

 <p>ISSN NO. 2320-5407</p>	<p>Journal Homepage: -www.journalijar.com</p> <p>INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ADVANCED RESEARCH (IJAR)</p> <p>Article DOI:10.21474/IJAR01/6067 DOI URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.21474/IJAR01/6067</p>	 <p>INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ADVANCED RESEARCH (IJAR) ISSN 2320-5407 Journal Homepage: http://www.journalijar.com Journal DOI:10.21474/IJAR01</p>
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

RESEARCH ARTICLE

SEXISM AND VARIATIONS IN THE USE OF LANGUAGE.

Chowdhury Omar Sharif.

Senior Lecturer, English, East West University, Bangladesh

Manuscript Info

Manuscript History

Received: 15 October 2017

Final Accepted: 17 November 2017

Published: December 2017

Abstract

This paper tries to focus on the use of language of men and women through concentrating on sexism and variations. In this paper, the research tends to make an attempt to explore, examine and evaluate the difference in language choice from different students of universities situated at Dhaka city. Through the analysis of difference, the study also uncovers and evaluates the existing attitude and acceptance level of variation among the students from different disciplines.

Copy Right, IJAR, 2017,. All rights reserved.

Introduction:-

Language is a symbol of human civilization, a conveyor of a culture, a product of the social development and an important tool of people's communication and understanding. Human being is the carrier of the language; all social activities of people, including the ways of thinking, social attitudes and values in all aspects of life, all are reflected in the language. So the sexual sense of language exists in and behind a language in a profound and complicated way. Sexual language is not only the reflection of male or female's knowledge on society, culture and history etc. with respect to language, but also the regulation and confinement of sexual language by society, culture and history etc.

Sexual language (male / female language or men's and women's language) refers to that which is usually used by men and women or that which is characteristic of gender differences. In the sixties and the seventies of last century, a number of linguists and scholars used some principles and knowledge of sociolinguistics to research women's language and found that men and women have differences in the language

A major topic in sociolinguistics is the difference between the structures, vocabularies, and ways of using particular languages and the social roles of the men and women who speak these languages. Usually men and women who speak particular language use it in different ways, these differences arise from the structure of the language and any difference that exists simply reflect the ways in which the sexes related to each other in that society. It is also questioned if it is possible to describe a particular language as 'sexist' or we should reserve such a description for those who use that language.

These issues have generated a considerable amount of thought and discussions in the last decades of twentieth century. They are also very emotional issues for many who have chosen either to write on them or to discuss them, and that they should be so is quite understandable. However, I will attempt to find out what some of the underlying facts are and to avoid the kinds of rhetoric and dialectic that characterize much of the discussion of 'sexism in language,' a topic which often seems to invite 'large' arguments based on 'small' data.

Numerous observers have described women's speech as being different from that of men (Baron, 1986). It is also observed that there is a bias here: men's speech usually provides the norm against which women's speech is judged. We could just as well ask how men's speech differs from that of women, but investigators have not usually gone about the task of looking at differences in that way. Any view too that women's speech is trivial (Kipers, 1987), gossip-laden, corrupt, illogical, idle, euphemistic, or deficient is highly suspect; nor is it necessarily more precise,

cultivated, or stylish – or even less profane (De Klerk, 1992, and Hughes, 1992) – than men’s speech. Such judgments lack solid evidentiary support.

Phonological differences between the speech of men and women have been noted in a variety of languages. The notion of difference in the area of morphology and vocabulary, many of the studies have focused on English. This notion can easily be identified in the ‘phatic use’ of language which is used to open talk-exchanges and to close them and my study has a great interest to analyze this type of conversations of men and women to which are the strong evidences of cultural influence behind the distinctions.

