticons represent cuteness. They can be found in different colorful styles to represent smiles, surprise,...etc.

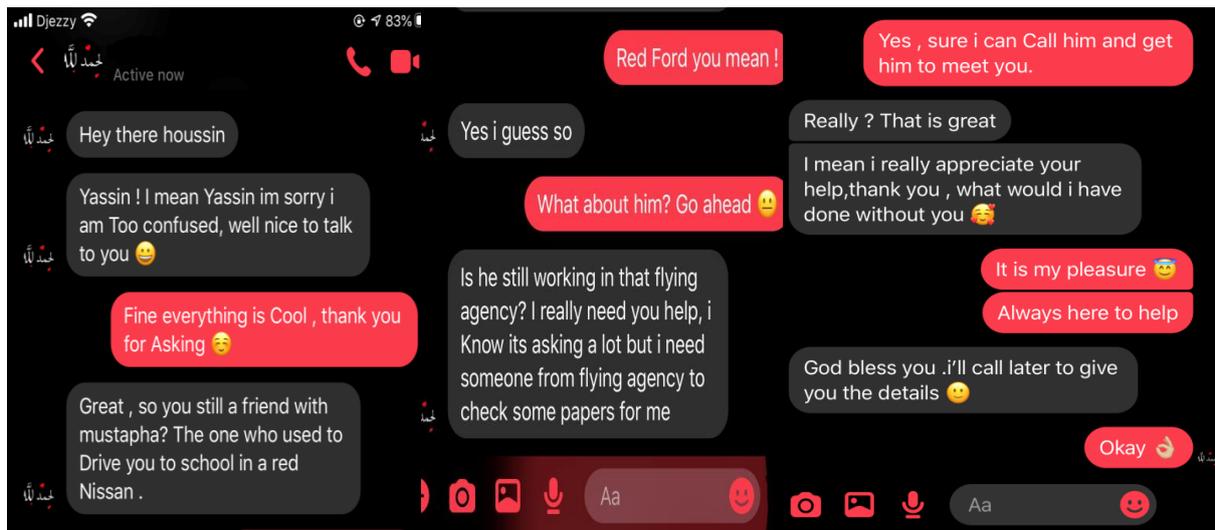


In this passage, the conversation style is different than everything above, no words or expression, only emojis or what is called emoticons. Emoticons are used when both participants want to say something sardonic such as a devastating observation written with irony, that a lesser mind might interpret as criticism. Emoticons they are more abstract and, hence make the chat look subtle and intelligent. As it appears, both of them used the emojis to create pictorial icons that generally display an emotion or sentiment and, this represents facial expressions by the keyboard. When the sender (male or female) inserts an emoticon into a message, it helps the recipient better understand the meaning s/he wants to convey.

7. Controlling the conversation :

After having a careful insight into selected excerpts, we notice that controlling topic is not something to assert that any of the genders monopolize most. Controlling the conversation depends on the nature of the topic itself and sometimes it is about the confident and strong persona during the conversation.

8. Politeness



This selected online chat is mainly about politeness strategies both negative and positive. It seems to us that both male and female used politeness when they can. This example (everything is cool thanks for asking) is response with positive politeness for establishing a positive conversation. We see that multiple times (that's great /I really appreciate your help /it is my pleasure to help), and all these instances reflect compliments and respect for the recipient. We can conclude here that no specific gender use more politeness strategies during mixed gender conversation than the other.

9. Repair

From the last selected passages, it can be clearly observed that a repair is happening during mixed-gender conversation. For example, at the start (...houssin, ...Yassin) said the wrong name, then rapidly he tried to fix it (self-initiated) so he tried to clear his position. This occurs another time with the same speaker (that's great) instead of thanking the other speaker, but he quickly realize that and rephrase his sentence (I mean I really appreciate your help...), so repair is an attempt to resolve a mistake or mis-phrasing a sentence which can happen to both genders.

