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A Discursive Psychology-Based Approach to Exploring the Psychological Dispositions Lying Behind Females' Higher Speech Intelligibility:

A Case Study of 1st, 2nd and 3rd Year EFL Students of the English Department at Yahia Fares University-Medea

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirmentsof a Master Degree in Linguistics

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my mother who was there for me in my time of need. She stood by me during the hardest times and paved me the way to success. She always had faith in me even when despair was all I could see; she helped me overcome my fears and taught me how to trust myself. I could not have been able to make it this far without my mother's pep talk and rigorousness that kept me constantly on track. My mother's determination and selflessness has always inspired me as I long to live up to her, although deep down she is an attainably glorious figure. Indeed, my father has been a companion of mine as we always walked side by side. He lectured me about life and its unexpected turns and taught me how to stand my own no matter where the wind blows. I have always looked up to my father and hope that someday I will make him proud. As for my sister Imene, she lifted me up in my weakest times and accommodated me for a long time so I could devote my time for work. She also stayed patient even when I was utterly unbearable and I do not think I will ever find the right words to thank her enough. Imene is my soul mate, my whole life and I am eternally indebted to her. Last but certainly not least my youngest sister Rym. She has grown so fast these last few months as she became an all-time supportive young girl and I have learned so much from her despite her young age. She brightened my world. I love my entire family, both the maternal and paternal side, more than I can say and I am forever grateful.

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Amira Oumouna

Dedication

I dedicate this little work to my MOTHER and FATHER who have been of a great inspiration and motivation and encouragement. I also like to express my sincere gratitude and love to my sisters and brothers and a special spot for my little angel MARAM. I'd like to thank my entire family for always being proud of me.

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Abstract

The present qualitative case study seeks to explore thedispositions (dispositionals/counterdispositionals) lying behind gender speech intelligibility among first, second and third EFL students at Yahia Fares University, Medea. It attempts to examine female EFL students' dispositions to having higher speech intelligibility in comparison to male students. For this purpose, the study was initially conducted with 26 first, second and third year students (13 females/13 males) in the English Department. The 26 participants were designated to answer mundane/ everyday questions whose answers were recorded during the observation. Moreover, 14 students (7males/7females) among the 26 previously selected participants were chosen to participate in the semi-structured interview. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected through: the observation and the semi-structured interview. The findings of the research revealed that female students were far more intelligible than male students in dint of their higher pitch and lengthier expressions in addition to their subjectivity management attributed to their casual use of counter dispositionals. Male students' speech however was marked with a relatively low pitch and shorter expressions along with their recurrent lack of subjectivity management attributed to their use of dispositionals which rendered them to be less intelligible than their female counterparts. On this basis, female EFL students at Yahia Fares University, Medea are disposed to be considerably more intelligible than the male students.

Table of Contents:

Dedication……i

Acknowledgements……ii

Abstract……..iii

Table of contents……iV

List of acronyms and Abbreviations……V

General introduction ……1

Chapter one: Literature Review

Introduction…….....05

1.1 Speech Intelligibility…….05

1.1.1 Acoustic Based Analysis of Speech Intelligibility……06

1.1.1.1 Speech Duration/Length……...07

1.1.1.1.1. Recording for Duration Measurements ……07

1.2 Previous Studies on Gender Speech Intelligibility…….....08

1.3 Gender Speech……10

1.3.1 Gender and Conversation…….13

1.4 Discursive Psychology……16

1.4.1 Gender Speech in Discursive Psychology……...18

1.4.2 Participants Subjectivity……..18

1.4.2.1 Stake as a Participant's Concern……19

1.4.2.2 Inoculation Theory……19

1.4.2.3 Need for the Theory……19

1.4.2.4 Comparison with Vaccination……20

1.4.2.5 Stake Inoculation……20

1.4.3 Emotional Disposition……20

.1.4.4 Pragmatic Based Speech Variation……21

1.4.5 Acoustic Based speech Variability……22

1.4.6 Managing Speakers' Subjectivity……22

1.4.6.1 Managing Dispositions to Say Things……23

1.4.6.2 Not Disposed to Say too Much……24

1.4.6.3 Extreme Case Formulation……24

1.4.6.4 Not Disposed to Be Negative……26

1.4.7 Intonation and Subjectivity……27

1.4.7.1 Voice Modulation and Subjective Expression……28

Conclusion ……...30

Chapter two: Research Methodology

Introduction……...31

2.1 An overall Research Design……31

2.2 Context……32

2.3 Participants ……32

2.3.1 Students……33

2.4 Instruments for Data Collection……..34

2.4.1 Observation……..35

2.4.2 Semi-Structured Interview……...37

2.4.2.1 Piloting the Semi-Structured Interview…….38

2.5 Data Collection Procedures…….38

2.6 Data Analysis Procedures……...39

2.7 Limitations and Delimitations …….....39

Conclusion……40

Chapter three: Findings and Discussion

Introduction……...41

3.1 Findings……...41

3.1.1 Observation Results…….41

3.1.1.1 Female/Male Pitch, Frequency of Speech and Sound Pressure Level……..42

3.1.2 Female's/ Male's Expressions Length Measurements…….44

3.1.2.1 Female Speech Duration……...44

3.1.2.2 Male Speech Duration……...44

3.1.2 Semi Structured Interview Results……...46

3.1.2.1 A discursive psychology-based analysis of females'/ males' management of their subjectivity…….....46

3.1.2.1.1 Interview Content Analysis……46

3.1.2.1.2 Results of Females' and Males" Intonation (pitch) Measurement…….68

Chapter Four: Conclusion and Pedagogical Implications

Introduction……...70

4.1 Summary of the Research Findings……70

4.2 Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations……...71

4.3 Study Limitations……72

4.4 Suggestions for Further Research ……..72

Conclusion……73

4.5 General Conclusion…….75

Bibliography……..78

Appendix A……...82

Appendix B……...83

Lists of Acronyms and Abbreviations

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

DP: Discursive Psychology

ECF: Extreme Case Formulation

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1. Background and Motivation for the Study
2. Statement of the Problem
3. Research Questions
4. Research Assumptions
5. Research Objectives
6. Significance of the study
7. Outline of the Thesis

General Introduction

1. Background and Motivation of the Study:

Considering the importance of communication in the modern world, the linear perception of speech intelligibility in linguistic studies is no longer consistent with today's findings. Speech intelligibility has always been believed to be dependent on the familiarity with the speaker and/or the topic of conversation per se completely disregarding other contributing factors that are deemed to have major impact on intelligibility. Given that speech intelligibility studies were held from mainly an acoustic and sociolinguistic perspective, linguists accounted for different and far more tangible perspectives, namely gender speech and discursive psychology to measure the extent of clarity a person speaks by relating it to his or her gender psychologicaldispositions in speech.

The field of gender speech intelligibility has significantly been improved, thanks to the number of studies that tried to identify gender based in discourse. During the seventies, gender speech differences have been widely tackled in both phonetics and sociolinguistics; that is, by measuring fundamental frequencies that were proven to be efficient to assess gender speech intelligibilityand by discerning male speech from female speech based on four distinctions which are, qualifiers, tag questions, hedges and modifiers making it inconsistent and, therefore, incoherent to measure speech intelligibility without factoring in gender speech. A different area of investigation had eventually popped up amid the early nineties known as discursive psychology. At this stage discursive psychology studied psychology through discourse so as to list out the psychological factors that reside behind gender speech differences since, it emphasizes the way versions of the world, society, events and inner psychological worlds are studied through discourse. That is to say, discursive psychology studies discourse as text and talk within their contexts to understand the human psychology. More importantly, discursive psychology and gender speech have become correlated to grasp an in depth perspective of gender and psychology through discourse. This has allowed many linguists to investigate gender speech differences along with the speaker's psychology in terms of his or her attitude, subjectivity …etc. The latter is a factor that accounts for intelligibility, in this sense, discursive psychology studies the way in which talk or text manages subject-object side in social interaction. Discursive psychology investigates who, how, where and when speakers manage their subjectivity. Furthermore, subjectivity is also

known as a disposition for, discursive psychology clearly states that males/females are both disposed to being subjective yet, they are in constant attempts to diminish some of their subjectivity through the use of counter dispositionals to sound more factual and realistic simply because the excessive use of subjectivity will only infringe the reliability of a speakers' speech. For this reason discursive psychology has elaborated these counter dispositionals by making them easy to identify and place under scrutiny which aids linguists in fathoming out most commonly known vagaries of speech.

