



Gender Differences in the Use of Linguistic Forms in the Speech of Men and Women in the Saudi Context

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the differences between Saudi males and females in the use of three linguistic features. These features include minimal responses, overlapping, and interruption, in the oral performance of Saudi speakers. Minimal responses are verbal and non-verbal indicators of a person's participation in a conversation. Overlapping means covering part of the same area whereas interruption stands for the action of interrupting or being interrupted. The data are collected from a Television Program presented on MBC1 Channel. The program is called *Heya wa Howa (She & He)*. The major aim of this study is to determine if there is any correlation between gender and the use of the three linguistic features mentioned earlier. These features are selected from many features that may characterize the speech of any interlocutors discussing different affairs. Four episodes or interviews are randomly selected to be used for data analysis. For that purpose, the researcher has used the strategies of Erosy (2008). Each episode or interview continued for 45 minutes without breaks or interruptions. All episodes or interviews are taken from Shahid.Net which is accessible to any person who wants to follow news or films on TV. The data analysis has revealed that females use minimal responses more often and with higher frequency than males. However, the researcher has found a significant difference between males and females in the use of overlapping and interruption features in favour of male speakers.

Keywords: Saudi gender, minimal responses, overlapping, interruption.



1. Introduction

Males and females are different in genetic and socialization factors, in which the latter has a strong correlation with language. Tannen (1993) claims that both males and females are socialized in a way to use language to fit gender cultural norms in their interactions. They are different in the way they use language and communicate — the way they choose words, the tone of their voice, and the manner of speech. They develop their own appropriate feminine and masculine speech styles and linguistic strategies from early childhood.

All these are factors that show the difference between men and women. Tannen (1992) illustrates that “there are gender differences in ways of speaking, and we need to identify and understand them in order to avoid needlessly blaming others or ourselves” (17). Also, Fei (2010) claims that “men and women act differently in many aspects, including in conversation. Men and women pursue different conversational styles and have different interpretations of others’ words. Sometimes, they just cannot understand each other” (6). In addition, Romaine (2003) states that women use conversation to facilitate social interaction, while men use it to convey information.

The concept of politeness differs from one culture to another. The things that we accept in Saudi Arabia may not be accepted in other cultures, and the same thing may happen from one culture to another. So, culture is an important factor that defines what is polite or not. Politeness is not only an act; it also means the way of speaking and body language as well. Also, the situation is a major element that defines if this certain response is accepted and polite or not.

Therefore, the concept of politeness is related to overlapping and interruption. When two speakers speak at the same time, there is an overlap. Overlaps are caused by interruptions of one speaker by another. Stubbs (2014) defines interruptions as “any instance of simultaneous speech. When two parties are speaking at once, in which a speaker is deprived of the so-called “floor” or his or her opportunity to speak” (5). He adds that “it is important to distinguish between simultaneous speech, overlaps, and interruptions before elaborating any further. Simultaneous speech is exactly as it sounds: any instance in which two voices are heard at once, regardless of context or length of time. Both overlaps and interruptions are types of simultaneous speech” (8). Moreover, Talbot (1992) defines interruptions as “turn-taking violations, one person taking another person’s speaking turn away from them” (86).

The aim of this research is to examine if there are similarities or differences between Saudi males and females in mixed-gender conversations, focusing on three linguistic features: minimal responses, interruptions, and overlaps. According to Ersoy (2008), these features are called “collaborative communication styles” and “competitive communication styles” (2).

It is noted that most studies on language and gender (such as Amir et al., 2012; Nemati & Brayer, 2007; Subon, 2013) relate sociolinguistic aspects to the differences between males and females in conversational styles.

Gender investigations are frequently offered through many methods, and the media seems to have become one of the most powerful influences on portraying women and men, along with their linguistic symbols. The representations of males and females



are often performed in the media, such as television programs, movies, and novels (Smith & Cook, 2008).

Likewise, Nemati and Bayer (2007) state that males' and females' language behaviours embodied in media carefully resemble linguistic behaviours that both of them display in real life situations. Since media and TV programs reflect language use in real life situations, in particular gender roles of the target culture (Altman et al., 1999) (cited in Phoopt, 2017, 3-4), they provide excellent source material for data analysis in the current study.