3.4. Discussion of the Findings

The current study arrives at many conclusions drawn from the data analysis outlined previously. To begin with, the findings validate what was hypothesized about the main research questions. They confirm that females and males use different conversational styles

(including repair, politeness, abbreviations...) in their online chats. This interpretation supports the claim that the social construction of gender is an important variable (factor) is shaping those conversational differences,

Male and female students study together, communicate and explore many educational and personal concerns regardless of their gender and mixed-sex discussions. It was also clear from their agreement that there are many explanations for engaging and welcoming with the other. However, it is undeniable that the degree of education represents the sensitivity of the students about variations in speech styles between men and women. Feeling the difference between male and female speech means that, when communicating with the opposite gender, a person tends to change their speech so that they do not notice the difference. This may also be that social expectations hamper these discrepancies, that is, what culture has learned. Communication is thus not only effective when students are aware of differences of this nature. To interact with the opposite sex simply means paying attention to the language they are using. For example, female students appear to have louder voices representing a social standard liability that interprets or associates a deep voice to authority.

The results have also showed that gender differences influence the attitudes and values of the students. Such stereotype about speech style however received separate views and opinions from male and female students. Informants shared the agreements on such a reality, starting from the assumption that women are talkative. But doubt is better than overconfidence; such a claim needs to be scientifically verified therefore.

Furthermore, the fields of conversation among members of the group are stereotypically established. Initiating a topic is depending on the speaker who is interested on that topic itself and does not matter whether the speaker is a male or a female. Each gender has its own topics of interest. To clarify, men may be more likely to talk about objective disputes, material and mechanical items and events, while women may be more likely to talk about individuals, relationships, clothes, feelings and children Hence, those characteristics that identify each gender are secret and unknown to individuals unless they frequently interact with the opposite gender.

It is not proven that preferring formal and a respectful mode of language when talking is done by one gender more than another. Therefore, the gender roles lead to the recognition of desired attitudes in and against a woman or man in a specific community. As for the interruptions, the responses revealed inconsistencies between men and women. The responses

for each gender tend to be biased and as a matter of fact, it is proven that interference is carried out more by women than by men.

For accommodating speech, it seems to be more like a subconscious process that allows the respondents to simultaneously shift their way of speaking like being more or less prestigious, using taboo words and slang, seeming more or less congruent with others. As it is noted, males display more accommodation for convergence than females.

In conclusion, since communication is the intercourse by words, letters or messages and occurs between two persons or group of people, so that means the role of speaking is happening exchangeably, that means there is no room to assert that one of both genders control the conversation in any way.

3.5. Conclusion

The present chapter describes the practical part of the analysis. It offers an interpretation of the data collected from both the questionnaire and an analysis of the selected online chats. However, no matter how much one analyses and describes a field, something of its essential nature remains unsaid. We hope therefore that those who read this chapter will be more able to question the role of gender variable in shaping the ways conversational styles differ in mixed gender online chats.

General Conclusion

There can be no difference in any language itself. But language can be used by people to achieve a particular purpose which reflects the personal or social values. Restriction of the use of language because of the social environment creates gender difference mostly. From the present study, it is clear that male and female languages are quite different. This difference occurs mostly in vocabulary use, voice and tone, syntactic structure and style of using language. Moreover, there are some common differences and some common similarities in using language. The research study shows that in recent time the youth are practicing these differences in a large extent. While uttering a language their different ways of using language reflects the gender difference. The using of language differently also creates many variations in communication.

The overall results of this research show that language usage is related to the norms of society and the attitudes of individuals which are controlled by those norms. In addition, there are several other social factors that affect the use of language between the two sexes. Indeed the results also show the socio-cultural framework Communities of speech influence the identification of both sexes. It thus also affects their construction, use of sentences, and expressions.

Such findings indicate henceforth that females are more attached for regular types. In other words, female speakers have been found to use forms considered better or more appropriate than those used by men, and to use other languages, including French, which is one of the most distinguishing distinctions between males and females. Furthermore, the findings of this piece of work show that women also talk for the purpose of creating an appropriate atmosphere for their intimate relations. They also differ in their selection of the topic, they want to discuss. In addition, these findings reveal that women sometimes engage in conversations without a clear objective. Our findings are consistent with Lakoff 's view that gender differences in language usage reflect the unequal status of females and their position in society.

In addition, the findings also show that females have more positive attitudes towards discourse strategies than men do. Another point that needs to be taken into account is that every society has developed certain stereotypes. These stereotypes become part of the norms of society and are used to govern the use of language by its members.