As far as experimental setting is concerned, females and males were mainly designated as participants in experiments that investigate speech intelligibility based on gender and speech frequency while disregarding psychology based approach. Whereas discursive psychology investigates psychology through speech and discourse to fathom out the inconspicuous psychological dispositions each and every speaker has. Emotional dispositions, for instance, are believed to alter the speaker's reliability in speech; that is, the more emotional a speaker gets the more subjective they become making their speech less reliable; however, discursive psychology did not give much importance to gender.Therefore, the current study aims at analyzing the psychological dispositions(dispositionals/counter dispositionals) tackled within discursive psychology to measure gender speech intelligibility.

2. Statement of the Problem:

The current study's overall problem stems from the observation that women are believed to be psychologically disposed to being subjective and, therefore, less reliable while conversing with others; however, discursive psychology proved that certain extent of subjectivity is deemed necessary to be intelligible.We have noticed that female students had higher speech intelligibility due to their higher pitch and lengthier expressions unlike male students. The research topic stands from the general observation that female English students' conversational interactions are marked with higher speech intelligibility than that of males. Female speech is produced with higher intonation and lengthier expressions which makes it highly comprehensible in comparison to that ofmales, although it is somewhat believed that women tend to be subjective while conversing. In light of this observation, this research is an attempt to investigate the psychological dispositions behind female English students' higher conversational speech intelligibility.

3. **Research questions:**

Based on the aforementioned overall problem, the one main research question and other three sub-questions are raised as follows:

1- What are thepsychological dispositions (dispositionals/counter dispositionals) laying behind female English students' higher conversational speech intelligibility?

a- Do lengthier expressions and higher pitch make female students more intelligible than male students?

b- Are English female students more likely to manage their subjectivity in speech than male students?

c- Are female students more likely to adopt a prejudiced position while conversing than male students?

4. **Research assumptions**:

In light of the aforementioned research questions the following assumptions are put forward:

1. Female EFL students at YFUM might be psychologicallydisposed to managing their subjectivity.
2. Subject/object side management might render female students at YFUM to being more intelligible than men.
3. Lengthier expressions and higher pitch might make female EFL students at YFUM more intelligible.
4. Female EFL students atYFUM might adopt a prejudiced position when conversing with others than male students.

5. **Research objectives**:

The current study seeks to reach the following objectives:

1. Exploring the reasons why women tend to be more intelligible while conversing with others.
2. . Investigatingfemales and males' speech performances through acoustic analysis of their tone and speech duration.
3. Investigating whether women are disposed to be more intelligible.

6. Significance of the study

The predictable results of this study are to prove that female English students are more intelligible than male students. What follows from this is that the current study seeks to clear the common misconception that females are too subjective while conversing by undertaking a thorough analysis on females' subject/ objectside that to a certain extent renders them to be more intelligible.

7. Outline of the thesis

This research is organized as follows. It is comprised of a general introduction and four chapters. The general introduction clarifies the background of the study along with the problem, the research questions, the research assumptions, the research objectives and the significance of the study. The first chapter is devoted to the literature review that tackles speech intelligibility, previous studies on gender speech intelligibility, gender speech and discursive psychology. The second chapter deals with the methodology followed in conducting this study. The third chapter is a representation and discussion of the obtained results, including a content analysis through the application of discursive psychology, and an acoustic analysis usingPraat softwareand VLC media player computer software. The fourth chapter comes up with a conclusion and the pedagogical implications.A general conclusion finalizes this work.

Chapter one: literature review

Introduction

Speech is the main vehicle of human interaction. Speech or rather the use of oral language is the main means by which people communicate and create community and support diversity. This chapter displays the literature review related to speech and it also explains the theoretical background this research stands on. The first section covers speech intelligibility along with gender speech intelligibility and acoustic based measure of speech intelligibility. The second section lists out the previous studies on gender speech intelligibility. The third section deals with speech in relation to gender and communication. The final section introduces the theoretical framework of this thesis which is Discursive Psychology (Hepburn & Wiggins, 2007) as a method of investigation that fuses psychology with discourse to detect subjectivity management devices in the talk in action.

1.1 Speech intelligibility

Speech intelligibility is a notion that has been employed in judging the degree of understanding of speakers' speech or as Kwon (2010) defines it, *"Speech intelligibility, which is the accuracy with which a spoken word or phrase is understood, is crucial in communication among individuals"* (p. 71). According to the latterspeech intelligibility is described as the level to which a listener can comprehend the utterances and recognize them that is, the degree to which the receiver grasps the message.Moreover, it is mostly considered as a word or utterance recognition which is affected by numerous factors. Most importantly, both the speaker and the listener are connected by the power of intelligibility which in its turn maintains a stable, continuous interaction and communication (Kwon, 2010, p.71).

Kwon (2010) describes how to supply an acceptable level of speech quality and therefore speech intelligibility. The understanding of acoustic characteristics of normal speaker is important in order to provide an acceptable level of speech quality. Myriad factors are believed to be related with speech intelligibility such as, fundamental frequency, formant frequency, vowel working space and vowel dispersion; however, gender is perceived as a far most remarkable characteristic featureamong them all (p. 71).

In addition to that,the listener's familiarity withthe speaker and the topic of conversation are also primordial factors for speech intelligibility in order to preclude any distortion inthe fluidity of speech making it unintelligible.

In this respect,Hofman, Terband ,Snik, andMaassen (2017) states that Intelligibility is modified with:

> The nature of spoken material (e.g., linguistic structure and length of utterance) and the context of communication (e.g., the quality of the acoustic transmission of the speech signal, the availability of visual cues from the speaker, and contextual support for the message to be transmitted". (p.176)

1.1.1 Acoustic Based Analysis of Speech Intelligibility

It was widely agreed on the fact that speech intelligibility abides by the gender variable, evidencing on that females' voices are biologically more intelligible than those of males. In an experimental study carried by Kwon(2010) on the fundamental frequency,it was discovered that higher overall intelligibility score was tightly related with a vaster scale in fundamental frequency and that female talkers had a noticeably higher fundamental frequency range in comparison with male talkers. It is well known that formant frequenciesfor vowels considerably differ across speakers from different sex groups. Apart from that, formant frequency values are also used in order to assess speech intelligibility (p. 72).

Despite the fact that formants were used to characterize variance in word intelligibility, some authors have focused on the vowel frequency range.Kwon(2010) has further elaborated this notion by stating that speech intelligibility can be obtained through vowel working space enclosed by the two first formants of corner vowels.Vowel space, which is where a speech sound, such as a vowel, is located in both "acoustic" and "articulatory" space, can be used to gauge the extent of intelligibility(p.72).

However, as reported by kwon(2010) a basic norm to measure speech intelligibility has not yet been identified; therefore,standardized speech intelligibility evaluation may be easily achieved through spontaneous speech recording samples during interviews where

participants respond to mundane, every day questions. The recording would later be evaluated to gauge the extent of intelligibility (p.72). When reduced, speech intelligibility can generate frustration and misunderstanding resulting in a noticeable reduction in communication. The notion of 'accommodation' is frequently used by speakers in attempt to adjust their speech and to sound more intelligible.

Moreover,Bradlow, Torreta and Pisoni (1995) stated that studies of within-talker variability in speech production have indicated that speakers consistently adjust their speech patterns in accordance to particular communicative requirements that would eventually have massive effects on the overall intelligibility of utterances. For instance, it has been discovered that 'clear' and 'conversational' speech within individual talkers had distinct acoustic phonetic characteristics, since clear speech was deemed slower and with higher intelligibility scores when compared to conversational speech. Therefore, talkers alter their speech patterns to both production-oriented and listener-oriented factors as requested by the specific communicative situation(p. 91).It is worth noting howeverthataccording to "Facts About Speech Intelligibility"(2016),in order to measure the sound pressure level of any given recorded speech, the recording distance along with the speech level, which in its turn varies from normal to raised; from loud to shout, must be factored in the equation (para. 16).

1.1.1.1 Speech duration/ length:

1.1.1.1.1. Recording for duration measurements

When measuring duration and comparing one word to another, effective storytelling should not be measured or analyzed in this case simply because the pace of the speech in such settings is either sped up or slowed down for extra dramatic effect, making consistent measurements impossible. Using recording conditions that remain pretty constant is more suitable to reach consistent results as the entire goal is to measure under consistent circumstances.