Therefore, the material for this study is the Saudi family program in MBC1, *Heya wa Howa*. However, according to the researcher's information and investigation, no previous studies have examined gender differences in such a program. For this reason, the present study attempts to examine the different use of linguistic features between males and females under Erosy (2008) techniques.

Thus, it is crucial to investigate how gender is portrayed in Saudi Arabia in order to ascertain the messages about femininity and masculinity that are being propagated there. In this study, the issue of gender similarities and differences in male and female conversational behaviour is specifically discussed with reference to Saudi society. Moreover, this study attempts to examine the relationship between gender and interruption to know who interrupts more in Saudi Arabia, males or females. Finally, it investigates whether there are any gender differences in the use of linguistic features in relation to the three linguistic features: minimal responses, interruptions, and overlaps.

2. Objectives of the Study

This study aims to:

1. investigate gender similarities and differences in male and female conversational behaviour with a focus on Saudi society.
2. examine the relationship between gender and interruption.
3. show who interrupts more in Saudi Arabia, males or females.
4. investigate whether males overlap females most of the time or the opposite.
5. compare the differences of minimal responses, interruptions, and overlaps used by Saudi males and females in the program in MBC1, *Heya wa Howa*.

3. Questions of the Study

In this study, the following research questions will be addressed:

1. Are there gender similarities and differences in males' and females' conversational behaviour with special reference to Saudi society?
2. What is the relationship between gender and interruption?
3. Who interrupts more in Saudi Arabia, males or females?
4. Are males overlapping females most of the time or the opposite?
5. Are there differences between males and females regarding the use of linguistic features such as minimal responses, interruptions, and overlaps in the program in MBC1, *Heya wa Howa*?



4. Significance of the Study

This study will shed light on gender similarities and differences in males' and females' conversational behaviour in Saudi society. It will explore the relationship between gender and interruption and show who interrupts more in communication. Moreover, it investigates if there are any differences in linguistic features usage between Saudi males and females in relation to the three linguistic features: minimal responses, interruptions, and overlaps in the Saudi program in MBC1, *Heya wa Howa*. Hence, it might offer a useful way of improving the effectiveness of interaction between male and female interlocutors.

5. Review of Literature

Erosy (2008) investigates whether there are any similarities and differences in speaking styles between males and females, with a particular emphasis on the use of so-called collaborative communication styles and competitive styles. She uses three episodes of Dr. Phil, an American television show. In her analysis, she employs three strategies. Minimal responses, interruptions, and overlaps are examples of these strategies. The three episodes have been watched, listened to, and discussed. According to the findings, women use more minimal responses. Men tend to interrupt and take the floor much more often than women.

Following the same techniques as Erosy (2008), Fang (2008) explores the communicative competence between males and females in a cartoon TV show, *The Simpsons*, using minimal responses for a variety of types and purposes. According to the findings, men engage in more active and minimal responses during same-sex and mixed-sex interactions. Contrarily, women in mixed conversation tend to use more agreement-type minimal responses than cooperative or facilitative types. Moreover, men are never found to use delayed minimal responses, which are thought to indicate a man's dominance in conversation.

Furthermore, Fei (2010) examines the conversational styles of women and men in the American television series 'Friends'. Transcripts of nine episodes from different seasons are used as video resources. The length of all conversations in the American TV series is calculated after carefully watching them. There is a count of all useful interruptions. Two items are analyzed; the first one is the frequency with which women and men interrupt and are interrupted. Second, cooperative interruptions, competitive interruptions, and neutral interruptions are used differently by men and women. As a result, competitive interruptions outweigh cooperative interruptions among the six main characters.

Additionally, Hussein (2020) claims that females are more curious about breaking the rules of turn-taking in conversations than males. The data is gathered at random from three episodes of MBC4 TV programs titled "The Drs," "Dr. Phil," and "The Talk," as well as one from Al-Hurra TV and two from Al-Iraqia TV. The researcher has selected Have's (1999) techniques of turn-taking analysis for the six episodes. Then she provides two tables, the first of which shows the rates of violations committed by men and women during conversation, and the second of which shows the rates of violations of Have's techniques by men and women. The findings show that women



are more dominant in interactions for a variety of reasons, most notably because they speak simultaneously and do not wait for their turns.