One of the consequences of such work is that there is now a greater awareness in some parts of the community, subtle and sometimes not so subtle; distinctions are made in the vocabulary choice used to describe men and women. Consequently, we can understand why there is frequent insistence that neutral words be used as much as possible, as in describing occupations e.g., *chairperson*, *letter carrier*, *salesclerk*, and *actor* (as in ‘She’s an actor’). If language tends to reflect social structure and social structure is changing, so that judgeships surgical appointments, nursing positions, and primary school teaching assignments are just as likely to be held by women as men (or by men as women), such changes might be expected to follow inevitably. This kind of work does two things: it draws our attention to existing inequities, and it encourages us to make the necessary changes by establishing new categorizations (e.g., *Ms*), and suggesting modifications for old terms (e.g., changing *policeman* to *police officer* and *chairman* to *chairperson*).

Gender roles have always been an important issue in analyzing human behavior. In order to understand the interaction between men and women, it is useful to have a closer look at conversations between male and female speakers and to analyze how they communicate with each other.

Rationale:-

Language variation is considered as an important factor in various fields such as sociolinguistics, feminism etc. Although a lot of empirical studies have been carried out in this field, most of the work has concentrated on English rather than other languages. In Bangladesh, research in this field is rare. One of the very works on this topic is a chapter in RajibHumayun’s book “ShomajBhasaBiggyan” However this chapter deals with sexism at the lexical level only. In this paper, the research tends to make an attempt to explore, examine and evaluate the difference in language choice from different students of universities situated at Dhaka city. Through the analysis of difference, the study also uncovers and evaluates the existing attitude and acceptance level of variation among the students from different disciplines. Evaluation is important because it is a useful tool for obtaining feedback about our condition of social interaction.

Scope and Limitations of the Study:-

This paper contains the research on a very limited area. It suggests the area concentrates on language variation of few universities of Dhaka city and especially the universities located near Dhanmondi area. This study has only focus on conversations from three levels of communications such as direct conversation, telephony conversation and social media network (Facebook) conversation with is rather an indirect conversation. As both time and place is limited for the study it can be doubted as a complete research work but this paper can be used as a very useful material and guideline for further study in this field.

Chapter Two

Literature Review:-

This chapter provides a critical overview of the theoretical, analytical, and practical questions prevalent in the study of the structural, sociolinguistic, and attitudinal dimensions of language difference between man and woman. In doing so, it reviews a range of empirical studies from around the world, focusing mainly on those which offer a relevant theoretical background for this study of language variation.

Although the difference in language between men and women has been widely discussed, most of the literature on the subject concentrates on two main theories. The first is the “dominance approach” (supported by Lakoff, 1975; Fishman, 1983), which claims that the difference in language between men and women is a consequence of male dominance and female subordination. In this view, women are a suppressed minority group. Supporters of the “difference approach” (Coates, 1986; Tannen, 1990) on the other hand, believe that men and women belong to different subcultures and that any linguistic differences can be attributed to cultural differences.

During the last few decades, rigid role patterns have changed and as a result gender notions have changed as well. Men and women are increasingly becoming each other's equals in areas of education and profession. This implies that, in Western society anyway, the concept of masculinity no longer exclusively brings to mind the image of tough guys who work all day and leave the upbringing of their children to their wives; it can now also be associated with men who take care of children and do domestic chores. Men are encouraged to open up and share their feelings, whereas this was quite unusual in the times of rigid role patterns. Women can now work in almost every profession they aspire to, and they can continue to work after having children without being regarded as bad mothers. As language helps people to create their identity and their gender, it makes sense to assume that when people's ideas of masculinity and femininity change, their language changes as well. My hypothesis is that the language of men and women is becoming more similar as a result of changing gender notions.

