Gender differences in the use of Personal Pronouns in the Moroccan Political Speech: A comparative Study of the pronominal choices of two Moroccan politicians

Différences de Genre dans l'utilisation des Pronoms Personnels dans le Discours Politique Marocain : Une Étude Comparative des Choix Pronominaux de Deux Politiciens Marocains

SADOUK LAILA

Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences , Fez

Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University , Morocco

laila.sadouk@usmba.ac.ma

Abstract

Sociolinguists have studied gender linguistic disparities intensively since the 1960s. The purpose of this article was to analyze the corpus of two speeches given by two Moroccan politicians from the same political party and determine whether there were any gender variations in the use of personal pronouns. The transcripts of four consecutive speeches were obtained from their original media outlets, translated into English, and evaluated using the text analysis tools Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count to determine how often the politicians used first-person pronouns. There were some slight but statistically significant variations in the use of personal pronouns between the sexes, according to the quantitative study. More nuanced disparities between the sexes were discovered in qualitative research, and they may be indicative of shifts in gender stereotyping as a result of language use.

Key words:

LIWC , Gender differences ,Political Speeches, Personal pronouns

Résumé

Les sociolinguistes ont étudié intensivement les disparités linguistiques entre les sexes depuis les années 1960. L'objectif de cet article était d'analyser le corpus de deux discours donnés par deux politiciens marocains du même parti politique et de déterminer s'il existait des variations de genre dans l'utilisation des pronoms personnels. Les transcriptions de quatre discours consécutifs ont été obtenues auprès des médias d'origine, traduites en Anglais et évaluées à l'aide des outils d'analyse de texte « Linguistic Inquiry et Word Count » afin de déterminer la fréquence d'utilisation des pronoms personnels par les politiciens. Selon l'étude quantitative, il y avait des variations légères mais statistiquement significatives dans l'utilisation des pronoms personnels entre les sexes. Des disparités plus nuancées entre les sexes ont été découvertes dans l'étude qualitative, et elles peuvent être révélatrices de changements dans les stéréotypes de genre résultant de l'utilisation du langage.

Mots clés :

LIWC , Différences de genre ,Discours politiques, Pronoms personnels

Introduction

One of the most significant ways that people express themselves is via language. People's choices in forms of expression are guided by ideas, and these thoughts may be compared to how they see things in the actual world and how they choose to express themselves about those perceptions. That's why it's possible for two individuals to be describing the same thing but in very different ways. Alternatively expressed, one's language preferences may serve as a diagnostic of one's overt and covert emotions towards real-world phenomena.

Politics is defined as the struggle for authority and the imposition of one's own views.

masculine-dominated occupation often held by those who exhibit the field's prototypical characteristics of strength, expertise, aggressiveness, and candor (Huddy and Terkildsen, 1993; Kahn, 1996). As a result, it shouldn't be a surprise that males still make up the majority of elected officials. Women still face significant barriers to entering politics in the contemporary period. Further, women tend to win lower-paying positions in politics, such as those associated with the fields of education, environment, social, and health care. To rephrase, women are allowed to occupy positions traditionally held by males. Female candidates are more likely to be linked by voters with issues of social solidarity (including but not limited to education, children, the elderly, social affairs, health care, and the environment), whereas male candidates are more likely to be connected with concerns of personal achievement.

The Business, Economy, Military, and Agriculture (Leeper, 1991; Huddy and Terkildsen, 1993). In addition, women are more likely to face bias and lower voter turnout if they seek office in traditionally male-dominated fields (Dolan, 2008). Voters who defy norms and elect women to traditionally male-dominated fields risk being portrayed as depoliticized, womanized, and maternalistic by the media (Bengoechea, 2011). Therefore, women experience shifts when they join politics, a realm traditionally dominated by males. Changes in language may occur as a result of their attempt to adopt masculine features.