Cahill (2008) has suggested some factors to consider in achieving this consistency:

> Make sure the person is speaking at approximately the same rate for your measurements.
> • Be consistent in where you place your cursor to measure, and report this in the description.
> • Finally and crucially, a single recording is not a sufficient basis for drawing conclusions. (p. 4)

1.2Previous studies on gender speech intelligibility

Intending to elucidate the concept of gender speech intelligibility, several studies investigated males' and females' extent of intelligibility from different perspectives. These are the main ones:

Bradlow et al., (1995) carried a study on 10 males andfemales to investigate whether gender would be a correlate of variability in intelligibility and as expected, the group of 10 female speakers had a higher intelligibility score in addition to a higher fundamental frequency. They also found a noticeably greater fundamental frequency range for the group of female talkers than for the group of male talkers. For data analysis TIMIT database of American English was used; however, they could not be certain whether the wider fundamental frequency range leads to higher intelligibility or whether both higher intelligibility and wider frequency range are simply consequences of some other voice quality of female talkers.Furthermore, in the same study, theychose speaking rate as another talker characteristic to measure speech intelligibility where speaking rates for each of the 20 talkers were measured and considerable duration variability were observed through TIMIT database but failed to find a clear correlation between speaking rate and speech intelligibility. Moreover, vowel spaces have also been examined as acoustic-phonemic talker characteristics to indicate its correlation with speech intelligibility.Bradlow et al., (1995) predicted that relatively expanded vowel spaces would be associated with enhanced speech intelligibility scores and to this respect they selected six occurrences to the three peripheral vowels, /I,a,o/, from the sentences materials in the database.18 sentences containing the words with the target vowels from which the vowel space measurements were taken were produced by 20 talkers. Across such talkers, the overall intelligibility scores for the total set of 100 sentences and for the subset of 18 sentences were significantly correlated making it a good indicator of the talkers' overall intelligibility scores (p.94).

Kwon(2010) carried a study on 20 men and women. The purpose of this study was to compare men with women in terms of speech intelligibility, to investigate the validity of objectiveacoustic parameters related with speech intelligibility, and to try to set up the standard data for the future study in various fields in prosthodontics. After the recording of sample sounds, speechintelligibility tests by three speech pathologists and acoustic analyses were performed. Comparison of the speech intelligibility test scores andacoustic parameters such as fundamental frequency, fundamental frequency range, formant frequency, formant

ranges, vowel working spacearea, and vowel dispersion were done between men and women. In addition, the correlations between the speech intelligibility values and acoustic variables were analyzed. As a result, Women showed significantly higher speech intelligibility scores than men and there were significant differences between men and women in most of acoustic parameters used during the study (p.71).

Another study was conducted by KiliçandOgüt (2004)to determine whether speaker's gender affects speech discrimination scores, in normal hearing and simulated high frequency hearing loss situations. Listeners were twenty normal volunteers. The speech stimuli were eight phonetically balanced monosyllabic word lists, uttered by a male and a female speaker. These lists were low-pass filtered at 1500, 2500 and 3500 Hz's to represent high frequency hearing loss. To obtain speech discrimination scores, the subjects listened to each of the eight lists in a different filtering and talker conditions in a randomized order. For statistical analysis, Mann-Whitney U test was used. Results showed that in normal hearing situations, the scores obtained by male and female speeches were similar; however, statistically significant differences were observed in all of the three high frequency hearing loss situations. This indicates that female speech is significantly more difficult to discriminate than male speech in normal-hearing subjects with simulated high frequency hearing loss and probably in patients with high frequency hearing loss(p.35).

Ezquerra,(2013) carried a study at Queen Marry University of London where native speakers of Peninsular Spanish, transcribed different speech samples belonging to a group of 20 Key Stage 4 English learners of Spanish. The transcription of the different speech samples served to assess intelligibility at word level and in connected speech (sentence, passage and semi-spontaneous production). Results revealed an intelligibility loss at all levels of analysis, as well as a high correlation between intelligibility scores in the single word test and those obtained in connected speech. At a segmental level, deviations affecting vowels, especially unstressed vowels, seemed to play a more important role than inaccuracies affecting consonants. Moreover, correlation analyses underscored the importance of speech rate, pause frequency and pause duration for intelligibility loss. Thepredictability of multiple-regression models was high for speech samples obtainedat sentence and passage levels (p.5).

The bulk of studies mentioned in the above section subsume under the rubric of a descriptive quantitative research through which the issue of speech intelligibility was addressed from a pure quantitative-statistical mode of investigation. The major purpose of the studies was to expose the effect of gender on speech intelligibility within acoustic-phonetic framework. However, for constructing a rigorous understanding of the concerned issue, and in order to establish correlation between gender and speech intelligibility, a thorough qualitative exploratory investigation is a prerequisite to pointing out that women are far more intelligible than men, which is mainly attributed to articulatory dispositions such as, distinctive frequency charatersitics. For this reason, the current study is put forward to obtain a rigorous understanding of the phenomenon under investigation in first, second and third year students in the English department at Yahia Fares University-Medea, Algeria. More precisely, this investigation aims at listing out the psychologiacl dispositions that render females' speech to be more intelligible than that of males' through the application of discursive psychology as a methodology of researching, that stands in its accords with its own theoretical principles and methodological techniques.

1.3 Gender Speech

The term gender has been progressively made use of ever since the 1950s where scholars attempted to discern gender identity from biological sex mainly in the academic literature and the public discourse. Gender speech differences have been the main interest of numerous linguists to indicate how both male and female speech differs in terms of their pronunciation, tone,and vocabulary and speech intelligibility. These studies have been labeled as the study of discourse and gender where scholars have approached it in various fields namely in linguistics, communications and social psychology.

It is widely perceived that gender speech is constrained by the speech community in which conformity is inevitable. Considering the intricacy of gender discursive constructions as a social phenomenon, cultural influences must be scrutinized as it generates gendered manners of speech.An incremental interest in depicting the relationship between language and gender, which was voiced mainly by the Second Wave Feminist Movement in the 1970s, reached establishing a clear division between biological "sex" and sociocultural constructs of "gender; however, some had still maintained the misconception of considering language differences as social inequality between genders.Robin Lakoff's Language and Woman's Place, is oneof the first to emphasize gender differences in ways of speaking. Lakoff(1973)

describedher paper as, "*an attempt to provide diagnostic evidence from language use for onetype of inequity that has been claimed to exist in our society: that between the rolesof men and women"* (p. 47).

She clearly stated that women and men are given unequal role in society which results in a distinctive gender socialization making girls use a “non-forceful style” also known as “women’s language” to distance them from any access to power and thus engendering social inequality.Lakoff (1973) noted that women were stuck in a double bind simply because if they speak “women’s language” they are considered as week, but if they do not, they will be labeled as unfeminine (p.48).

Her work launched the exploration of gender and discourse. In keeping with the introspective method typical of her field, theoretical linguistics, Lakoff (1973) based her insights on her own observations and intuition. Subsequent studies applied her framework to a range of data and either confirmed her observations or found exceptions in particular contexts. Leaper and Robnett (2011) performed a meta-analysis of 29 studies that examined, among other linguistic features;Kendall and Tannen (2015) stated that:

> four forms of tentative language as described by Lakoff expressions of uncertainty, (I’m not sure whether this is right but…”) and qualifiers (somewhat); hedges including prefatory remarks (“I guess”) and modifiers (“kind of”); tag questions; and intensifiers very, so and really.

A 2011 article by leaper and Robnett women are more likely than mento use tentative language, aren't they?a meta-analysis testing for genderdifferences and moderators (as cited in Kendall &Tannen, 2015, p. 640).

The results revealed a small but statistically significant difference, indicating that women were *“somewhat more likely than men to use tentative speech*”.(p.640)
Some methodological and contextual moderators increased this effect: observation length (longer versus shorter), student status (undergraduates versus adults), group size (groups versus dyads), and physical setting (research lab versus other settings).

Lakoff(1973) accentuated that “women’s language” which relies on the attitude stating that women are marginal to the serious concerns of life, which are pre-empted by men. The ways women are expected to speak and are spoken of reflects the marginality and

powerlessness. That is to say, an appropriate women's speech is when strong expression of feeling is avoided, expression of uncertainty is favored, and means of expression in regard to subject-matter deemed 'trivial' to the 'real' world are elaborated. The personal identity of women thus is linguistically submerged; the language works against the treatment of women, as serious persons with individual views (p.45).