Until recently, the language of men and that of women were perceived as being very different from each other. Specifically, male use of language was considered the norm and women's language was deviant from that norm, thus being regarded as inferior to that of men. Following this belief, it has been claimed that there is a typical female language. According to Lakoff (1975) this style is marked by the use of certain linguistic features such as hedging devices, tag questions, intensifiers and qualifiers, so-called "trivial lexis", "empty" adjectives and rising intonation on declaratives. The link between these markers is their alleged common function in communication: they weaken or mitigate the force of an utterance. Lakoff's characterization of language suits the rigid role patterns that existed decades ago. More recent research has shown, however, that women's language is not as weak and tentative as Lakoff suggested. O'Barr and Atkins (Coates, 1998) have shown in their study of language used in American courts that the mainly female characteristics of language as described by Lakoff were in fact not characteristic of female language. They suggest that this use of language should not be called "female language" but "powerless language" as it is characteristic of people in powerless positions (either because of their relatively low social status or because of lack in experience in the courtroom). They suggest that this use of language by female speakers is a reflection of American society, in which women often have subordinate positions. Likewise, Harris (1984) argues that people's use of tag questions does not express uncertainty or a request for confirmation as was commonly assumed, but that it actually reflects a very powerful act in that questions demand answers. From this point of view, women are not tentative and insecure but authoritative and powerful.

Although in my opinion men and women are equal and should not be looked upon as coming from different subcultures as is claimed by supporters of the "difference approach", I do think that there is a difference in the way language is used by men and women. In my opinion this is due to the way boys and girls are raised linguistically. However, as gender notions change, the traditional upbringing of children may also change. In order to test this hypothesis, I have taken the 'small talk' device used by men and women as a case study. 'Small talks' are used to start any conversation like "hey buddy, wat's up?". Holmes (1996) claims that they may express that the speaker is not committed to what s/he is saying and that they can be used to soften or mitigate utterances in order not to hurt the addressee's feelings. As 'small talk' devices have often been considered a characteristic of female language mainly, e.g. by Lakoff (1975) and Fishman (1983). If the language of men and women is becoming more similar, as the changing gender notions might lead us to expect, it could be possible that men and women are becoming more alike in their 'phatic use' of language. This would mean that the difference between "powerful" and "powerless" language as described by O'Barr and Atkins is diminishing.

Although men and women, from a given social class, belong to the same speech community, they may use different linguistic forms. The linguistic forms used by women and men contrast to some extent in all speech communities. For example, Holmes (1993) mentions the Amazon Indians' language as an extreme example, where the language used by a child's mother is different from that used by her father and each tribe is distinguished by a different language. In this community, males and females speak different languages.

Less dramatic are communities where men and women speak the same language, but some distinct linguistic features occur in the speech of women and men. These differences range from pronunciation or morphology to vocabulary. Holmes (1993) refers to Japanese, where different words, with the same meaning, are used distinctively by men and women. For example, in this language when a woman wants to say 'water', she uses the word 'ohiya' whereas a man uses the word 'miza'.

Furthermore, women tend to use the standard language more than men do. Climate (1997) believes that females generally use speech to develop and maintain relationships. They use language to achieve intimacy. Tannen (1990)

states that women speak and hear a language of connection and intimacy, while men speak and hear a language of status and independence. Tannen (ibid) also states that such a communication resembles cross-cultural communication where the style of communication is different. According to Kaplan and Farrell (1994) and Leet-Peregrini (1980) messages (e-mails) produced by women are short and their participation is driven by their desire to keep the communication going rather than the desire to achieve consensus.

The investigation and identification of differences between men's and women's speech date back across time. Until 1944, no specific piece of writing on gender differences in language was published. As stated by Grey (1998), it was in the 1970s that comparison between female cooperativeness and male competitiveness in linguistic behavior began to be noticed. Mulac, et al., (2001) concentrated on the term 'gender as culture' and ran an empirical study on linguistic differences between men and women. Swallowe (2003) reviewed the literature on differences between men and women in the use of media for interpersonal communication, etc.