1. Theoretical Framework

Gender studies in language have progressed through four distinct phases. The deficit model was established by Robin Lakoff in 1975, expanding on Jespersen's (1922) characterization of men's language as a standard making women's language inferior. Lakoff said that societal pressure causes women to "speak like ladies," rendering their communication less effective

than men's. Despite widespread criticism of his scattered thoughts and broad generalizations, Lakoff sparked a wealth of investigation. At the same time, Zimmerman and West (1975) created the dominance method, which postulates that the social dominance of males is reflected in the allocation of interruptions and floor time in conversations involving people of different sexes. Researchers responded by reevaluating women's language with an eye on its strengths; this effort eventually gave rise to the cultural difference method, which was first advocated by Maltz and Borker (1982). They worried that misunderstandings may arise due to differences in the communication assumptions and norms held by people of diverse cultural backgrounds. Disagreements might emerge between men and women since they are often socialized differently. Deborah. Tannen (1986; 1990) popularized this concept by arguing that there is no inherent difference in the ways in which men and women communicate and that any observed variations are the result of a uniquely female cultural socialization process. Anti-essentialist techniques, such as ethno methodology (Garfinkel, 1967), discursive psychology (Potter and Wetherall, 1987), social constructionism (Shotter and Gergen, 1994), conversation analysis (Sacks, 1992), and others, represent the fourth stage of gender study in language.

Eventually, researchers opted to hone in on more nuanced topics, such as the stereotype that men's public discourse is more combative and competitive than women's is cooperative and facilitative (Coates, 1989; Holmes, 1992). To be more specific, studies have shown that men are more likely to dominate conversations in public settings than women are (James and Clarke, 1992; Karpowitz and Mendelberg, 2014). This could be because men are socialized to follow different interactional norms than women are (Gal, 1991; Tannen, 1997), giving rise to the concept of gendered spaces (Freed, 1996). Women, according to studies (Dahlerup, 1988; Webster, 1990; McElhinny, 1998), use more traditionally masculine tactics in professions where males prevail, such as politics.

Personal Pronouns / Inclusive Pronouns (I, we, us, our)

Several studies of the relationship between gender and pronoun usage were developed in the last twentieth century. Women used pronouns more frequently than men in corpus linguistics as claimed by Biber (1998), machine learning approaches to recognizing authorship, dating commercials, and argumentative essays authored by university students. More recent research has revealed shifts in pronoun usage. Anderson investigated personal pronouns in editor's letters in 2012. The investigation revealed that male editors used pronouns more than female

editors, lending particular thought to the idea that men are more engaged with their readers. Furthermore, Yu (2013) observed the most significant gender difference as congresswomen using fewer pronouns than members of Congress, attributing it to an elevated platform.

Several studies have examined the personal pronoun "I" from a gender standpoint. Brownlow (2003) discovered that women used the pronoun "I" more than men in unscripted TV interviews, indicating that they were more self-focused. That's a push for them to represent themselves as independent solid women in a male-dominated field. For the use of the pronoun "we." They are personal pronouns, such as *us* and *we*, which refer to the audience and speaker as one entity. Scholars have found that feminine language incorporates more inclusive pronouns than masculine language because they help express a relationship with listeners by inviting their participation in thought or collaboration in action. The study of the first-person plural pronoun has piqued the interest of experts who work on political speech analysis. The researchers discovered that politicians of both genders used the word "we" to identify with the party they represented.

Holmes (1993) expanded on the research by discovering that women used inclusive pronouns (we, us, our) more than men to engage addressees in dialogue. In contrast to prior findings showing women use the pronoun "we" at a higher rate than their male counterparts. On the other side of the discussion, men and women use the first personal pronoun "I" on an equal scale.

2. Methodology

This paper aimed to analyze differences in linguistic expressions of male and female politicians in 4 selected political speeches by two ministers Mbraka Bouaida and Salahddine Mezouar. The two politicians were chosen randomly without any subjectivity.

The four speeches were downloaded from the official websites of the event held. They were transcribed as I didn't find an online script. The four speeches were analyzed with well-recognized and independently rated software Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (here-inafter LIWC). It does a word-by-word analysis of a corpus, classifying each word into one of seventy categories (including word length, part of speech, and topical categories like "money," "religion," "achievement," etc.).