Some studies relate gender differences to the social position of males and females in their society in the sense that men and women live in different worlds and, therefore, they have different cultures. That is to say, there have always been differences between men and woman from the day of birth as they dress differently, act differently, have different opinions, and what is more commonly noticed is that they have and are aware of the variety of dissimilarities in their speech.

Finally, it should be pointed out that doubt is better than overconfidence, the way is still endless for researchers to disclose more and more detailed difference between male and female language.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire

“We are currently working on *gender differences in conversational styles: a conversational analysis of mixed gender online chat*. It would be grateful if you answer the following questions”. Tick the appropriate box for your opinion about each statement please.

❖ **Gender:** Female Male

1. How often do you chat online?

- For hours per day
- Daily
- Rarely

Other (please specify)

2. Do you prefer participating in same gender or mixed gender online chat?

- Same-gender online chat
- Mixed gender online chat

Say why? (Please specify)

3. Do you use the same speech style when chatting online with male and/or female partners?

- Yes
- No

Other (please specify)

4. Do you notice any conversational differences when it comes to online mixed- gender chat?

- Yes
- No

5. If yes, could these conversational differences lead to misunderstanding in communication?

Yes

No

6. Who are more likely to initiate topics during online mixed-gender chat?

Males

Females

7. Who do you think interrupt more during online mixed- gender conversations?

Males

Females

Say why? (please specify)

6. Who are the most likely to remain silent during mixed-gender online conversations?

Males

Females

Say why please?