From among these researchers, Lakoff (1975) proposed theories on the existence of women's language. Her book '*Language and Woman's Place*' has served as a basis for much research on the subject. She mentions ten features for women's language. As cited in Holmes (1993, p. 314), these ten features are as follows:

1. Lexical hedges or fillers, e.g. you know, sort of, ...
2. Tag questions, e.g. she is very nice, isn't she?
3. Rising intonation on declaratives, e.g. it's really good.
4. Empty adjectives, e.g. divine, charming, cute.
5. Precise color terms, e.g. magenta, aquamarine.
6. Intensifiers such as just and so.
7. Hypercorrect grammar, e.g. consistent use of standard verb forms.
8. Super-polite forms, e.g. indirect requests, euphemisms.
9. Avoidance of strong swear words, e.g. fudge, my goodness.
10. Emphatic stress, e.g. it was a BRILLIANT performance.

Lakoff's hypotheses have both pros and cons. Men's language as put by Lakoff is assertive, adult, and direct, while women's language is immature, hyper-formal or hyper-polite and non-assertive. But such statements have their own pros. Michaelson and Poll (2001), for example, emphasized on the dynamic nature of speech of men and women by stating that 'rule of politeness' governing face-to-face conversations seems to be less binding when there is no physical presence. They also state that it is this bodily presence of conversational dyads that lead to a weakening of gender roles. While analyzing the electronic mails of a number of men and women, Bunz and Campbell (2002) stated that social categories such as age, gender, etc. do not influence politeness accommodation in e-mail. Canary and Hause (1993) as cited in Mulac (1998) have argued that meaningful differences in the communication strategies of men and women have not been found with any degree of consistency.

Despite such and many other similar observations, Lakoff believes that the use of tag questions by women is the sign of uncertainty. Dubois and Crouch (1975) launched a critique on Lakoff's claims, especially on tag questions. They examined the use of tag questions within the context of a professional meeting and concluded that at least in that context males used tag questions more than females did. Their conclusion was that Lakoff's hypothesis might be biased in favor of highly stereotyping beliefs or folk linguistics. Dubois and Crouch (1975) questioned Lakoff's findings as Lakoff had used introspective methods in her study. They argued that her conclusions were made on uncontrolled and unverifiable observation of others and were based on a highly skewed and non-random sample of people. From childhood males and females are different in many ways, both physiologically and psychologically. Eisenmen (1997) claims that women, in comparison to men, have better memory. Men are quite accurate in maintaining a sense of direction but women are not. This is consistent with the claim that men tend to do better than women on visual-spatial tests and in mathematics.

There are also social differences between men and women. Two of the most significant theories on social differences between males and females are "*difference theory*" and "*dominance theory*". According to the "*difference theory*" men and women, even those within the same group, live in different or separate cultural worlds and, as a result, they promote different ways of speaking (Uchida, 1992). This theory is sometimes called "*two-culture theory*". In simple terms, although men and women live in the same environment they establish different relations with society as if each belonged to a different environment and culture, the result of which is consequently

reflected in the language of both genders as in 186 other aspects of their lives. So in this theory, cross-gender communication is to be taken as cross-cultural or bi-cultural communication.

In “dominance theory”, men and women are believed to inhabit a cultural and linguistic world, where power and status are unequally distributed. In this theory, also called *power-based theory*, the focus is on male dominance and gender division.

Chapter Three

Methodology:-

Introduction:-

This chapter describes the methodology employed in this study. It presents the qualitative and the quantitative procedures used in both macro- and micro-sociolinguistic studies. The macro-sociolinguistic study was carried out (and is here presented) first, with the belief that an overall view of the major patterning is a great help, if not a prerequisite, to micro-sociolinguistic studies. In addition to the research procedures, a functional framework for analyzing the data is presented to explore general findings.