This paper set out to accomplish the following precise aims:

(1). To see whether male and female politicians use personal pronouns differently.

(2). To see if one gender or the other is more likely to use a certain pronoun.

(3). To explain the findings by offering underlying explanations for gender differences and similarities in the usage of pronouns.

(4) . Using a CDA method, check contextual usages of pronouns and record probable gender differences.

The social aspect of pronouns is often associated with women, thus we expect that women politicians would use them more than males. Similarly, we anticipate that male politicians will emphasize the first person singular, "I," to convey leadership and autonomy, while female politicians would emphasize the second person plural, "we," to create a sense of solidarity and group identification. Plus, female politicians may utilize "intimate you" instead of "critical you," which is more often employed by male politicians. And lastly, it seems that there are no gender differences in the usage of the pronoun they, with both groups potentially employing it to portray unfavorably someone who does not belong to their group.

3- Analysis and Discussion

Each individual pronoun will be discussed in further depth and compared to prior analytic research findings in the sections that follow. Because our data is divided up into multiple subsections, it is easier to compare it to the analytical findings of other researchers.

3-1 Personal pronoun ”I”

In the first studies, women were shown to be more frequent users of all personal pronouns (Mulac & Lundell, 1986; Mulac et al., 1988). Argamon et al. (2003) confirmed Holmes's (1993) sociolinguistic universal that women use linguistic devices to stress the solidarity between a speaker and a listener by showing that female writers used personal pronouns when referring to a listener/reader. In contrast, male writers tended to use generic pronouns, i.e., female writers' language pointed to greater text personalization.

Analysis of political speeches relies heavily on the use of personal pronouns since they reveal with whom the speaker most closely identifies. There was no statistically significant difference in the prevalence of male vs female personal pronouns in the data collected using (LIWC) . However, the data do corroborate Yu's (2013) observation that female lawmakers tend to use fewer personal pronouns than their male counterparts. They also provide credence to our theory that women in legislatures prefer to adopt masculine speaking patterns while working in a mostly male industry.

Table 1 : Frequency of the usage of first pronouns in hedging

Token	Number of the token occurrences in the Bouaida's speeches	Percentage of the token with respect to the total number of *I* occurrences in the Bouaida's speeches	Number of the token occurrences in the Mezouar's speeches	Percentage of the token with respect to the total number of *I* occurrences in the Mewouar's speeches
Total number of *I* tokens	3700		5000	
I think	35	0.95%	58	1.16%
I believe	57	1.54%	120	2.4%
I mean	08	0.21%	12	0.24%
Total % of the hedge *I* phrases		2.7		3.8

In the past, scholars have analyzed political speeches by focusing on how often certain pronouns were used. Since Karapetjana (2011) claims that politicians' pronominal choices reflect who they are, this is an important area of research. Several studies have looked at how we use the personal pronoun.

As a matter of gender, I'm using this. Based on their analysis of men's and women's language usage in unscripted television interviews, Brownlow et al. (2003) concluded that women were more self-centered because they tended to use the first person pronoun (I) more often. Studies by Larner (2009), Andersson (2012), Mulac et al. (2013), and Ahmad and Mehmood (2015) indicated that males were more likely to engage in risky sexual behaviors. Men utilized the first person singular I more often than females to project authority.

Other factors must be taken into account when evaluating findings from research on language habits in a mostly male profession.

According to a research conducted in 2014 by Arustamyan, Hillary Clinton often uses the first person pronoun "I," which was viewed as an effort to differentiate herself from other women in politics. Hakansson (2012) analyzed eight consecutive State of the Union addresses to draw comparisons. Both George W. Bush and Barack Obama gave four addresses while in office. The two politicians were selected for this research because of their divergent views on a range of political problems. In my previous qualitative study of linguistic features use by two other Moroccan heads of political parties, I showed how the two politicians used distinct sets of rhetorical techniques. In particular, male speaker spoke in the first person. He used the single pronoun to emphasize his convictions without regard for the views of others. On top of that, he portrayed himself as a strong and decisive politician by claiming credit for initiatives he neither initiated nor would lead. When compared, female speaker's addresses were more personal since she shared her hopes, thoughts, and compassion for the country.