Phoophet (2017) investigates gender differences in American and Thai films using three linguistic features: hedges, intensifiers, and tag questions. She also investigates whether there are any significant differences in the use of the three linguistic features by gender, as well as between languages or cultures. She has chosen five American and five Thai drama films for data analysis using Lakoff's framework (1975). Contrary to Lakoff's (1975) theory, the results show that women in American and Thai films use more hedges, intensifiers, and tag questions than men. However, there are significant differences in the use of these linguistic features between data from the same gender and data from different cultures.

Stenstrom (1994) states that interruptions are due to the following three reasons: Speaker B believes Speaker A does not have anything else to say; Speaker B believes he or she is well informed and Speaker A does not need to elaborate on the topic; and Speaker B wishes to speak before it is too late at a particular point in the ongoing conversation. All of these factors have the potential to create competitive conversations and to throw off the symmetry of the conversational model, as the interrupter gains a turn while depriving the speaker of the opportunity to finish.

Using their analysis of eleven mixed-sex conversations, West and Zimmerman (1975) find that, of the forty-eight interruptions, only two are caused by women and that women rarely overlap with men, while men have done so nine times. These findings suggest that in mixed-gender conversations, men violate women's rights to speak, particularly women's right to finish a turn, whereas women are not concerned with violating the man's turn but will wait until he is done. Researchers discover that men interrupt more frequently than women in a more recent study and the average is 75% for male to 25% for female (West & Zimmerman, 1983). West and Zimmerman (1983) have come to the conclusion that the gender of the participants has more significant conversational consequences and that interruptions are one way to work out power relations. Many subsequent studies have corroborated their findings.

AlGhathami (2013) investigates Saudi female gender identity in single and mixed gender interactions by examining linguistic gender identity markers in mixed and single gender recorded conversations and using questionnaires. She investigates involvement styles such as responding with minimal responses, hedging, etc. Her findings show that when women adopt male norms of speaking in mixed-sex conversations, there is a shift in gender identity because there is a decrease in topic development and minimal responses. Furthermore, there is a decrease in interruptions and a rise in questions. In mixed-sex conversations, women often interrupt to maintain their turn or to provide related details that are urgently required.

Leaper and Ayres (2007) investigate gender differences in adults' talkativeness, affiliative speech, and assertive speech. They use metatheoretical approaches to conduct and explain gender variations. In order to test three independent languages constructs — whether men or women are more talkative or whether assertive or affiliative language is used — they test 17 moderator variables, including aspects of the interactive context, measurement quality, and publication characteristics. In



addition, the trend of some gender differences is significantly inverted in relation to specific circumstances. Finally, the findings are interpreted in relation to social-constructionist, socialization, and biological interpretations of gender-related variations in social behavior.

MacGeorge et al. (2004) examine gender differences and cultures. They identify several limitations in the two studies of Michaud and Warner (1997) and Basow and Rubenfeld (2003), who negotiate gender differences in “troubles talk”. They indicate that men and women are regarded as having different communication cultures or speech communities. Therefore, this conclusion has the effect of forming an uncertain theory. Furthermore, the researchers summarize three more studies which demonstrate that men and women are examples of supportive messages. In addition, men and women have many more similarities than differences. The current findings, in combination with other recent results, propose that the different cultures theory is a myth that should be rejected.

Björnberg (2007) explores three objectives in this study. The first one is the dynamic effects of gender differences on conversation; the second one is whether interaction between participants with opposing opinions encourages intellectual progress on a moral task or not; and the last one is to explore whether specific conversational features of interaction would have any influence upon a pair’s joint response or on each child’s moral progress. The code schemes of the data include simultaneous speech acts, psychosocial behavior, and different types of justifications. The results show that boys use more negative interruptions, overlaps, and significantly more justifications in the form of assertions than girls. Moreover, it is found that there are no gender differences regarding psychosocial processes.

This study investigates whether men and women interpret interruptions differently. Laing (2004) seeks to answer this question and to expose how the definition of the category “interruption” varies because of many factors, including the gender of the interactants, which often results in miscommunication between the sexes. The data collection used for this study is a tape recorder of the responses and the reasons of the participants. To enable the observation of any relationships, the raw data is presented in tables and graphs. The findings show that men and women have different definitions of what constitutes an interruption.