Research Procedures:-

I have used both qualitative and quantitative method to gather information about the language variation, the language choice in relation to the contextual factors, and attitudes towards specific language. The first method is Literature review. It is the body of text that aims to review the critical points of current knowledge on the topic of gender in language or sexism in language. The books that I have reviewed are *Man made Language* by Dale Pender, *Sociolinguistics: An introduction to language and society* by Peter Trudgill, *An introduction to sociolinguistics* by Janet Holmes, *Feminist Stylistics* by Sara Mills, *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men Conversation* by Deborah Tannen, *Sociolinguistics* by Ronald Wardhaugh, and *Methods of Rhetorical Criticism* Edited by Bernard L. Brock, Robert L. Scott and James W. Chesebro. Secondly, I have collected data through observance of different conversation that is observing the speakers' behavior. It is essential for studies that are concerned with the speech of a community for the purpose of describing and analyzing its patterns of using languages and dialects. It is based on gathering substantial recordings of genuine situated speech, and then attempting to detect patterns using evidence internal to the data and the researcher's intuition, drawing on his/her social knowledge. The census observation approach has the great advantage of being well suited to very large scale studies, being comparatively simple and cheap to administer. It also permits the gathering of specific and directly comparable data from a number of subjects.

The data were collected to investigate code-variation and related language contact phenomena for the speech community of university students. A number of speaker participants were randomly selected from the community of different university students and the ethnographic and the census approaches were applied. In addition to recording natural conversations among students, no questionnaire was administered to any group of students and thus the study becomes very authentic.

To obtain a full picture of the language contact phenomena of this community, it was necessary to record, transcribe, and analyze natural language data from the participants. Information from the recordings is linked to the code-mixing patterns observed in the community. This is an effort to investigate as much as possible the macro and micro aspects of variety phenomenon.

Selection of Participants:-

To collect data from natural conversations in order to examine the research hypothesis, different university students of Dhaka city of both sexes and from different fields of study were selected, representing varying socio-economic levels. The participants are having the age range from 20 years to 25 years. The selection of participants aims at investigating possible discrepancies in language use and attitudes among the concerned students. Participants were selected randomly and contacted by me or other students from the same field of study who were participants and helped in the research at the same time. Because the two approaches of investigation were not applied at the same time, the focus was on having the same sample for both approaches. Conversations were noted instantly when students were found to make any conversation and recording was avoided because it was an attempt to get the spontaneous and natural conversations. Conversations which are noted are mostly casual and occurred when the students had free time after or before their classes. Along with these direct observations of the conversations, few

mobile conversation and also a Facebook (social network) chat is recorded to get to the range of variation of language.

Limitations:-

In contrast to data that was available for English, the resources for Bangla were very limited. Thus, it was not possible to make a proper comparison of this work with previous works. Time was also a constraint. The research was carried out within a specific period. It is also a small scale research. Thus the sample size for the different surveys conducted also small. Hence it is difficult to generalize findings based on a small scale study. A large scale research could have offered a clearer view of the difference in men and women language and how those affect the society or how they are affected by the society. Another difficulty is to data analyzing as sample are in Bangla, English, and mixed languages and before analyzing then I need to transcribe and categorize them to bring out specific result.

Chapter Four

The Linguistic Analysis of the Language Data:-

Difference has been observed at various linguistic levels of men and women language such as lexical level, morphological level, and phrasal level, semantic level and the level of discourse.

In case of language choice females are found to express more moderate and polite whereas males are found to express more open and often rough language. Difference in tone and intonation has observed in most of the cases, moreover women are more careful in selecting words in comparison. Some other features has been sorted out in women language such as confusion, compassion, affection anxiety on the other hand men are very bold, careless and straightforward with their language. Males often ignore the effect on the listener and they regret less than females.

One of the most interesting observations is the difference in the topics of their conversations. The discussed areas or fields of the phatic communion of male and female are presented on the following table:

Participants	Topic of conversation
Male	Casual talks, fashion, affair and relationship, career, games and sports, technology, entertainment: movies and music
Female	Fashion: dress up and make up, TV: drama serials, hang out, cooking: recipe, study, leisure

Table 1:- Topics of male and female conversation

Another observation regarding the use of vernacular is notable though in Bangladesh attitude towards code-mixing is moderate and the data bears the percentage of using pure Bangla, pure English, mixed language of Bangla and English and also including words from other language like Hindi and Urdu and French. The following chart presents the scenario:

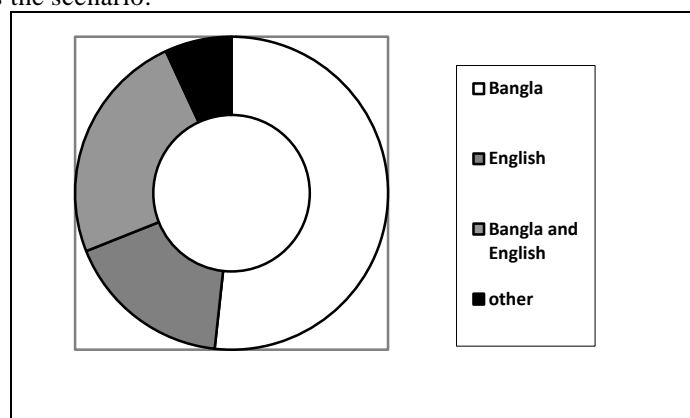


Chart 1:- specific languages used by the participants

There are also some differences in calling each other as when a male student is calling another male student on the other hand when a female student is calling another female student or even one is calling someone from opposite gender.

Female students get more comfort calling by names in most of the cases when males are totally opposite as they most of the time do not call with the name and even though they call the name they make some change or modification.

For example from the recorded data males are found to call with the following words: Mamma, bondhu, buddy, dosto, bhai, Abbe, oii etc. on the other hand females are calling with the names and other words: Sweetie, Merry, oii, hey beautiful, Tania, Tuli etc. In this regard female students are found to be more formal than male students.

The final observation which is quite common in all the language communities, that is the difference in tone and pitch. Male students are found to be using higher tone than the females. Which may includes shouts sometimes.

Findings and Discussions:-

There are physiological differences between the sexes is hardly a matter of dispute, which did exist and can be easily observed. For example, on the average, female have more fat and less muscle than male; they mature rapidly and live longer; men and women have distinctly different voice qualities: men's voices are commonly thought to be lower - pitched and more resonant than women's voices. But men and women are social beings who have to learn to act in certain ways according to the requirements made for them by the society in which they live, so their ways of using language are undoubtedly influenced by certain psychological, social or cultural factors. William Labov considered sex as one factor among many influencing the variation of language behavior.

Some results of sociolinguistic studies show that there are differences between men and women in language use in certain society even though they speak the same language. For instance, men and women talk differently, it is said that woman are less assertive (more tentative) in the their speech than men; that they use fewer taboo forms and more euphemisms than men; that they talk more than men, or conversely that they talk less than men; that they are inclined to gossip than men; that they are more conservative in their speech and at the same time; more sensitive to matters of correctness than men, and their speech in more polite and indirect and so on. Here we'll summarize and analyze sex differences of men and women in language use as the following:

Physiological differences between men and women have been noted in a variety of languages. Because of some physiological factor, men and women have distinct different voice qualities: men's voices are commonly thought to be lower-pitched and more resonant than women's voices. Female speech is faster than male, and so on. Generally speaking, female is more apt to use normative and canonical pronunciation.

American linguists Trudgill and Fisher point out that men usually pronounce "ing" as "in", it is not normative, but women pronounce it as "iŋ", it is normative. In New York and Detroit, the pronunciation "r" behind vowels is a sign of social normative pronunciation, through the survey; we find that women pronounce more "r" than men:

As to intonation, Brend claims that the intonation patterns of men and women vary somewhat, "women using certain patterns associated with surprise and politeness more often than men". In the same vein Lakoff says that women may answer a question with a statement that employs the rising intonation pattern usually associated with a question rather than the falling intonation associated with making a firm statement. And women are usually inclined to be tactful and gentle and often use low rising intonation at the end of the sentences, which seems to show that they lack of confidence and seek the opinions of the others. In contrast, men usually like using high falling intonation at the end of the sentences, so their intonation sounds resolute and affirmative. For example, to speak the following sentence, man and women may use different intonation:

I wish you'd try it.