Liberman (2006) also estimated that women speak 8805 words and men 6073 words per day, which is taken as a solid proof that women do indeed speak more than men. A 2006 article by Liberman sex-linked lexical budget (as cited in Mehl, Vazire,-Esparza,Slatcher&Pennebaker, 2007, p. 2). Moreover, Dr. LouannBrizendine, a female psychiatrist, wrote a book several years ago called "The Female Brain" (2006) that explained,"*women devote more brain cells to communication, and that the mere act of talking can produce a high similar to the rush that addicts experience when they get a hit*." Since the time a few of those studies were conducted, other surveys have showed that men and women do speak about the same amount — roughly 16,000 words per day. However, certain differences that are still obvious. Nonetheless, a 2007 study entitled "Are Women Really More Talkative than Men" has concluded that the female talkativeness stereotype is unfounded thus, the recorded data failed to unveil a reliable sex difference in daily word use. (Mehl et al., 2007, p.2)

1.3.1Gender and conversation

Speaking of conversation,Xu (2009) stated,*"Conversation as social interaction among people is a necessity of everyday life"* (p.1). The language used by conversational participants reflects people'sthoughts, that being so, it inevitably reflects and maintains gender differences and even social inequalities. He continued assuming that people can sense inequality is maintained through hierarchical structures in conversations. It is well acknowledgedin linguistics that males and females have different communicative competence and that they tend to adopt different conversational strategies to accomplish interactional goals.

Accordantly, both genders have distinct notions of the appropriateness of an interaction, which means when to interact and how to interact correctly and appropriatelyin the way that *"spoken interaction is a joint, here-and-now social activity which is governed by two main principles: speakers take turns and speakers cooperate"*a 1994 book by Stenstrom an introduction to spoken interaction (as cited in Xu, 2009, p .1).

In other words, the strategies adopted by the participants tightly depend on the fluidity of the conversation.An important factor of successful conversation is whether the participants follow the ideal model of the conversational turn-taking system, which means one speaker speaks at a time. A turn is the basic form of conversation which presupposes a shift of speakers. Participants normally try to keep smooth speaker shifts to make conversation going.

However, in a specific stretch of talk, it is quite common for people to violate the turn-taking aspect of conversation and interrupt the current speaker and so obtain the speaking right, that is to say one simply takes the turn when one wants to speak, regardless of whether the current speaker has stopped. It is known to all that conversation is a social practice; it is a spoken interaction involving at least two or more people. Some linguists view conversation as work, which indicates that conversation is not something casual which can be engaged in spontaneously and without much conscious effect as most people think. Graddol and Swann (1989)point out that "*conversation can be regarded as a structured activity that the talk has to be sequenced, effectively opened and brought to a close"*A 1989 book by Graddol&Swann gender voices (as cited in Xu, 2009, p.5). To maintain the flow of conversation, participants should follow certain rules like what one is supposed to say, when it is appropriate to say it, how to continue the current topic or talk on a topic exactly about what is under communication and also how to relate to the turn-taking system.

When gender is taken into consideration, conversations exhibit different functions to men and women. According to Tannen (1992), to men, as they are in a hierarchical social order in which they are either one-up or one-down, conversations are negotiations in which people try to achieve and maintain the upper hand if they can, and protect themselves from other's attempts to put them down and push them around. A 1992 book by Tannenyou just don't understand. Women and men in conversation (as cited inXu, 2009, p. 5).Considering this view, men have the tendency to override others while conversing to preserve independence and preclude failure whereas; women consider conversation as a mere

negotiation of closeness in which they attempt to shield themselves from those who tried to push them away.

In mixed-sex conversations, communication can be a continual balancing act, juggling the conflicting needs for intimacy and independence, because women and men tend to develop differentiated communicative competence to achieve their interactional goals.

Xu (2009) stated that evidence from a range of studies shows that gender differences in communicativecompetence are presented in male and female speakers' different use of particularconversational strategies. A lot of research confirmed the stereotype that women tendto adopt the cooperative while men competitive conversational strategies(p.6).

It has been suggested that conversational topics have different survival rates depending upon whether they are introduced by women or men hence, the topics initiated by men are more successful than that of women. A 1983 book by Fishman the work women do (as cited in Xu, 2009, p.6). Women have the tendency to cooperate while men tend to adopt non cooperative strategies in order to reinforce their dominance by using non cooperative feedback signals such as delayed minimal responses or evensilence to show a lack of interest, indifference and impatience and tend to interrupt tochange topics to their favor.

Women do not intend to dominate asmen do even if they are well versed in a topic.They are more likely to behave asfacilitative and supportive conversationalists who respond positively to others by accommodating their speech. Women have a common tendency to show solidarity and support with the addressees through the use of interactional styles in addition to politeness devices.

It is claimed that what is uttered in a turn could initiate a conversation or end it. Through speech, the speakers should attempt to make the listeners understand and anticipating a response; otherwisethere would be no conversation. That is what makes the turn primordial and inevitable as it constructs a part of the structuralorganization of the conversation, and what is said is part of the interactional andpragmatic strategies adopted by the speakers to make the listeners understand theirintention. However, it is very commonthat speakers do not keep to the one-at-a-time rule.

A conversation withoutany simultaneous speech indicating receipt of information agreement and involvementis not a very spontaneous lively or personal conversation. It also noted that women are more likely interrupted or overlapped by men than the other way around. Afterquantitative study, Zimmerman and West (1975)labeled the two sorts of irregularitythey identified in the transcribed conversations as overlaps and interruptions. Overlaps are instances of slight over-anticipation by the next speaker, caused by the use of minimal responseswhich often signal involvement in the conversation; while interruptions are violationsof the turn-taking rules of conversation. A 1975 paper by Zimmerman& Westsex roles, interruptions and silences in conversation (as cited xu, 2009, p.7).

Based on their analysis of eleven mixed-sex conversations,Zimmerman and West (1983) found out that only two of the total forty-eight interruptions were caused by women and women used no overlaps in conversation with men while men performed nine overlaps. These again indicate that in mixed-sex conversations, men infringe women's right to speak, especially women's right to finish a turn, while women are concerned not to violate the man's turn but to wait until he has finished. In a more recent study (the researchers found that the men interrupted more often than the women (the average was 75 per cent male interruptions to 25 per cent female).It has been concluded that the gender of participants has more important conversational consequences and that interruptions are one way on which power relations may be worked out. Their findings have beensupported by many studies followed. A 1983 book by West & Zimmerman small insults: a study of interruptions incross-sex conversations between unacquainted persons (as cited in Xu, 2009, p.9)

Thus, women's speech is currently dissolved psychologically, as discursivepsychology tried to unearth the psychological dispositions that enable women's language to be neither week nor unfeminine.

1.4 Discursive Psychology

Despite language being psychologically and socially oriented, cognitive psychology treats language as a resource that reveals what exactly takes place within people's minds/ brains making it insufficient to elucidate the true inconspicuous aspect of discourse; therefore, discursive psychology considers language as its topic, examining the ways in which people talk about or construct things such as subjectivity, attitude, memories and emotions.

Discursive psychology rose into prominence at the end of the 1980s in England which was thought of one the most considerable theoretical /methodological developments in contemporary Social Psychology. DP has been constructed out of a combination of a theoretical perspective and an empirical research model offering a novel outlook in the psychological field. A (1992) journal by Eduards and Potter stated, "*rather than seeing the study of discourse as a pathway to individuals inner life;whether it be cognitive processes, motivations or some other mental stuff we see psychological issues as constructed and deployed in the discourse itself*" A 1992 bookdiscursive psychology byEdwards and Potter(as cited in Guzman, Stecher& Rueda,2016,p.510).

Discursive psychology is characterized by a meta-theoretical emphasis on anti-realism and constructionism. That is, DP emphasizes the way versions of the world, of society, events, and inner psychological worlds, are produced in discourse. On the one hand, this leads discursive psychologists to be concerned with participants' constructions and how they are accomplished and undermined.On the other hand, it leads to recognition of the constructed and contingent nature of researchers' own versions of the world.A 2008 book by Potter and Hepburn handbook of constructionist research(as cited in Potter, 1997, p. 188).

According to Potter (1997), DP is taken as an analytic commitment to studying discourse as texts and talk in socialpractices. That is, the focus is not on language as an abstract entity such as a lexiconand set of grammatical rules (in linguistics), a system of differences (in structuralism),a set of rules for transforming statements .Instead, it isthe medium for interaction analysis of discourse becomes then analysis of whatpeople do. A 1996 book by Billing arguing and thinking: a rhetorical approach to social psychology (as cited in Potter, 1997, p.188)

In the same line of thought Wiggins &Potter stated (2007) stated:

> Discursive psychology begins with psychology as it faces people living their lives. It studies how psychology is constructed, understood and displayed as people interact in everyday and more institutional situations. And this in turn encourages us to respecify the very object psychology. (p.73)

Discursive psychology does not initiate its research based on mental investigations, behavior or neural events that took place during interaction but instead, it focuses on constructions or orientations where moments of understanding and comprehension are exposed through interaction in a given setting.