6. Methodology of the Study

6.1. Participants

The material in this observation contains episodes from a Saudi program, *Heya wa Howa*. The program appears on MBC1, an Arabic-speaking Saudi Channel. The program discusses family and partner issues. The choice of this program is based upon all participants being equal and from both genders. They are three married couples. They are from different ages and backgrounds, but all of them are Saudis. The presenters are Amer and Amal, AbdulAziz and Fatima, and Mohammed and Afnan. These are the participants in all the episodes, but in episode 3, AbdulAziz and Fatima are not there, and instead, there is a new lady whose name is Duha.



6.2. Data collection

The researcher chooses four episodes and analyzes them to answer the research questions. Each episode is 45 minutes long without breaks. All episodes are taken from Shahid.Net. (2022).

6.3. Data analysis

In mixed-sex conversation, the researcher uses both quantitative and qualitative methods for data analysis. Additionally, she has employed the techniques of Erosy (2008) in analyzing the results, which are minimal responses, interruptions, and overlaps.

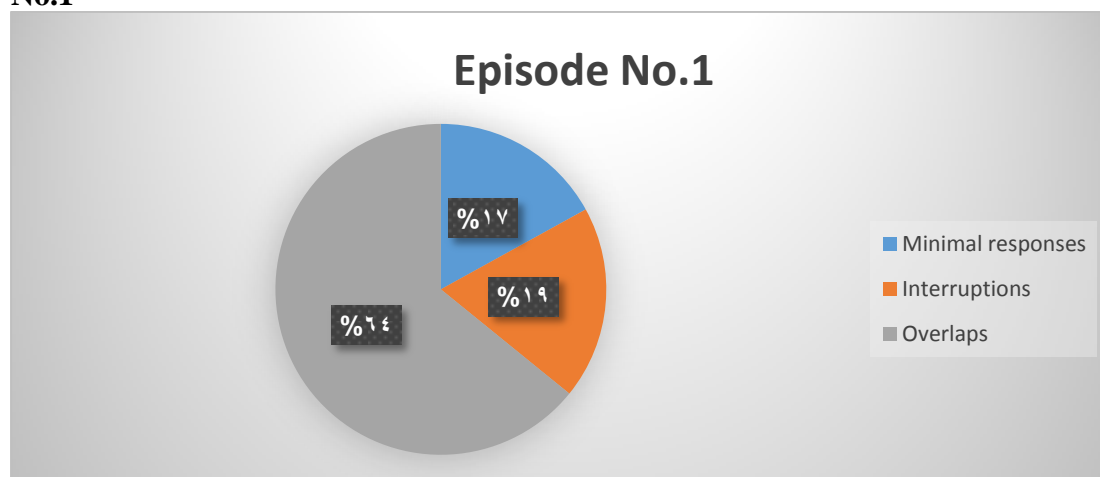
7. Results and Discussion

In this part the investigator provides analysis for each episode identifying which strategies are used by the different participants to handle the issues of the episodes.

7.1. Episode No. 1

The first episode is an introductory episode. The presenters introduce themselves. The topic of this episode is about 'the most important qualities that people look for in their future husbands and wives'. The focus of this program depends on the three couples.

Graph No. (1): Overall Results for the Three Linguistic Features for Episode No.1



The results show that women use minimal responses than men more frequently. Women use 30% of minimal responses. The graph indicates that women use minimal responses to show agreement, to show that they are still in the line, and to indicate that they are encouraging the other speaker to continue speaking. Also, women use them to show sympathy when they talk about something related to emotions. Women use many minimal responses, such as, 'mhm', 'alright', 'exactly' or 'yeah' 'صحيح', 'أهم', or بالضبط'. Coates (2004) believes that women use minimal responses consistently than men, and she comments that even Holmes (1995) wonders if these responses are "a female specialty" (87).