To determine whether there were any disparities in pronoun usage based on gender, LIWC was consulted. There was no discernible change in frequency of use. Since the majority of common hedges begin with "I" (as in "I think," "I believe," or "I mean"), we set out to find them and determine their frequency of occurrence. The table shows that the usage of the hedge phrases was the same amongst male and female speakers.

The following table showed other instances where the two politicians used personal pronouns to either greet the audience or honor a specific aspect linked to their country.

Table 2 : Polite forms to address / honor the audience

Token	Number of the token occurrences in the Bouaida's speeches	Percentage of the token with respect to the total number of *I* occurrences in the Bouaida's speeches	Number of the token occurrences in the Mezouar's speeches	Percentage of the token with respect to the total number of *I* occurrences in the Mezouar's speeches
Total number of *I*	3700		5000	

Tokens				
I am honored	14	0.37%	35	0.7%
I am pleased	9	0.25%	23	0.46%
I hope	21	0.65%	47	0.94%
I wish	18	0.48%	27	0.54%
I noticed	25	0.67%	26	0.52%
I recommend	07	0.18%	16	0.32%
I urge	19	0.51%	28	0.56%
Total of using polite forms		3.11 %		4.4 %

The findings indicated that both genders employed polite phrases while addressing the audience in all the settings within which they deliver their speeches. 3.11 % of occurrences in female speaker were attributed to formalities , while 4.4% of occurrences in male utterances.Thus , it's probable that the male speaker was more formal in his usage of the pronoun "I" than his female fellow.

The two politicians used the pronoun "I" to convey various massages and reflect their political profiles to the audience. Thus , I decided to count the frequency of the pronoun "I" using the software LIWC that allow the detection of every "I" pronoun using the word search function. Bellow are few extract in which the two speakers used the first pronoun "I" throughout their speeches.

Mbraka Bouaida (female speaker) :

1- **I** would like to thank you all for hosting me

2- **I** want to confirm that Morocco is driving towards the modernity hat is an efficient aspect for progress

3- **I** am convinced and satisfied that my country Morocco is working really hard on improving various systems and sectors

4- **I** wish you al a very nice journey here.

Salahddine Mezouar (male speaker):

1- **I** am very pleased and honored to be among you today.

2- **I** would like first to greet the head of this event.

3- **I** am sure that Morocco is always ready to start collaborations with the neighbors to meet up the common African goals of progress.

4- **I** do rely on you to put hand in hand to complete our mission.

As one can notice, both female and male speakers tended to use the first personal pronoun, "I," to honor their guests and to contextualize their speeches within the context of the event in which they took part. Using the "I" was for the same reason:

- Conveying their opinion
- Showing authority and compassion with the audience, and for a few instances
- Transmitting a life lesson through a citation or a national experience

Another reason was to fulfill efficient communication. The personal pronoun "I" creates a relationship between the speaker and the audience because the "I" personalize the speech regardless of its linguistic nature. All in all, both speakers reinforce linguistic formalities while delivering their speeches. At the stage gender doesn't interfere with the use of super polite forms. It's the position they two speakers occupy that control the kind of language they have to use.

3-2 Personal Pronoun "We"

Researchers whose work involves the analysis of political speeches have shown a lot of interest in the study of the first-person plural pronoun. In the past, scholars have studied how the pronoun we is used in political interviews, and their findings have coined an expression of institutional identification (Wilson, 1990; Sacks, 1992). Researchers discovered that politicians of both sexes often used the collective we to refer to the political party they served. Janet Holmes (1993) expanded on this study and discovered that women were more likely than males to use "inclusive pronouns" (we, us, our) while speaking to others in order to draw them into the dialogue. Her results backed with those of Harness Goodwin (1980), who proposed that the reason women's language tends to be more inclusive than men's is because of the way women see teamwork and the need of lowering social barriers via communication. Skarpol Kaml's (2000) investigation on Ann Richards' use of rhetoric lent credence to this theory. Pennebaker and Lay's (2002) research of mayor Rudolph Giuliani's crisis-related language found that, in addition to serving as a symbol of group identity, politicians frequently used the pronoun we to express an emotional distance from the situation.