According to Wiggins & Potter (2007):

> Discursive psychology is not focused on discourse because it is interested in the psychology of language as a topic amongst others (prejudice, social influence, etc.) as it has been traditionally understood. Indeed, it takes a very different approach to language than is common in psychology. It is focused on discourse because it is the primary arena for action, understanding and inter subjectivity. (p.73)

1.4.1 Gender speech in discursive psychology

Speech of both genders differs in terms of tone, vocabulary, pronunciation, communication, subjectivity and speech intelligibility that are believed to be psychologically oriented. Both tone and the use of lengthy expressions for communication are hallmarksto speech intelligibility which is highly noticeable in females' speech, as they are believed to be more emotional than males and, therefore, more intelligible.

Discursive Psychology stands as an analytical technique for conducting qualitative researches. It seeks at approaching the relationship between people, practices and institutions by focusing on human interaction in intricate settings. What makes this analytic approach so sophisticated is the combination social action with the assessment of cognition and personality in discursive psychology. Its main focus is on the interaction between participants in terms of their orientations, perspectives and constructions which would be eventually recorded and represented in order to measure and study "the world as it happens" a 1990 book by Boden the world as it happens: ethnomethodology and conversationanalysis.(as cited in Hepburn& Wiggins, 2007, p.1). This renders collection of empirical data possible. Discursive psychology supplies researchers with a scale of analysis which validates new ways in which mundane and/or institutional settings can be placed under scrutiny such as family conversations, telephone calls, sex offender therapy and politic speeches.

One of the notable features of discourse research is that the best way to start making sense of a set of materials like this may be to consider other materials or other sorts of findings. At its most basic, a good feel for some of the standard features of everyday and institutional talk is essential for producing high-quality analyses provide a basic introduction and overview.

1.4.2 Participants subjectivity

Discursive psychology's main concern has been the ways in which talk manages subject-object side in social interaction.The object side issue was howspeakers or writers build the factual status of what they are sayingin reporting versions of things or events. In other words, discursive psychologists examine how descriptions and accounts are produced as reflections of things they are about. In subject side however, description and accounts reflect a speaker's stake and interest in a topic (Hepburn and Wiggins, 2007, p31).Speakers' subjectivity has gained a wide scope of discursive psychologists' interest and it has mainly been addressed as an issue in its major part, in terms of speakers' stake and interest.No matter how appealing is for discursive psychologists to highlight subjectivity (participants' stake) as a prerequisite to any discourse, and as far as communication strategies are concerned, there seems to be a number of procedures to follow so that to manage the participants' subjectivity.

1.4.2.1 Stake as a Participant's Concern

Discursive psychologists focused on the significance that speakers put on matters related to stake and interest. Potter (1997) further elaborated the notion of stake by stating:

People treat each other as entities with desires, motives, institutional allegiances and so on, as having a stake in their actions. Referencing stake is one principal way of discounting the significance of an action or reworking its nature. For example, a blaming can be discounted as merely a product of spite; an offer may be discounted as an attempt to influence. (p. 196)

No matter how many issues discourse and conversation analysts face, there happens to be a few well-structured procedures to deal with it. Regarding the steps that exist to manage turn taking, it is commonly predictable that other steps formulated to terminate conversations, justify claims or to undermine opponents exist as well.

1.4.2.2 Inoculation Theory

The inoculation theory was proposed by McGuire (1961), he defined the Inoculation Theory as:

> A response to a situation where the goal is to persuade someone not to be persuaded by another. The theory is a model for building resistance to persuasion attempts by exposing people to arguments against their beliefs and giving them counter arguments to refute attacks. The theory therefore offers mechanisms by which communication is used to help people defend their beliefs. (p. 1)

1.4.2.3 Need for the Theory

Countless attempts are being made on an everyday basis to persuade people in one direction or another. Thereby there is a need to know how such persuasion attempts can be fought. The theory offers up a way in which resistance to persuasion can be achieved.

1.4.2.4 Comparison with Vaccination

There is tight comparison between the Inoculation Theory and the concept of vaccination. In vaccination, a weakened form of the virus is injected into an individual in order to build resistance to the disease. A similar procedure is used to ‘inoculate’ an individual from attacks on his belief. That being said, a small number of contrary arguments called inoculation message are frequently delivered to people. These individuals who have been exposed to the weaker argument develop a defense system that helps them to retain theirbeliefs and not change their attitudes when they are confronted with a stronger form of the argument (Mcguire, 1961, p.1).

1.4.2.5 Stake inoculation

According to Potter (1996), researchers' main interest is the way in which people construct representations which resist to being labeled as products of stake.The action of reporting events or representing people can often be undermined by relating it to an interest. There are various ways of resisting such undermining; one of these can be called 'stake inoculation' just as flu inoculation is intended to prevent flu, a stake inoculation is intended to prevent a claim being undermined as a product of stake. A 1996 book by Potterrepresenting reality: discourse, rhetoric and social construction (as cited in Potter, 1997, p.197).

Potter (1996) also added, "*stake inoculation' is a counter-dispositional practice in which the producer of a possibly dubious factual claim prefaces it with a self-characterization as predisposed to see things differently*" A 1996 book by Potterrepresenting reality: discourse, rhetoric and social construction (as cited in Hepburn & Wiggins, 2007, p. 46).

1.4.3 Emotional disposition

In addition to the primordial role emotions play in communication, studies on emotional speech have verified that there are strong correlates between speech and emotion. The most commonly studied emotions in related studies are chosen from the basic emotions such as happiness, sadness, fear, disgust, anger, and surprise (Murray and Arnott, 1996, p.1). Relatively little work was conducted to analyze how speaker's emotional state generates variation in the speech signal which has been undertaken by psychologists remaining separate from mainstream speech science. Modern research proposed sufficientendeavorment involved in producing legitimate description of pragmatic variations in speech.

1.4.4 Pragmatic-based speech variations

Given that speech is the principal means of communication as noted by Murray and Arnott (1996,p.1) between humans, both for transfer of information and for social interaction elucidating the mechanisms of speech has been one of the main interests to scientific research, acquainting with a richness of knowledge concerning the production of human speech. The main problem encountered in dealing with speech that has turned out to be a main challenge to researchers is variability. Speech is produced with remarkable variability, at both verbal and vocal levels, among different speakers as well as by a single speaker. For instance,speakers never use the same words to say the same thing twice whether consciously or unconsciously; however, if instances of the same word is used twice, it will not be

acoustically identical.According to Murray and Arnott (1996), there are various reasons for such variability:

> First, speakers tend to change their speaking style in response to a number of conditions related to their environment and their status relative to those to whom they are speaking. Second, different emotional states will affect the speech production mechanism of a speaker in different ways, and lead to acoustical changes in their speech; these changes can be perceived as being due to emotion by listeners. Third, a speaker will speak more carefully to a listener with whom they are not familiar and will speak to a child differently from the way they would speak to a peer. Fourth, physical stress due to vibration or acceleration may produce acoustic changes in speech due to direct action on the vocal apparatus itself. (p. 1)

All four of these factors were elaborated to explain how they are mainly independent within thespeaker, but all are present to a greater or lesser extent in all speech. Considering the changes they produce within the speech signal, researchers considered them of great importance since each one of these aforementioned factors generate a number of speech variabilities. Such variablities are unconsciously produced which makes it difficult to quantify the changes that occurand to lay out a thorough description of how they are produced.

Studies in this area have traditionally been in the domain of psychologists, and there is very little overlap between psychology and the speech sciences.

The majority of speech scientists have been interested in dealing with “normal speech", that is speech which does not display any of these variabilities, which have eventually been considered as unnecessary complications by speech scientists thus, successful work on analysis, and recognition of speech has been achieved under the constraints of variabilities per se.

1.4.5 Acoustic-based speech Variability

In addition to the four factors (noted in section 1.4.4) which are defined within pragmatic forces, underlying speech variability, Murray and Arnott(1996) discussed paramount factors, affecting speech intelligibility, with respect to a number of phonetic-acoustic features prior to speech variability. First, intonation isone of the main factors in intelligibility of speech. It has been identified as the intonation contour of the utterance, and in particular the placement of wordandutterance-level accents; hence, this is also of major importance for naturalness, as an incorrect intonation contour immediately suggests an

unnatural voice. Second, variability(as discussed in section 1.4.4)is of high importance for speech intelligibility although it is not wholly clear how different speaking situations correlate to acoustic changes. Similarly, changes due to stress are very poorly defined, and several stress factors are often present simultaneously. Vocal emotion factors, while still not rigidly defined, have perhaps been examined more than speaking style and stress (Murray and Arnott, 1996, P.2).