According to Fang (2009), minimal responses have two functions. The first one is to show the listener's agreement and support, giving support to the speaker to go on. The second function is to interrupt the speaker in order to be dominant when talking. On the other hand, men do not use minimal responses very much. They use only 9% of minimal responses. Men prefer to listen carefully instead of saying small words or responses. For example:

عامر: زوجتي هي حبيبتي وأم عيالي وهي طموحة ومتقفة وفيها كل شيء حلو
 أمل: بالضبط
 عامر: لكن....
 [الجميع] آآه
 عامر: ما عندها وقت تروح للسوق
 أمل: هذي كويسا
 عامر: خلوني أكمل.... لكن لما نسافر تعوض الفرق كله علي

Amer: My wife is my sweetheart, the mother of my children. She is ambitious and educated. She has everything sweet.

Amal: Exactly.

Amer: But...

Everyone: Yeah

Amer: She does not have time for shopping.

Amal: This is a good thing.

Amer: Let me continue.... But when we travel, she compensates for that.

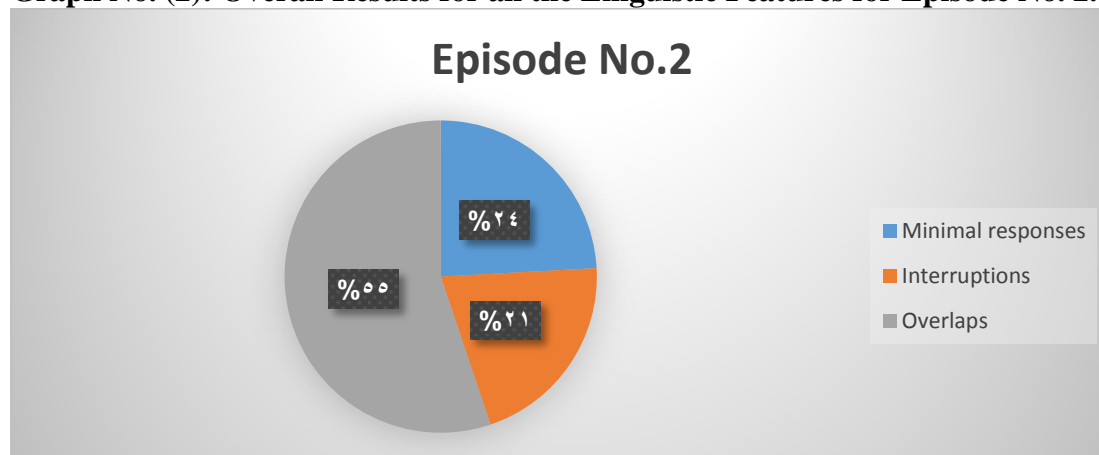
When we come to interruptions, sort of in this episode as it is shown in the example above, the results are close. This result is similar to that of Stubbs (2014), who indicates that while men and women interrupt in different ways, both genders exert control over the floor by interrupting frequently.

As for overlapping, the idea of this program is to present partners and family issues, and of course when the presenters are from both genders, there will be many overlaps. Most of the time in this episode, overlapping occurs. Both men and women talk at the same time. Men try to take the floor, perhaps in order to show dominance or to show that they have more knowledge than their wives.

The results here are totally different from the results of Erosy (2008), except for the results of minimal responses, which are almost the same.

7.2. Episode No. 2

The second episode is about 'suspicious between the couples and respecting their privacy'. The tone of the second episode is totally different. It is calmer than the first one, and each presenter has the ability to convey his or her messages clearly with a few overlaps and interruptions.

**Graph No. (2): Overall Results for all the Linguistic Features for Episode No. 2.**

As is shown from graphs 1 and 2, women use minimal responses more than men. For instance:

عبدالعزیز: خلینا نفتح موضوع الشك بين الزوجین

فاطمة: آھا

عبدالعزیز: بین الزوجین... أش الی خلاھا تضطر إنها تدور أو تحاول تفکر تفتش فی الجوال!

فاطمة: آھا.. آھا

AbdulAziz: Let's talk about suspicion between the couples.

Fatima: aha... aha

AbduAziz: between couples... What is the reason that let the wife to suspect him, that let her try to search in his mobile!

Fatima: aha... aha

On the other hand, when it comes to interruptions, the result shows that women interrupt more than men. They use interruptions to show that they agree with or disagree with an idea. As a continuation of the previous example, let us illustrate how women interrupt:

عبدالعزیز: لازم یكون فی ثقة بین الطرفين

فاطمة [تقاطع] : الشك!