Table 3 : The frequency of the pronoun "we"

Token	Number of the token occurrences in the Bouaida's speeches	Percentage of the token with respect to the total number of *you* occurrences in the Bouaida's speeches	Number of the token occurrences in the Mezouar's speeches	Percentage of the token with respect to the total number of *you* occurrences in the Mezouar's speeches
Total number of token	**3700**		**5000**	
We want	27	0.72%	25	0.5%
We tend	19	0.51%	22	0.44%
We need	47	1.27%	50	1%
We hope	32	0.86%	37	0.74%
We have to	15	0.40%	13	0.26%
Total Of "we" utterances		3.76%		2.94%

Although earlier research has shown that women are more likely to use the pronoun "we" than men are, LWIC analysis found no such gender gap in we use. When analyzed more closely, it was found that the subject pronoun we accounted for 3.76 percent of the entire vocabulary of female speakers and 2.94 percent of the total vocabulary of male speakers. The findings show that both sexes have an equal frequency of using the first-person plural pronoun. To learn more about politicians' pronoun use, we also conducted Critical Discourse Analysis on a selection of texts. We used the same procedure as before with the pronoun I: first we used a Word search to find all occurrences of the we pronoun, and then we examined the data. We found several examples of the pronoun we being used in different settings.

Below are few extracts from the speakers' speeches when "we" was used.

Mbarka Bouaida (the female speaker)

1- **We** tend to work for the overall good of the country

2- **We** tend to have Morocco of diverse cultures, Morocco that is engaged in the process of modernity

3- **We** want Morocco of equality and of security.

4- **We** didn't need and will not need assistance.

5- **We** also need to reinforce collaborations to enrich our continent.

6- **We** hope to develop our natural resources' investments that would give a pave the way to economic changes.

Salahddine Mezour (the male speaker)

1- **We** need to reinforce sustainable development's projects to measure up the common responsibility.

2- **We** need to put hand in hand to achieve common goals.

3- **We** need to set the right circumstances to be ready to host bigger event like this one.

4- **We** would like to invite you to invest in Morocco to strengthen the diplomatic relationships between the two countries.

5- **We** are driving towards a new fresh blood of modern Morocco.

6- **We** are looking forward to inviting you to give more support.

The statistical research concluded that there was no substantial difference between men and women in their use of the pronoun we and its derivatives, the use of which invariably suggests a collective identity. Through careful analysis of our corpus, we were able to determine six distinct circumstances in which politicians employed the pronoun we in ways that revealed underlying gender inequalities. The politicians' use of "we" to establish a sense of collective identity was particularly prevalent (Wilson, 1990; Sacks, 1992). The institution came to symbolize the whole country, all of the politicians working in government, the states they represented, the political parties they belonged to, and the committees they served on. The male members of the group focused on their accomplishments in the past and the present when developing a sense of shared identity, whereas the female members looked forward. Further, males were more likely to connect with their party, while women were more likely to identify with the state they served. We infer from these instances that women are more likely to identify with their constituents (those who voted for them) than men are (those they represent), whereas men are more likely to identify with the political agenda of their party.

The we/them identity split was a subtle but important distinction between the various institutional identities. Jones and Stilwell Peccei's (2004), Karapetjana's (2011), and Al-(2014) Faki's theories all find support in the application of the dichotomy before to or after a contentious choice. Given the public nature of politics, politicians had to construct not just individual identities via their contacts with the public but also group identities through the use of shared references and shared signifiers. They actively pursued the development of a collectively affirmative self-image. According to our findings, just tallying up the number of instances of we is meaningless and uninformative. A variety of outcomes may be achieved by the strategic use of the pronoun "we" by politicians, and this tactic deserves more investigation.