However, despite the importance of the above mentionedvariabilities (mentioned in section1.4.4), it is worth noting that one of discursive psychology's key concerns has been the ways in which talk manages subject–object relations, or mind–world relations .The 'objects side' issue was how, in producing versions of things and events, speakers (or writers of text) build the factual status or objectivity of what they are saying. The 'subject side' is an integral part of those same practices of description and accountability. By working up the subjective status of an account, generally somebody else's account, its objectivity is undermined. Subjective or 'subject side' accounts are ones that reflect a speaker's 'stake and interest' in a topic. A 1992 book by Edwards and Potterdiscursive psychology (as cited in Hepburn & Wiggins, 2007, p. 31).

1.4.6 Managing Speakers' Subjectivity

To label which stretch of talk is objective or subjective, there are matters attended to in the talk itself. The main task of discursive psychology is to analyze and examine how, in the service of what and on what occasion the interactional practice of discourse manages its objectivity and subjectivity.

Subject- object relations can be managed by the use, say, of model verbs and numerous subjectives and conditionals.

According to Edwards and Potter, 2005:

> DP has extended its analytical interest in how the 'subject side' is managed, beyond the operation of stake and interest in factual discourse, toward how psychological states generally, including dispositions of all kinds, are attended to as part of talk's situated practices.

A 2005 book; Edwards and Potterdiscursive psychology, mental states and description (as cited in Hepburn & Wiggins, 2007, p.32)

This includes extending the study of dispositional uses of modals such as will, would and going to or gonna, as in 'I'm not gonna hit an old lady' A 2006 book by Edwards to be honest': sequential uses of honesty phrases in talk-in-interaction research on Language and social interaction (as cited in Hepburn & Wiggins, 2007, p.32).

Hepburn and Wiggins (2007); however, clearly stated that discursive psychology focuses on two related themes which are*, "(1) how people handle their accountability for what they say in terms of dispositions to say it; (2) how manner of vocal delivery, including intonation, laughter and other non-verbal features of talk, handles a speaker's subjective stance"* (p.33).

1.4.6.1 Managing dispositions to say things

The original DP theme for subjectivity was stake and interest(as noted in 1.4.2), mainly in the sense of self-interest. Nonetheless, stake and interest constitute a very small part in the grand scheme of distinct kinds of investment that people may claim or deny, concerning the content of what they say. Hepburn and Wiggins (2007) elaborated that there is a range of commonsense kinds of tendencies or dispositions to act or talk in particular ways. Dispositions can be psychological, emotional, cognitive, epistemic, moral, situational or character-based. Retaining an interest in subject–object relations, include a range of ways in which speakers may show that they are not disposed to get things wrong. They also stated that,"*Dispositional ways of getting things wrong include being prone to tell tall stories, being prone to exaggerate, being prejudiced, and being paranoid or disposed to moan or complain."* (p.33)

The range of devices (as noted in section 1.4.2) represent major DP areas of research, where the task is to identify how they function and indicate the speaker's actual bias, but as actively managed practices of social interaction.

Hepburn and Wiggins (2007) also focus on two general ways in which people may be at pains to manage subject-side dispositions, *"(1) by showing themselves as not disposed to make too much of things (e.g., to exaggerate, draw extraordinary inferences, etc.); (2) by showing themselves as reluctant to say negative things (e.g., to complain or criticize, or adopt a prejudiced position)"* (p.33).

1.4.6.2 Not disposed to say too much

Various studies have taken up an issue first developed by Harvey Sacks regarding the practice of 'doing being ordinary' A 1984 book by Sackson doing being ordinary (as cited in Hepburn & Wiggins, 2007, p.33).This usually returns to attempting to neither prove oneself as not disposed to exaggerate, nor to experience and report extraordinary events, nor make too much of mundane events "*You cannot have a nervous breakdown because you happened to see an automobile accident. You cannot make much more of it than what anybody would make of it*" (Hepburn and Wiggins, 2007, P.33).

Using devices such as 'at first I thought … and then I realized …' help in managing subjectivity as they prove that what is being reported or claimed is in fact in the world and not a figment of the speaker's imagination; thereby, the reporter is immediately considered to be disposed to see things as ordinary. These devices can be called counter dispositionals, in that they provide ways of managing a report's potential subjectivity, including its stake or interest. In implying a disposition to see things as ordinary, for example, a speaker counters the notion that they might be disposed to see, imagine or infer those things that they are claiming to have witnessed. Hepburn and Wiggins (2007) stated, "*the use of the device displays sensitivity to normal, rational accountability not only there and then at the time of the witnessing, but here and now on the occasion of its telling"*(p.34).

A different way to report extraordinary experiences, is by formulating cases in an extreme way, that is, the use of what Pomerantz (1986) termed 'extreme case Formulations' (ECFs for short).

1.4.6.3 Extreme case formulation

According toHepburn and Wiggins (2007),Pomerantzdescribed ECFs as:

> descriptions and assessments that include extreme, ultimate or end-of-the-continuum expressions such as never, always, brand new, everybody, the best and nobody. They maximize the quality or state of affairs to which they are attached, generally when there are grounds for expecting an unsympathetic hearing.

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A 1986 book by Pomerantz extreme case formulations: a way of legitimizing claims (as cited in Hepburn& Wiggins, p.34).

ECFs provide a context in which speakers attempt to be not disposed to get things wrong: 'ECFs are factually brittle, in that an extreme or universalizing statement (''I know nothing,'' ''nobody comes here" ,''you always say that'') risks easy refutation by a single exception, invites being taken nonliterally, and may be treated as an index of the speaker's attitude (subjectivity) rather than as a straightforward description of the world. In this regard, Pomerantz (1986) identified the central features of this device. She locates ECFs within a broader class of "practices of description," and provides a number of examples including "brand new," "completely innocent," "he was driving perfectly," "he didn't say a word," "I really don't know who he is," "no time," "forever," "every time," and "everyone".(Extreme-Case Formulation, para. 1)

Pomerantz (1986) defined extreme case formulations through opting for a number of linguistic cues rather than by logical or grammatical rule. In fact, they cut across a variety of grammatical categories, notably the "superlative" forms of adjectives (best, most, biggest, least, etc.); a collection of other semantically extreme adjectives (total, absolute, whole, etc.); and various adverbs (always, never, perfectly, completely, etc.), nouns (nothing, everybody, etc.), and phrases (as good as it gets, forever, brand new, etc.)(p.1).

Furthermore, Pomerantz (1986) emphasized the correlation between complaining and extreme case formulations. It involves depicting a given setting as a "*legitimate complainable*." This represents the offense committed and/or the suffering endured in a way such that it would not be dismissed as minor. In order to legitimize a complaint and depict the complainable situation as worthy of the complaint, a speaker may portray the offense and/or the suffering with Extreme Case formulations. In both accusing and defending the participants often present their strongest cases, including specifying Extreme Cases of their claims (p.228).

According to Hepburn and Wiggins there are three ways of handling the subject side of ECFs:

> First, 'softeners' are extreme expressions usually qualified, under some kind of challenge. Second, ECFs as expressions of investment where subjective investment, rather than undermining truth or objectivity, is part of a display of sincerity, genuineness or affiliation. Third, irony and other 'non-literal' uses of ECFs, in which, again, the extremity of ECFs is used as a resource, rather than a threat to their objectivity. Ironic uses and their receipts are often accompanied by laughter but, in any case, all these ways of handling subjectivity are produced interactionally. (p 35)

1.4.6.4 Not disposed to be negative

As another device to manage one's subjectivity along with the rest of devices (pointed in section 1.4.1) To display oneself as not disposed to be negative, is by showing oneself as disinclined to make negative inferences and statements or to have a tendency to talk onthe basis of prejudice rather than observation or sound judgment. Furthermore, displaying oneself as not being negative may also mean the use of softening of ECFs, also called softeners. It has been stressed that claims can be legitimized and grounded by offering them as counterdispositional: as reluctantly arrived at, or even precisely counter, not onlyto what others may think, but also to one's own presumptions and biases. This way, people can deny that they believe what suits them to believe to steer clear of any possible accusation of prejudice or bias (Hepburn and Wiggins, 2007, p.36).