7. Who are more likely to repair online conversation after silence?

Males

Females

8. Who avoid slang / taboo, aggressive language and insults during online mixed-gender chat?

Males

Females

9. Who speak more during online mixed-gender conversations?

Males

Females

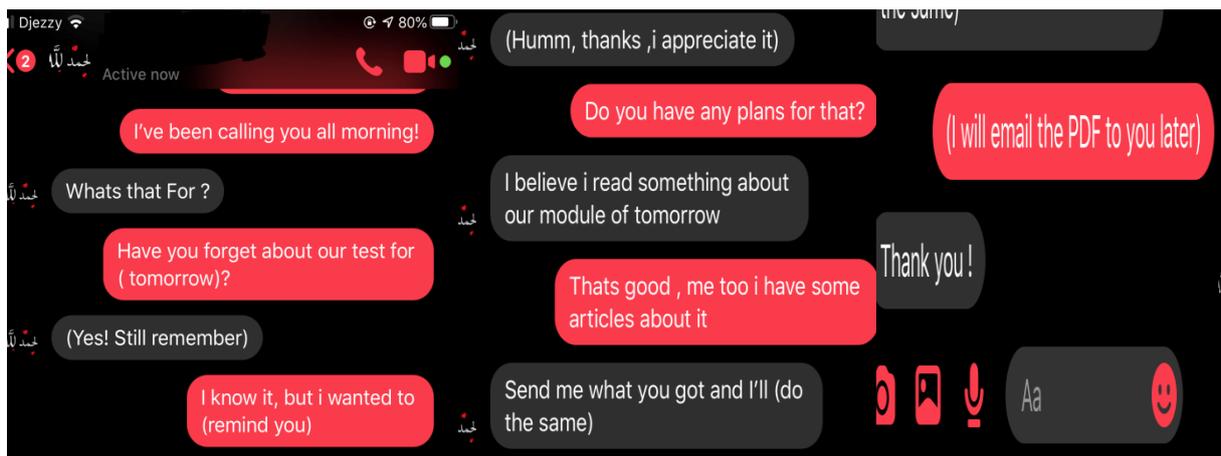
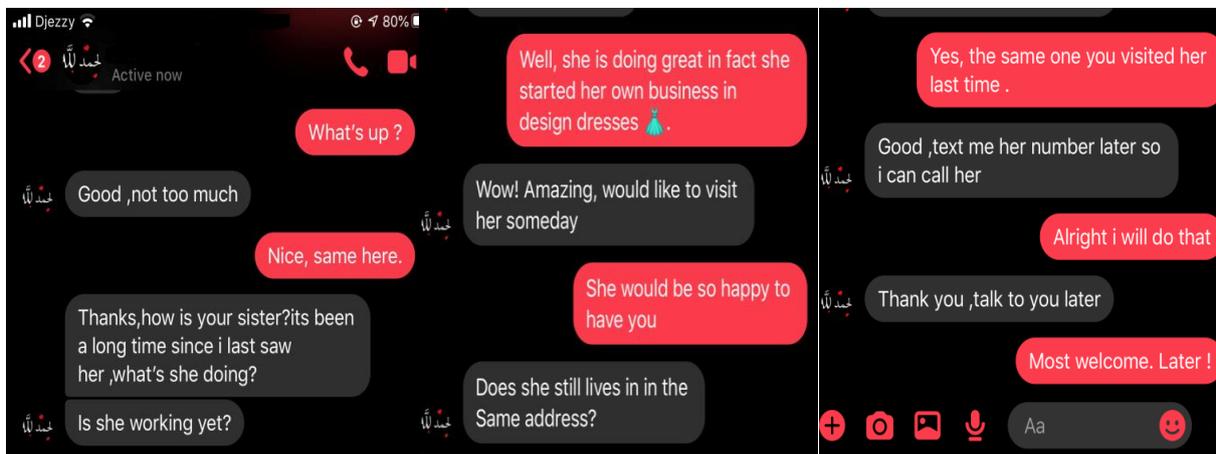
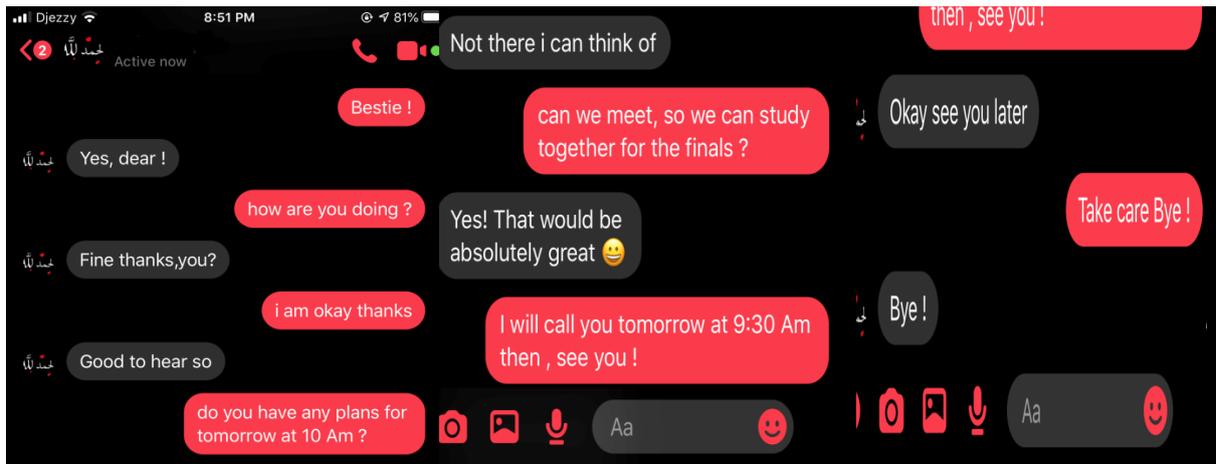
10. In online mixed-gender chat, who do you think control the topic?