Conclusions

This analysis of political speeches looked at how speakers of different sexes used first- and third-person pronouns. To be more specific, I picked talks from several Ministry of Foreign Affairs-sponsored political events. Speeches that were previously delivered in Arabic or French may be downloaded in their entirety together with their English translation. Two of the ministers of foreign affairs provided them. Using the LIWC text analysis program, we were able to determine how often each politician made use of first-person pronouns in the corpus. In general, we found no statistically significant variations in the rates at which male and female politicians used personal pronouns in our sample. To answer my main question, I hypothesized that women are taking a more assertive position in society than expected; thus, finding stricter and powerful language in how they position themselves was highly anticipated. In other words, female speaker tend to adopt a powerful discursive profile when asked to speak in a formal context like politics. The two speakers used the linguistic characteristics that were supposed to be "women" features interchangeably, within the same rate. This signifies that the two speakers perform their role as politicians. They chose a language that fit the context and this is I called earlier; a context dependent language.

References

Argamon, S., Koppel, M., Fine, J., & Shimoni, A. R. (2003). Gender, genre, and writing style in formal written texts. *Text & talk*, *23*(3), 321-346.

Bengoechea, M. (2011). How effective is 'femininity'? Media portrayals of the effectiveness of the first Spanish Woman Defence Minister. *Gender and Language*, *5*(2), 405-429.

Biber, D., Conrad, S., & Reppen, R. (1998). *Corpus linguistics: Investigating language structure and use*. Cambridge University Press.

Bischoping, K. (1993). Gender differences in conversation topics, 1922–1990. *Sex roles*, *28*(1), 1-18.

Dolan, K. (2008). Is there a "gender affinity effect" in American politics? Information, affect, and candidate sex in US House elections. *Political Research Quarterly*, *61*(1), 79-89.

Holmes, M. (2008). *Gender and everyday life*. Routledge.

Huddy, L., & Terkildsen, N. (1993). The consequences of gender stereotypes for women candidates at different levels and types of office. *Political Research Quarterly*, *46*(3), 503-525.

Jespersen, O. (2013). *The philosophy of grammar*. Routledge.

Karapetjana, I. N. D. R. A. (2011). Pronominal choice in political interviews. *Baltic Journal of English Language, Literature and Culture*, *1*(1), 36-45.

Kitzinger, C. (2009). Doing gender: a conversation analytic perspective. *Gender & Society*, *23*(1), 94-98.

Lakoff, R., & Lakoff, R. T. (2004). *Language and woman's place: Text and commentaries* (Vol. 3). Oxford University Press, USA.

Maltz, D. N., & Borker, R. U. T. H. (1982). A..(1982). A cultural approach to male-female miscommunication. *Language and social identity*, 196-216.

McElhinny, B. (1998). Genealogies of gender theory: Practice theory and feminism in sociocultural and linguistic anthropology. *Social Analysis: The International Journal of Social and Cultural Practice*, *42*(3), 164-189.

Mulac, A., & Lundell, T. L. (1986). Linguistic contributors to the gender-linked language effect. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, *5*(2), 81-101.

Potter, J., & Wetherell, M. (1987). *Discourse and social psychology: Beyond attitudes and behaviour*. Sage.

Shotter, J., & Gergen, K. J. (1994). Social construction: Knowledge, self, others, and continuing the conversation. *Annals of the international communication association*, *17*(1), 3-33.

Tannen, D. (2014). Gender and family interaction. *The handbook of language, gender, and sexuality*, 491-508.

Tuber, S., & Coates, S. (1989). Indices of psychopathology in the Rorschachs of boys with severe gender identity disorder: A comparison with normal control subjects. *Journal of personality assessment*, *53*(1), 100-112.

Webster, J. (2014). *Shaping women's work: Gender, employment and information technology*. Routledge.

West, C. D., & Zimmerman, D. H. (1977). Women's place in everyday talk: Reflections on parent-child interaction. *Social problems*, *24*(5), 521-529.