Men: I wish you'd try it \.

Women: I wish you'd try it. /.

Women always use rising intonation to answer questions. For example, "When will dinner be ready?" The answer is "oh, about 8 o'clock?" She uses a question to answer the question rather than a firm statement.

The most distinct difference of men and women lie in the different choice of vocabulary. Lakoff claims that women use color words like mauve, beige, aquamarine, lavender and magenta but most men do not. She also maintains that adjectives such as lovely, charming, adorable, sweet, divine etc. are also commonly used by women but only very rarely by men. Women are also said to have their own vocabulary for emphasizing certain effects on them, words and expressions like so good, such fun, exquisite, lovely, divine, precious, adorable, darling and fantastic. And when expressing praise, women are inclined to use some overstatement adjectives such as terrific, tremendous, gorgeous etc.

As vulnerable groups, if they want to express strong feelings, women are usually more cautious and implicit. They can only use some weak execratory words or phrase, such as, "Oh dear", "Oh, God! ", "God bless me! ", "Good God! ", "Great God", "My Goodness", "Good Heavens", and avoid using vulgar words, such as "God damn it!", "Damn", "What the hell".

Still other gender-linked differences are said to exist. Women and men may have different paralinguistic systems and move and gesture differently. The suggestion has been made that these often require women to appear to be submissive to men. Women are also often named, titled, and addressed differently from men. Women are also often likely to be addressed by their first names when everything else is equal, or, if not by first names, by such terms as *lady*, *miss*, or *dear* and even *baby* or *babe*. Women are also said to be subject to a wider range of address terms than men, and men are more familiar with them than with other men. Women are also said not to employ the profanities and obscenities men use, or, if they do, use them in different circumstances or are judged differently for using them. Women are also sometime required to be silent in situations in which men may speak.

Linguists like Wardhaugh (1998) tried to explain gender differences in language behavior. One explanation is that languages can be sexist. Other explanations are men and women are biologically different and this difference has serious consequences for gender. Women are somehow predisposed psychologically to be involved with one another to be mutually supportive and non-competitive. On the other hand men are predisposed to independence and vertical rather than horizontal relationships, i.e., to power rather than to solidarity.

The second claim is that social organization is best perceived as some kind of hierarchical set of power relationships. This is a social rather than a psychological fact. It happens that men have the ascendancy on such a system. Language behavior reflects the social dominance of men. It is they who try to take control, to specify topics, to interrupt, and so on. They do it with each other and they do it with women, who, feeling less let them get away with it, preferring instead to seek support from other women.

The third claim, which does not actually deny the second claim, is that men and women are social beings who have learned to act in certain ways. Language behavior is largely learned behavior. Men learn to be men and women learn to be women, linguistically speaking.

One consequence of such differences is that women's speech has often been devaluated by men, for, as Tannen rightly observes, her difference approach in no way denies the existence of male dominance (1993, p.9). Tannen's solution is an interesting one, although one not without its critics. She believes that men and women should try to understand why they speak as they do and try to adapt to each other's styles. However, the self-help nature of her 1990 book You Just Don't Understand might seem to thrust much of such work onto the shoulders of women rather than men. Freed and Greenwood (1996) conclude their study with a general caution: 'we have no reason to doubt that some differences in everyday speech of women and men result from distinct socialization practices for girls and boys, and from various gender-assigned activities; women may engage in co-operative talk in wider range of settings than men'(p.22). They add that it does to say that men's style is 'competitive'. We must be on guard against stereotyping here too.

According to Wardhaugh (1998) men's and women's speech differ because boys and girls are brought up differently and men and women often fill different roles on society. Moreover, men and women know this and behave appropriately. If such in the case, we might expect changes that make a language less sexist. It may also be quite possible, of course, to try to hasten the process by attempting to rid language of whatever is sexist in it or at least by persuading authors to be nonsexist in writing.