أفنان [تقاطع] : الی علی راسه بطحة یحسس علیھا

AbdulAziz: There must be trust between the husband and wife...

Fatima [Interrupts]: Its suspicion!

Afnan [Interrupts with a Saudi idiom]: There must be a reason behind her trial to search in his mobile!

When participants are equal in a conversation, they have equal rights to speak, according to the turn-taking model. Because men and women have different understandings of the conversation, they use different strategies in mixed-sex conversations. Women appear to be more collaborative, whereas men appear to be more competitive. As previously stated, men tend to interrupt in order to gain control of the conversation, whereas women tend to wait for their turn instead of interrupting men. In this sense, interruptions serve to demonstrate neutral intention. A neutral interruption is based on objective intention and not dominance.

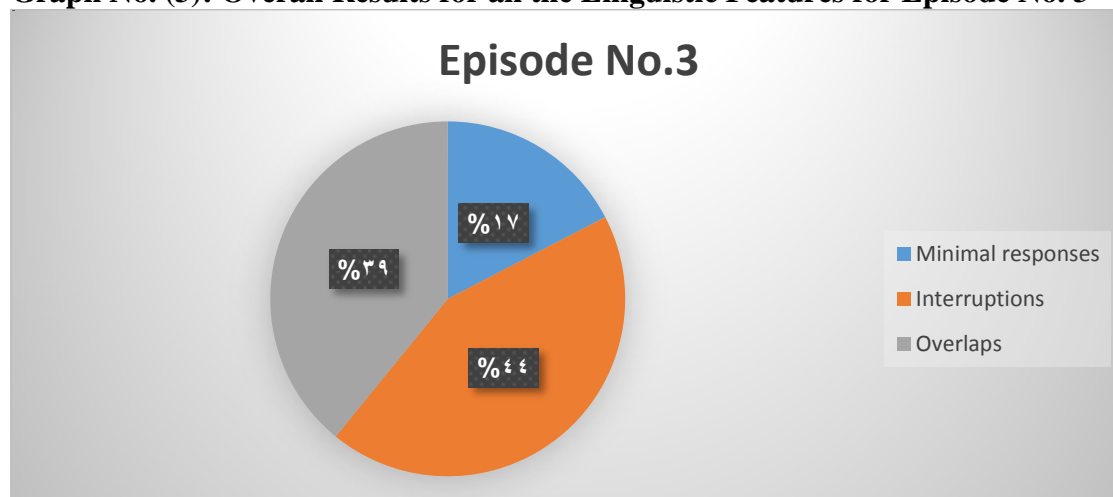


According to overlapping, women and men use overlapping, but men use it more. Maybe men use it more in order to show their power, and also because the society gives men the right to overlap and to be free in their opinions or decisions. According to Tannen (1992), overlap can be mechanical in that it can be determined whether or not two voices are speaking at the same time.

7. 3. Episode No. 3

The issue on this episode is 'Lying among couples'. Opinions range that the wife's achievement extra than her husband's makes them experience jealous, which makes them emotionally depressed. Women's interest in this subject more than men's is the result of high intervention in the talk by women.

Graph No. (3): Overall Results for all the Linguistic Features for Episode No. 3



In this episode, women show their activeness and attentiveness to the current speakers by using minimal responses 'أهم', 'أيو', or 'بالضبط' more than men, which are used to establish a collaborative floor rather than a single one-to-one time floor (Coates, 2004). The following example shows support for the current speaker while also indicating that other speakers are present and involved:

ضحى: لو يقول الرجل مثلاً أنا حاسس انه عندنا عادات غذائية خاطئة هذه اليومين
أمل [تأكد]: مم.. ايوا بالضبط.

Duha: If a man says, for example, "I feel that we have bad eating habits these days..."
Amal [Responds]: Um...Yes, exactly.

When we come to interruption, which is called the "competitive style" by Tannen (1992), it is found that males are controlling the topic, which is why they interrupt more than females. This result supports Tannen's (1992) theory that competitiveness is stereotypically associated with masculinity, and thus men are more dominant. For instance:

عبدالعزيز: انه مفتوحة الاقتراحات يعني؟
فاطمة: انك تنتقد هذ---

عامر: ---إنك تنتقد بطريقة لبقه، هي دائما لباقة الحوار اهم شيء.