Another way people can display reluctance to be negative and that is when they are complaining which usually involves ECFs. According to Hepburn and Wiggins (2007), Drew (1998) stated, *"Complainers generally attend to their motivesor grounds for the complaint, as an integral part of the complaint'sproduction*" (p. 37).Complaints do not immediately signify that the complainer portrays any sort of inclination to complain or moan. In fact, Hepburn and Wiggins (2007)described a collection of sharp ways of lexicalizing such dispositions: "*moan, whinge, harp on, go on andon, etc., just as there are words for other dispositional reasons forspeaking (racism, sexism, paranoia, boasting, axe-grinding, etc.). The very use and existence of these terms indicates subjectivity-management as a speaker's concern."* (p.37)

Moreover, complaints usually display some kind of grievance or transgression, mostly against the complainer, which automatically indicates that the given complaints have a possibly motivated or dispositional basis. Yet 'subjectivity' does not always distort the complaint's factual grounding as it may also enhance the credibility and thereby the factuality of the complaint which legitimately signals the long- suffering and the disinclination of being negative. That is to say, complaining does not only require abolishing any traces of subject-side basis but, instead, attempting to manage it to get the best effect.

According to Hepburn and Wiggins (2007), there are four ways ofhandling the subject-side of complaints.First, announcements are used when an upcoming complaint is projected inways that signal the complainer's stance or attitude. Second, laughter can be a counter dispositional when accompanying the complaint announcement, and/or its

subsequentdeliveryand receipt. Third, displacement is when the speaker complainsabout something incidental to what would be expected to be the main offence. "*Displacement also includes prevarication, which is the ability to lie or produce utterances which do not correspond with reality*" (Samuel, Viol, &Xinyi, 2014, para. 17).Fourth, uses of lexical descriptions such as 'moan' and 'whinge'formulate subjectivity, investment and a disposition to complain. (p.37)

1.4.7 Intonation and subjectivity

Sound patterns are sometimes linked to 'attitude' and 'emotion' in mundane speechand aims to ground interpretative glosses of themeaning of participants' vocal delivery and reactions in measurable phonetic features of talk. An abundance of literature concerning emotional expression is built on normative linguistic examples or psychologicalexperiments rather than studies ofinteractional, everyday talk.

However; it is worth stating that the descriptions of attitude and emotions in talk are still not clear outside of the participants own descriptions, that is to say that no previous research had specified how this procedure must be undertaken.

In this respect, Hepburn and Wiggins (2007) suggest:

> When emotional or attitudinal states are formulated by participants themselves in the course of social interaction – that is, when they say things such as 'you sound happy' – these formulations may occur in the absence of any measurable acoustic features of the other person's speech, to warrant them.

A 1996 book by Local and Walker journal of pragmatics (as cited in Hepburn and Wiggins, 2007, p. 42).

Differences between female and male speech have been grabbing many people's attention ever since the very first wave of feminism came out. Feminist-minded people consider these so called gender speech variations as a symbol of gender inequality; however, it is impossible to claim that such developments will distort the distinction between male and female speech.(Orazbekovaa,Shyngyssovab, Mamyrovab&Zhumabayevab,2015) give an elaborate depiction of gender speech differences by stating that women have the tendency to use exclamatory and interrogative intonation while men use a rather downward, smooth

intonation. That is, female speech is characterized with more varied intonation patterns in comparison to the one of males (p. 11). Such varied female intonation patterns play a huge role in speech intelligibility as (Marklund&Zackariasson, 2014) confirmed that there is a straightforward connection between intonation and intelligibility after conducting a quantitative cross section study. The results showed that a monotone intonation reduces intelligibility while a lively, varied and high intonation increases intelligibility. Female speech differences are often associated with female emotionality which results in an excessive use of standard pronunciation and prestigious forms of grammar while males' speech is usually characterized with stiffness and reticence (p.13).

1.4.7.1 Voice modulation and subjective expression

Speakers are fairly inclined to adjust their vocal delivery as a conventionallyunderstandable index of a particular subjective. In other words, people feel the urgeto accommodate their speech in accordance with the setting in fear of not being understood. Stokoe and Hepburn (2005) described a phenomenonthey call 'intonational mirroring'.

This phenomenon occurs when people complain about each other, or report suspicious activities like vocal noises, screams, shouting etc. Through voice quality,coordinated with their talk's lexical content, the reporter can signal asubject-side stance or 'stake' on the matter.

Accordingly, Hepburn and Wiggins pointed out one interesting feature of analysis "which is how features of vocal delivery, along with the talk's content, were relevant to the talk's major interactional business and setting". A 2005 book by Stokoe& Hepburn You can hear a lot through the walls': noise formulations in neighbor complaints. Discourse and society (as cited in Hepburn & Wiggins, 2007, p. 42). This helped identify whether they were making a complaint or else expressing concern which could all be realized through voice modulation, and vocal mirroring permitting various kinds of alignment and misalignment with, or subject-side stance on, the activities being reported.

As far as subject-object relationship is concerned, evaluating how subject-object relations are managed on daily basis has become an experimental concern in speech as it constitutes part of a general analytical preoccupation. The subject side often opposes the object side as it, as subjectivity is always displayed as a distortion and threat to report's objectivity, reliability or truth. Sometimesthey work in unison, especially where motives and other dispositionalsare offered as running counter to the speaker's claims – counter-

dispositionals– but also where the proposed disposition is somethingsuch as sincerity, honesty or a tendency to speak plainly.

On the other hand, counter-dispositionalsare themselves dispositionals, but are exclusively used to indicate that whatever is being said is factual and credible. For instance, a complaint's objectivity can be undermined when the complainer is inclined or disposed to moan or whinge, yet its objectivitycan be enhanced by providing a counter-disposition. What we have called 'stake and interest'. A 1992 book by Edwards and Pottertoward a discursive psychology of remembering.(as noted in the above section 1.4.5) is a particular kindof dispositional consideration relevant to factual claims; whereas, stake inoculation is a particular kind of counter-disposition

CONCLUSION

The chapter has provided a thorough description of the review of literature of the study being investigated. The first section tackles speech intelligibility including its various definitions and its areas of investigations. The second section dealt with a range of previous studies on speech intelligibility to locate a gap for the current study. The third section covered gender speech both theoretically and practically. Finally, the fourth section presented Discursive Psychology as the theory that builds this research.

Chapter two: Research Methodology

Introduction

The present chapter intends to provide a clear portrait of the methodology applied in this research. To begin with, the chapter displays and discusses the rationaleconcerning the research design and the methods used for data collection. Furthermore, a profound description of the study context and the participants along with the instruments of data collection procedures and a description for data analysis procedures are tackled. Finally, mixed methoddata analysis, study limitations and delimitations are explained.

2.1 An overall research design

The aim of the current research is to investigate the psychological dispositions that render female English students' higher speech intelligibility in comparison to male students. Therefore, a sub-type of a case study entitled a single case with embedded units' type of study would serve the purpose of the research through employing an exploratory approach. A case study is a method that allows the researcher to debunk a particular phenomenon by understanding its activities within its own setting. Baxter and jack (2008) defined a case study as, "*an approach to research that facilitates exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources*" (p.544). That is, a case study takes different sources to thoroughly comprehend a phenomenon while a single case with embedded units' type of study, which is one sub-type of a case study,was specifically selected in order to explore a given phenomenon on the same case yet with sub-units (different categories of participants) (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p.550).

The phenomenon sought to be investigated in this research is speech intelligibility which is employed, as noted in chapter 1 section 1, as the device to judging the degree of speaker's speech recognition. Therefore, an investigation of the speakers' speech, as being a primary conduit is crucial for studying the concerned phenomenon. Accordingly, to explore the different psychological dispositions underlying speakers' (females and males) intelligibility and to answer the current research question from a psychological-based perspective, EFL students' oral performances, at Yahia Fares University were observed

during their speaking/oral sessions. Besides, 14 students (7 males /7 females) participated in semi-structured interviews so as to explore the stated problem.

2.2 Context

The research being investigated takes place during the second semester of the academic year 2019/2020 with first, second and third year students in the English department at Yahia Fares University-Medea, Algeria. The main reasons behind choosing Yahia Fares University students is due to their availability and an administrative permission, in addition to the students' English communicative competence level that helped in the flow of the research process.

The English department of Yahia Fares University was founded in 2014, with about 12 teachers and more than 100 students. However, it contains now about 25 teachers, and more than 400 students. The department offers several degrees, License Degree which consists of 3 LMD school years followed up by Master Degree which consists of two years, to Algerian students and other students with various nationalities. The main purpose of the License and Master programs is to prepare students through equipping them with certain language knowledge and skills, to be ready for the future occupations (Teaching), or for further studies (Doctoral studies). concerning this, the first three formative years curriculum includes courses corresponding to the goals set by the Competency-based approach, mainly the students' English communicative competence. For example, first, second and third year EFL students receive respectively, speaking courses, where cooperative learning strategies (learning through games, role playing…) are the dominant learning modes, which target students' improvements of speaking skills in real life learning situations.