Chapter Five

Conclusion:-

The study of variation is very significant because it is the evidence of social interactions between men and women. Language choice is performed according to specific factors that make it predictable in most cases. However, the results support the hypothesis that there are cases of language choice which are unpredictable. Moreover, female students use language as a communicative strategy more than male students do. Attitudes towards language variations are analyzed to determine the nature of these attitudes. The contradictory opinions lead to discrepancies between the speaker's language behavior and attitudes. The investigation shows that the language variation between male and female in our country is not ignorable.

This paper has dealt with the use of 'phatic communion' devices by men and women. I was interested in this aspect of the communication between the two sexes since in the literature on the subject, especially in studies by supporters of the "dominance approach", the notion of small talk is used to argue that women use language in a tentative way. Male use of language is said to express authority and power whereas women, who deviate from the male norm, show their weakness through their choice of linguistic devices, such as hedges.

This study has examined language variation among different university students of Dhaka city. Through time, language contact has led to various language phenomena that have had linguistic, sociolinguistic, and attitudinal effects on speakers. This study attempts to identify these effects in order to shed light on the language behavior distinctions of this specific community. Two methods of data collection are used: the ethnographic study and the direct observation. There are almost 5 hours of recorded spontaneous conversations by 20 groups of participants in the ethnographic study.

The results of the study show that a significant variation exists in the linguistic situation of our community though distinctions are being reduced gradually. This study reveals that there is a difference between female students and male ones in linguistic, sociolinguistic, and attitudinal aspects. Female students use more soft, formal and weak language and male students use strong languages which also focus on the cultural influence on them. However this study cannot be regarded as revealing general attitudes towards the language of men and women because the number of programs analyzed and the sample group of informants is obviously very small. Even so, the data suggest that male and female language is becoming more similar and that perceptions of language are changing. Further research is needed to confirm this development.

References:-

1. Coates, J. (1986), *Women, Men and Language*, New York: Longman.
2. Coates, J. (1996), *Women Talk, Conversation between Women Friends*, Oxford: Blackwell, 152-173.
3. Coates, J. (1997), "One-at-a-Time, The Organisation of Men's Talk", in Johnson and Meinhof, eds., *Language and Masculinity*, Oxford: Blackwell, 107-130.
4. Coates, J. (1998), ed., *Language and Gender, a Reader*, Oxford: Blackwell.
5. Fishman, P. (1983), "Interaction: the Work Women Do", in Thorne, Kramarae and Henley, eds., 89-101.
6. Harris, S. (1984), "Questions as a Mode of Control in Magistrates' Courts", *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 49.
7. Hirschman, L. (1994), "Female-Male Differences in Conversational Interaction", *Language in Society* 23:427-442.
8. Holmes, J. (1992b), "Women's Talk in Public Contexts", *Discourse and Society* 3, 2:13, 11-50.
9. Holmes, J. (1996), *Women, Men and Politeness*, New York: Longman, 74-75.
10. Johnson, S. and U.H. Meinhof (1997), eds., *Language and Masculinity*, Oxford: Blackwell.
11. Lakoff, R. (1975), *Language and Women's Place*, New York: Harper & Row.
12. O'Barr, W.M. and B.K. Atkins (1998) "Women's Language or Powerless Language?", in Coates, ed., 377-387.
13. Tannen, D. (1990), *You Just Don't Understand, Women and Men in Conversation*, New York: Ballantine Books.
14. Tannen, D. (1994), *Talking from Nine to Five: How Women's and Men's Conversational Styles Affect Who Gets Heard and What Gets Done at Work*, New York: Morrow.
15. Thorne, B., C. Kramarae and N. Henley (1983), eds, *Language, Gender and Society*, Cambridge, MA: Newbury House.
16. Trudgill, P. *Sociolinguistics: An Introduction to Language and Society*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 2000, 2-3
17. Wardhaugh, R. (1998) *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. Oxford: Blackwell, 309-322
18. Bio of the Author: Chowdhury Omar Sharif Senior Lecturer, Dept. of English, East West University, Bangladesh.