



## Gender Differences in the Use of adverbs in the Context of Iranian Language in Movies

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### Abstract

In spite of belonging to the same social class, men and women may use different linguistic forms. Many researchers were interested in investigating the differences in the language use by males and females. This study was an attempt to compare gender differences in terms of using adverbs in daily interaction between males and females the adverbs of (place, time, frequency and degree) in Persian society in the movies to find out if there is any difference between men and women in the use of adverbs. The five Persian movies with a social theme were used as sources for data collection (Foroushandeh, Darbare Eli, Jodaei Nader az Simin, Emtahan Nahaei and Zard). For data analysis t-test as statistical procedure was used to explore whether or not there was any difference between men and women's speech. The results indicated that there were not any significant differences between males and females in use of the adverbs of place, time, frequency and degree.

**Keywords:** Gender Differences, Linguistic Differences, Adverb

### INTRODUCTION

Gender and language have become an interesting topic on which some linguists have done research to find out the relationship between them. Language and gender refer to the relationship between the language is used by men and women. Gender difference is a reflection of the speeches between males and females and reflection of their different living styles and attitudes Gu (2013). Studying about gender and communication can be divided into two paradigms: 1. Gender as cross-cultural difference 2. Gender as social power/dominance (Alami, Sabbah & Iranmanesh, 2013). Cross-cultural difference approach states that women and men speak differently because of fundamental

differences in their relation to language and different socialization. Social power/dominance approach is a feminist-oriented perspective, believes that differences between male's and female's speech style arise because of the male's dominance over women which persists in order to keep women subordinated to men (Alami et al., 2013). Words are divided into content words or grammatical function words. Lexical items (L) are the major content words (fall into four grammatical categories including nouns, adjectives, adverbs and main verbs) which carry information (Yule, 2010). This study was an attempt to compare gender as cross-cultural difference in terms of using adverbs in daily interaction between males and females the adverbs of (place, time, frequency and degree) in Persian society inside the movies to find out if there is any difference between men and women in the use of adverbs.

### Review of literature

Different studies have been done on the way that men and women use linguistic forms in their conversation. They all proved that men and women tend to favor distinct language features in expressing themselves (Lakoff, 1975; Soori and Zamani, 2012; Tafaraji, Yeganeh & Heidary, 2015). In a research, Alami, et al. (2013) investigated gender differences in lexical density. The results indicated that males and females had no effect on the lexical density of discourse and male and female discourses were almost equally dense. Also, there was a negative relationship between the length of discourse and its LD (lexical density) for both gender groups

In 2017 Tavakoli and Karimnia investigated types of discourse markers (DMs) used in the spoken language of Iranian advanced EFL learners of male and female students. The results showed that "and" was the most elaborative DM, "but" the most contrastive, "because" and "by the way" were respectively the only reason and topic-related DMs used by the participants and "sure" was the most frequent interpersonal DM. Also, it was revealed that females significantly used more DMs compared with the males. Rezaee, Aghagolzadeh and Birjandi (2015) did a research on four discourse marks "well", "OK", "you know", and "I mean" in the spoken language of Iranian and English professors. Their findings showed that there were significant differences in the use of DMs between English males and females professors' lectures. The findings revealed that Iranian and English male professors used the DMs less than the female professors.

Jafari and Nejad Ansari (2012) examined the effect of group work and gender on Iranian EFL learners' writing accuracy on text production. The findings indicated the significant role of collaboration in L2 writing that students in collaborative group had better outcomes than control group and females in the collaborative group were better than males in the same group, and it shows the significant role of gender in writing setting. In another study, Gorjian, Pazhakh and Parang (2012) examined the effect of critical thinking instruction on Iranian EFL male and female students' descriptive writing and strategy use in the writing performance between male and female students. The results showed significant effect of critical thinking instruction on improving Iranian EFL students' descriptive writing and significant differences on the effective use of critical thinking instructions was found with regard to gender in descriptive writing test performance.

In a study Sorry and Zamani (2012) investigated writing style differences between male and female students, they concluded not only men and women speak differently in using different language features, but also, they can write differently as well. However, Soori and Zamani (2012) revealed that most language features were used equally by male and female writers. Pasaribu (2017) in a conducted research examined 40 EFL students essay writing (20 male and 20 female) and analyzed them based on the metadiscourse framework proposed by Hyland (2005). It was clear from the findings that both male and female writers employed more interactive markers than interactional markers, both genders were heavy users of transition markers which help them connect ideas in the discourse. It was assumed that male students use more interactional resources, female students use more markers in the sub-categories except self-mentions. Beside these features, women preferred to use a more personalized style, male writers in this study also made their presence noticed by using self-mentions.

Chouchane (2016) examined conversational linguistic differences between male and female by the Deficit and Dominance theory. After conversation analyzing between male and female speaking, interesting results were found. There was a significant linguistic difference between men and women speech in using lexical hedges and fillers, intensifiers and the lexical choice and intonation which supports the Deficit and Dominance claims. In other features like the rising pitch and overlapping and interruptions in turn taking, the conversation analysis didn't show any differences between genders.

Lakoff (1973) believed that women tend to use more question than men, especially they use more tag questions because they have less confidence, also in contrast to men, women use more indirect request because they are non-assertive and more polite. Hanafiyeh and Afghari (2014) showed that male and female use language in different ways by studying their interaction area. They concluded that in contrast to men, women prefer discussing personal topics to debating private issues. Rasekh and Saeb (2015) after a research stated that there is Gender differences in the use of linguistic forms in any speech community with different degree of intensity and the linguistic forms are used differently by male and female in all speech communities.