AbdualAziz: You mean to be open to receiving suggestions?

Fatima: You criticize this....



Amer [Interrupts]: ...that you criticize in a polite way will always be the most important thing in polite interaction...

In this episode of "overlapping" or "collaborative style" (Tannen, 1992), women show support to the current speaker to emphasize the power of the voice of the group rather than of the individual (Johnson, 1997).

Duha: There are people who lie and believe in these lies....

Afnan [Overlaps]: Yes, this type of lying we do not want.

ضحى: فيه ناس بتكذب وبتصدق الكذبة

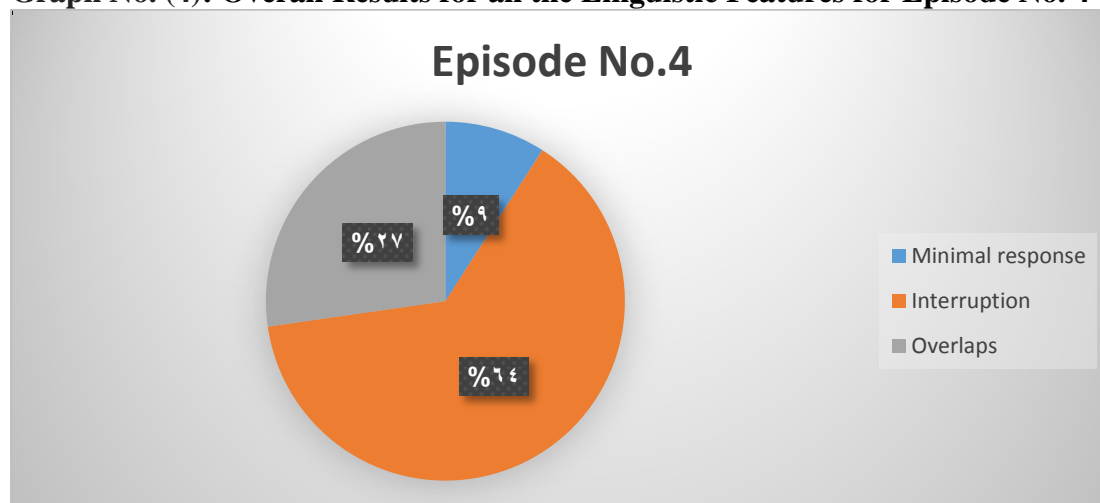
أفنان [تتداخل]: أيوا هذا النوع من الكذب اللي ما نبغاه.

The results of this episode show that both males and females use overlaps, but women have a higher use of overlap than men, which means that the topics are of great importance to women and their concerns. These are strong arguments, but they are not bullet proof. The argument that genetic differences inherently give rise to differences in behaviour is not a bullet proof.

7. 4. Episode No. 4

The episode tackles the subject of 'the effect of people's interference in married life'. The providers explain some of the methods that are considered interference in married life and what results from such interventions. The discussion is also about the husband refusing his wife's requests because of his fears of customs and traditions.

Graph No. (4): Overall Results for all the Linguistic Features for Episode No. 4



As a result of this discussion, women differ from men on this subject, but in using minimal responses, both of them do not use as much as in the previous episodes. In addition, the results show that men are found to be more interruptive than women and in accordance with the stereotyped expectations of them. On the other hand, women might not interpret the way in which men behave with them, in their trial to offer support or comfort (MacGeorge et al., 2004). In the meanwhile, men are proved to be using more confident speech than women who are found to be using more affiliative speech to impact people in a positive way. West and Zimmerman (1975) states that in most cases women are interrupted by men in mixed-sex conversations because they



are considered as substandard or unequal to men who enjoy high status and power. The essential ingredient that makes men competitive in talking is experience. This is the person who claims in this episode that the man is more knowledgeable about the subject than in any other episode. For instance:

أمل: بيجبوا موضوع سفرهم، يعني حتى ما تتكلم عنهم الناس، لا عن اهلوا، بسبب انو خوف انو يتكلموا عنهم
 انو هما كيف سافروا، كيف طلعا، كيف جو.....
 عبدالعزيز [يقاطع]: انو ليش مدلعا و ماخذها معاك.

Amal: When the couple decide to travel, they are afraid of what the people think of them, so they do not tell even the husband's family.....