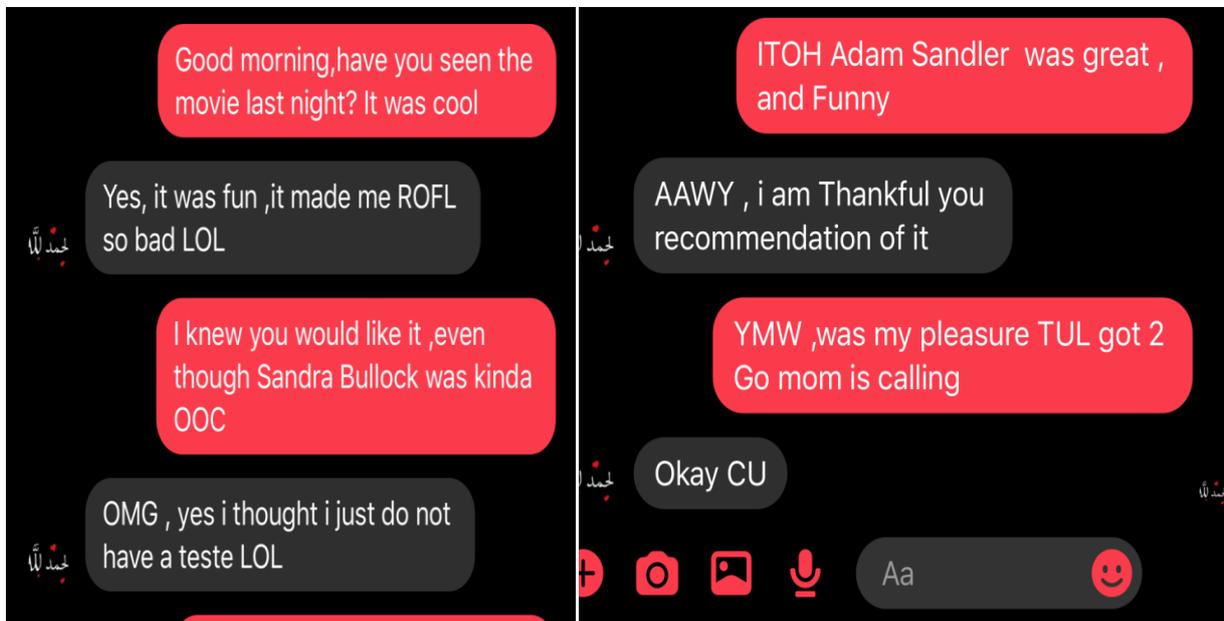
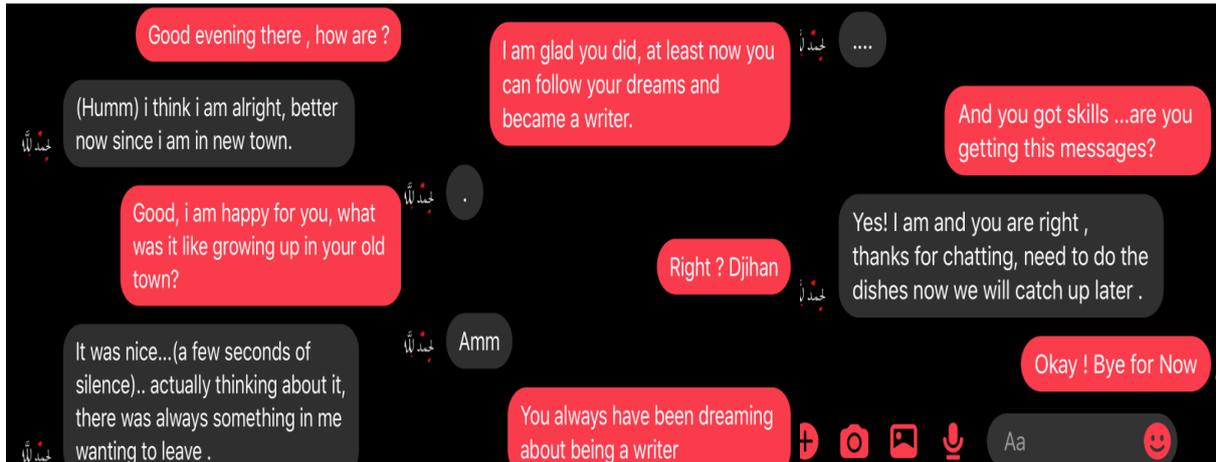
Males