Another study was conducted by Nemati and Bayer (2007). They analyzed 14 films (6 English and 8 Persian films- scripts) to find gender differences in the use of linguistic forms. In their findings there was not any significant differences in the use of intensifiers, hedged and tag questions between male and females. Chang (2011) examined the use of questions by professors in lectures. The study showed more gender similarities than differences in the use of questions by male and female speakers. This study was an attempt to compare gender difference in terms of using adverbs in daily interaction between males and females the adverbs of (place, time, frequency and degree) in Persian society in the movies to find out if there is any difference between men and women in the use of adverbs and answer the following questions:

1. Which adverbs (place, time, frequency and degree) are used more by men?
2. Which adverbs are used more by women?
3. What is the order in the use of these adverbs?

4. Is there any significant difference between males and females in the use of adverbs (place, time, frequency and degree)?

## METHOD

In this study, Persian films were used as sources for data collection because data collected from film are very close to natural data. The following films were used in this research: 1- Foroushanderh (the salesman), 2- Darbare Eli (about Eli), 3- Jodaei Nader az Simin (Nader and Simin's separation), 4-Emtahan Nahaei (final exam) 5- Zard (yellow). The selected films have social and family theme.

## Data Collection and Data Analysis Procedure

The selected movies were watched by the researchers and then the texts of conversations (scenarios) of them were written. Then all the scenarios were read to collect the relevant data. Then, the total number of adverbs (adverb of place, time, frequency and degree) which were used by males and females in each film were counted and separated from each other. Descriptive statistics and t-test statistical procedures were used for the analysis of the data. T-test was used to find whether the differences were meaningful or not between men and women in using different kind of adverbs.

## RESULTS

This section is going to explore any significant difference between males and females with regard to the use of adverbs (adverbs of place, time, frequency and degree). First, descriptive statistics were employed to identify how many adverbs are used in the men and women's speech. As shown in Table 1, the most frequently used adverb with respect to mean scores was adverb of frequency. The adverb of place ranked the second. The adverb of time and adverb of degree ranked the third and the fourth, respectively.

**Table1.** Descriptive Statistic

		Foroushanderh		Darbare Eli		Jodaei Nader az Simin		Emtahan Nahaei		Zard	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Adverb of place	male	5.94	12.92	8.22	9.37	16.83	22.12	1.81	3.21	2.916	4.96
	female	3.69	3.37	6.14	4.09	4.80	9.72	5.00	5.65	2.000	1.58
Adverb of time	male	4.05	10.74	2.55	2.96	8.50	12.73	4.45	9.43	4.250	5.62
	female	2.00	4.72	4.00	4.12	3.60	5.64	14.50	20.50	4.400	8.76
Adverb of frequency	male	3.52	4.58	5.77	7.57	11.33	19.31	4.45	8.37	3.250	4.53
	female	1.61	3.50	5.87	6.81	3.80	4.18	16.00	22.62	5.200	4.96

Adverb of degree	male	1.41	2.85	1.33	1.41	3.66	5.55	1.54	4.48	1.58 3	2.64
	female	0.30	0.85	2.28	2.05	1.50	2.67	4.00	5.65	2.20 0	3.03

In next step, an independent sample t-test was computed to find any difference between men and women's speech. Table 2 showed the results of t-test. The results in the table 2 indicates that the differences between the groups under study was not significant because of all of the values were far above significant value,  $p < .05$ .

**Table2.** Independent Samples T-Test

		Foroushande			Darbare Eli			Jodaei Nader az Simin			Emtahan Nahaei			Zard		
		t	df	Sig. (2=tailed)	t	df	Sig. (2=tailed)	t	df	Sig. (2=tailed)	t	df	Sig. (2=tailed)	t	df	Sig. (2=tailed)
Adverb of place	male female	0.69	28	0.54	0.54	14	0.59	1.51	14	0.15	1.17	11	0.26	0.39	15	0.69
Adverb of time	male female	0.64	28	0.52	0.81	14	0.42	1.07	14	0.30	1.19	11	0.25	0.78		0.96
Adverb of frequency	male female	1.25	28	0.22	0.02	14	0.98	1.21	14	0.24	1.43	11	0.180	0.42	15	0.444
Adverb of degree	male female	1.34	28	0.18	1.09	14	0.29	1.05	14	0.30	0.64	11	0.502	0.04	15	0.680

No meaningful differences have been found between men and women use of adverbs of place, time, frequency and adverb of degree.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research was to explore whether or not there was any difference between men and women's speech with respect to using adverbs of place, time, frequency and degree. In this study, more similarities were found in the use of adverbs (place, time, frequency and degree) between two groups of under study. The finding seems to support the study was done by Alami, et al. (2013), they investigated gender differences in lexical density. The results indicated that the males and females had no effect on the lexical density of discourse and male and female discourses were almost equally dense. Tafaraji Yeganeh and Heidary (2015) in a conducted research investigated the differences between male and female for using questions. The results indicated that there was not any significant difference between male and female's with regard to the use of questions. Also, it was revealed there was not any significant difference between men and women

for using kinds of questions, both of them use all kinds of questions (information seeking, rhetorical, interrogative and indirect request) in their speech. In contrast to result of this study, Chouchane (2016) examined conversational linguistic differences between male and female by the Deficit and Dominance theory. There was a significant linguistic difference between men and women speech in using lexical hedges and fillers, intensifiers and the lexical choice and intonation which supports the Deficit and Dominance claims. Hanafiyeh and Afghari (2014) showed that male and female use language in different ways by studying their interaction area. They concluded that in contrast to men, women prefer discussing personal topics to debating private issues.

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