AbdulAziz [Interrupts]: Why do you take your wife? You spoil her!

For overlapping, the results show that women use it with a higher rate than men as in the previous episode. However, when we examine male's overlapping, as in the below example, we come to conclude that the overlapping is symmetry, smooth, and no domination. Both speakers catchphrase from overlapping and win equally.

عامر: الواحد افضل حاجة انو ما يسمع كلام الناس، دام انت عارف، متفقين انتو الاثنين مع بعضكم على
 اساسيات معينة، لا تسمع كلام الناس، كلام الناس عمرك ما تسعدهم
 محمد [يعقب على كلام عامر]: و إرضاء الناس غاية لا تدرك، و مستحيل انك ترضي الجميع، جميع
 الانواق و جميع الافكار، الناس افكارهم مختلفة.

Amer: The best thing is that one doesn't listen to people's talk, as long as, you know, that both of husband and wife agree on specific basics, they suppose not to take care of what others say, people's talk would never make you happy.....

Mohammed [Overlapping]: It is impossible to make everybody happy, every perception and thoughts are different.

8. Conclusion

The current study looks into whether Saudi males and females have any similarities / differences in a mixed-sex conversation. The focus is on three linguistic phenomena in conversation— minimal responses, overlapping, and interruption. Overall, there are 41% cases of minimal responses used by male participants compared to 59% used by female participants, 61% cases of overlapping by males compared to 39% by female participants, and 73% clear cases of interruptions by males compared to 27% by female participants identified in the four episodes chosen from the Saudi TV program, *Heya wa Howa*.

After observing and analyzing the results, the researcher has found that women and men differ in their use of minimal responses, interruptions, and overlaps. Throughout the four episodes, it is found that Saudi women use minimal responses more than Saudi men, and men do not use them as frequently as women. We indicate that women tend not to be passive, but to give simultaneous expressions during the current speaker's utterance using minimal responses more than men in conversations, whereas men tend to listen carefully more than respond with short comments. This finding seems consistent with the results reported by Pilkington (1998) and Coates (2004), who determine that women tend to give more positive minimal responses, while men offer less minimal feedback.



Concerning the answer to question two raised above about the relationship between gender and interruption, and also question three, which is about who interrupts more, males or females, the outcome differs from one episode to another. However, the results of the data are the opposite of the researcher's expectations. They agree with the results of Fei (2010), who concludes that the probable cause of this finding is "the conversational situation and the relationship among" the speakers (41).

The first two episodes demonstrate that Saudi women are more interruptive than Saudi men. Nevertheless, as we can see, the situation differs in episodes 3 and 4, and the results are in line with the previous works. They show that men are more interrupters than women. According to Ersoy (2008), interruption or competitive style, as Coates (2004) calls it, is associated with men who are "stressing their own individuality and emphasizing the hierarchical relationship that they enter into with other people" (33). However, the researcher believes what Fang (2008) says: "it is a difficult task to generalize the differences between male and female speech, for it depends on the situation and individual" (23).

In the aspect of overlapping and in order to answer question four about whether males overlap females most of the time or the opposite, a remarkable result is found in this study, that is, men initiate more such cases than women, which is contradictory with the previous findings in the studies of many other linguists, such as Coates (1998) and James and Clarke (1993). In episodes 1 and 2, we see that men are more likely to show cooperative overlapping in the conversations. Fei (2010) claims that men use more overlapping with "close-related speakers to show [their] interest, care, and high involvement" (42); while women, in episodes 3 and 4, tend to use overlapping to prove their point of view and tend to dominate the conversation.

Finally, there are differences between Saudi males and females regarding the use of linguistic features such as minimal responses, interruptions, and overlaps in the program in MBC1, *Heya wa Howa*. There are social factors that affect the results and lead men to use interruptions as well as overlapping. Furthermore, there are other dynamics that causes females to use minimal responses, which are cultural values.

Due to many reasons, the results of this study are relatively limited, but they might give an indication of how men and women perform linguistic differences in the use of minimal responses, overlapping, and interruption. However, to be able to draw a definite conclusion based on this present study, further studies involving more media materials and TV series are needed concerning other conversational aspects of same-sex and mixed-sex communication.

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