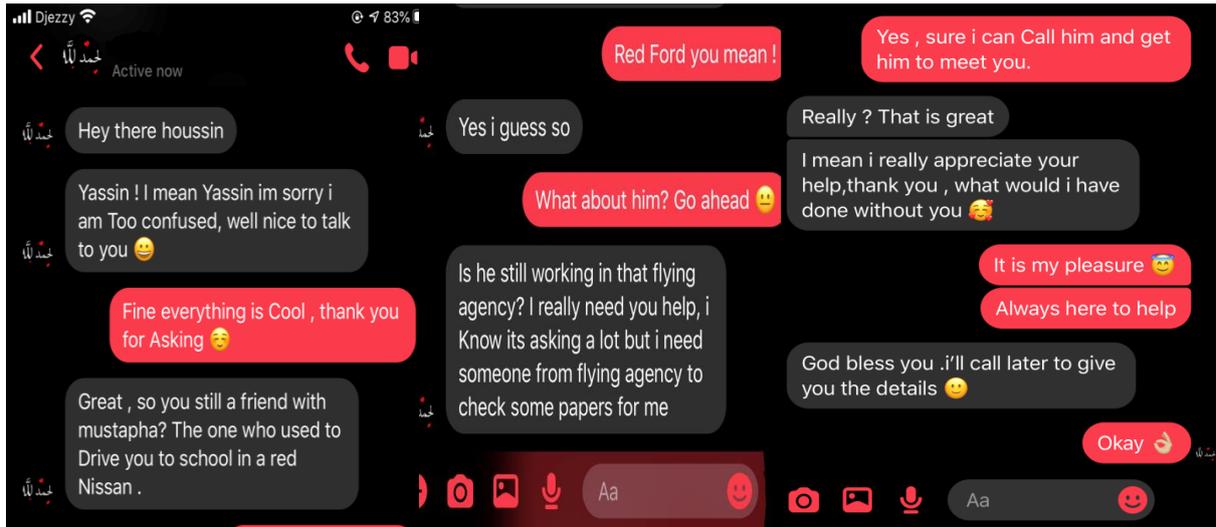
Females

Say why please?

Appendix 02: Excerpts of online mixed gender chat







الملخص

أصبحت الدردشة عبر الإنترنت ضرورة للحياة اليومية. إن أنماط المحادثة المستخدمة في هذا النوع من التفاعل الاجتماعي تعكس حتماً الاختلافات بين الجنسين وتحافظ عليها. وبالتالي ، فإن البحث الحالي هو محاولة لفحص اختلافات أنماط المحادثة في الدردشة عبر الإنترنت المختلطة بين الجنسين واكتشاف الأسباب الكامنة وراء استخدامها. الهدف من هذا البحث هو تقديم أدلة إضافية على تأثير متغيرات الجنس على استخدام أنماط المحادثة المختلفة في المحادثات الرسمية وغير الرسمية. ولهذه الغاية ، اختيرت طريقة تجمع بين النهجين النوعي والكمي. على هذا الأساس ، يسعى الباحثون لاختبار صحة ما يفترض من خلال تضمين مجموعة متنوعة من التقنيات المنهجية المعروفة. إلى جانب طريقة ملاحظة المشاركين ، يتم اختيار تسعة مقتطفات من الدردشات عبر الإنترنت لتحليلها باستخدام تحليل المحادثة ، ويتم توزيع مائة استبيان عبر الإنترنت على طلاب وطالبات ماجستير السنة الثانية بجامعة ابن خلدون. تكشف نتائج البحث أن المجيبين يستخدمون أساليب محادثة مختلفة في محادثتهم اليومية على الإنترنت (بما في ذلك المقاطعة ، والتأدب ، والإصلاح ...) ، وذلك نتيجة العديد من الأسباب بما في ذلك البناء الاجتماعي والثقافي للجنس على وجه الخصوص.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الجنس ، اللغة ، أنماط المحادثة ، الدردشة عبر الإنترنت وتحليل المحادثة

Resumé :

Le chat en ligne est devenu une nécessité de la vie quotidienne. Les styles de conversation utilisés dans ce type d'interaction sociale reflètent et maintiennent inévitablement les différences entre les sexes. La présente étude tente donc à la fois d'examiner les différences de styles de conversation dans le chat en ligne mixte et d'explorer les raisons de leur utilisation. L'objectif de cette recherche est de fournir des preuves supplémentaires de l'influence de la variable du genre sur l'utilisation de différents styles de conversation dans les conversations formelles et informelles. À cette fin, une méthode mixte combinant des approches qualitatives et quantitatives est choisie. Sur cette base, les chercheurs cherchent à tester la validité de l'hypothèse en incluant une variété de techniques méthodologiques bien connues. Outre la méthode d'observation des participants, neuf extraits de chats en ligne sont sélectionnés pour être analysés à l'aide de l'analyse des conversations et cent questionnaires en ligne sont distribués aux étudiants de deuxième année de master, hommes et femmes, de l'université Ibn Khaldoun. Les résultats de la recherche révèlent que les répondants utilisent différents styles de conversation dans leur chat en ligne quotidien (y compris l'interruption, la politesse, la réparation...), et ce pour de nombreuses raisons, notamment la construction sociale et culturelle du genre.

Mots clés: sexe, langue, styles de conversation, discussion en ligne et analyse de conversation.