2.3 Participants

The current research required two modes of data collection instruments including: Observation and semi-structured interviews.

At first, we attended six speaking/oral sessions with EFL first, second, and third year students at Yahia Fares University. Second, werecorded 26 different answers grouping13 male and 13 female students in a spontaneous manner (the participants were kept uninformed of the recording of their answers so as to obtain the most valid and reliable results). Third, 14

students (7males/7females) among the 26 ones were chosen to participate in the semi-structured interview.
A thorough description of the participants:

2.3.1 Students

Listing out the psychological dispositions(dispositionals/counter dispositionals)behind English female students' higher speech intelligibility is the focus of this inquiry. Sociolinguistics and phonetic enquiries proved that females' speech is acoustically more intelligible in comparison to males' leaving a wide gap for psychology, more specifically, discursive psychology, to reveal the psychological dispositions underlying this phenomenon. Therefore, audio-recordings of both males' and females' voices will allow us to compare both genders' speech and analyze it acoustically, (measuring the pitch and the formant frequencies of both genders' speech) and contently (analyzing subject/object side). This holds true for the reason (as motivated in chapter 1 section 1.4.2) that if a speaker is too subjective while conversing,he/she is less intelligible.

The participants of this study comprised of 26EFL first, second and third year Yahia Fares University students whose ages range between 18 to 23 years old, sharing the same mother tongue (Arabic) with an equal gender distribution : (50% were males and 50% were females). Choosing an equal number of female and male students helped in measuring and comparing the tone and the length of the speech of the individuals so as to prove the validity of the preliminary observation.

The participants were randomly selected from first, second and third year English students for observing their oral performances during speaking classes. This was for the objective to receive spontaneous responses due to the following reasons: first, the priority was not the students' English competence but rather the speech itself. Besides, the English department female students' number is much larger than that of males; therefore, we had to gather an equal male/female number for the observation from different years to fill the number gap. As for the interview, we applied purposeful sampling, that is to say, we intentionally selected the individuals (14 students) to learn and understand the central phenomenon. The sampled participants (14 students from first, second and third years) were among the selected 26 students and were chosen for the following reasons: first, they proved to acquire a good and accurate command of the English language, unlike the first data

collection instrument (observation), having a high proficiency level in English was a condition for conducting the semi-structured interview to obtain reliable data. The conducted semi-structured interview tackled a prevalent theme that required language competence. Moreover, students were only designated based on their language communicative competencesin order for them to perform positively in the semi-structured interview. In this sense, we asked the teachers of our sampling participants to provide us with a list of the best students from each class be it first, second or third year depending on the students' performances during oral conversations and discussions. Finally, according to Creswell, purposeful sampling is an approach applied when the researchers want either to confirm or disconfirm a phenomenon; therefore, it is the most adequate approach for our inquiry (p. 207).

The reason behind selecting students from first, second and third year instead of having participants who belong to the same level lays behind the fact that third year English students lack language communicative competencethat represents a primary condition for our sampling participants and also due to the fact that female students outnumber male students. So in order to fill the participants' gap, we tried to find better alternatives from the second year, yet, the same problem was faced; only few students had convenient language communicative competence. After doing some research and listening carefully to the audio-records of the observations, we managed to find some students from first year with a fair communicative competence.

2.4 Instruments for data collection

To profoundly decipher the phenomenon of this research, we used a mixed-method data collection process.Data were collected from two different sources using two different data collection instruments to insure the credibility and the reliability of the study.

The study at hand stands for an exploratory qualitative case study, more specifically, single case with embedded units' type of study that employed two data collection methods for multiple reasons. Mixed method-based praxes are used in this study because our data is qualified quantified;therefore, the analysis is interpretive and statistical. Furthermore, exploratory research tends to answer specific type of research questions namely: what, why and how and in this research, the main question is posed as "WHAT are the psychological dispositions (dispositionals/ counter dispositionals) laying behind female English students'

higher conversational speech intelligibility". Also, this study aims to explore the phenomenon with varying levels of depth and this is feasible via the application of exploratory research. Moreover, exploratory research is utilized in tackling new problems on which little or no previous research has been done to investigate that specific phenomenon.

Since exploratory research is employed, we decided to use the most popular primary data collection method used in exploratory studies which is a semi-structured interview.Besides, we employed observation as another method for data collection for a better comprehension of the phenomenon under investigation.

The employment of two different data sources in research is called triangulation. Mackey and Gass (2005) argued, "*Triangulation involves using multiple research techniques and multiples sources of data in order to explore the issue from all feasible perspectives. Using the technique of triangulation can aid in credibility, transferability, conformability and dependability*" (p.181).

To abide by the aforementioned statement, we decided to go with two data collection models to create a reliable, credible work,and todeeply understand the issue from different angles. For these reasons, data collection methods including semi-structured interviews and observation were engaged.

2.4.1 Observation

Observation was the first data collection instrument used in this inquiry for a number of reasons. Before initiating this investigation, we noticed inside our classrooms that female English students could deliver speech in a more intelligible manner in comparison to male students as their speech was marked with the use of higher tone and lengthier expressions. In order to check the validity of this observation, we attended first, second and third year students' oral classes at Yahia Fares Universityand tried to listen and observe students delivering oral presentations. After, we recorded the speech of 26 speakers(13 male and 13 female students). We chose a pair of students (1 male/ 1 female) to answer one common everyday life question (Appendix A)that any speaker has the potentiality to answer in order to compare and analyze the tone and the length of the speech delivered by the pair separately. Some grammar and language mistakes were spotted in the records; therefore, grammar

mistakes and language incompetence were not taken into account in this data collection instrument (observation) since data is statistically analyzed so as to extract the pitch values and the speech duration that have no direct relation with language proficiency.

At first, we attended 6 oral classes of first, second and third EFL students, each took about one hour and half, to verifyour assumptions on whether female English students are more intelligible in comparison to male students is valid or not, and after, we attended 4 classes with first, second and third years to record the answers of 26 participants of our population. Each class took about 30 minutes to finish recording.

According to Mackey and Gass (2005), "*observation, as a method of data collection, requires researchers to immerse within the setting of the inquiry and observe the dimensions and establish the relationships between the aim and the participants of the study"* (p.175). The type of observation used in this researchis a combination between unstructured field notes that provide descriptions of the context and the participants of the population, along with the audio records. The aim was to collecta considerable amount of data for an in depth analysis of our research context be it thespeech length of the participants or their pitch.

The purpose of selecting observation as a data collection instrument is to measure the length of the speech and the tone (pitch) of the speaker. Cell phone audio records provide time measurement and the needed data for pitch analysis. That is to say, we were able to know the amount of time consumed by the speaker which indicated the speech duration when he/she isansweringthe question.By this, we were covering the length question. As for the tone, we used a computer software program named Praat thatprovided diagrams and statistics that measuredthe tone (pitch) produced. These measurements (the length and the pitch) provided the credibility of our classroom observation that was considered to be the first step towards initiating this research.

2.4.2 Semi-structured interview

In this type of data collection instrument, researchers tend to prepare a set of questions before the interview yet; they still have the freedom to manipulate the interview content according to what is needed (Mackey &Gass, 2005, p. 173). As this research is an exploratory, qualitative case study that aims at listing out the psychological dispositions behind English female students' higher speech intelligibility, a semi-structured interview

provided the data that corresponds to the purpose of this inquiry as we could gain information that experimental strategies cannot provide.

The observed population comprised of 26 students for note taking and audio records. As for the interview, we selected 14 students (7 males/7 females)representing the current research sampling.

The phenomenon at hand was not directly observable since the psychological dispositions could not be directly noticed in the speech; therefore, using semi-structured interviews could help researchers interact with the participants so as to elicit the data required.

One interview format wasadministered to 14 individuals including 7 male students and 7 female students from first, second and third yearsat Yahia Fares University. The first part targeted the participants' demographic information; however, the second part consisted of a set of open-ended questions so as to answer the research's questions.(Appendix B).

In this method, students' English competence was required; therefore, the sampling selected was purposefully chosen based on the students' language proficiency after carefully examining the notes taken from the observationsalong with listening to the answers provided in the observation records.

After selecting the samplingparticipants, they were divided into three groups; the first group included 4 students: 2 males and 2 females. They sat in a round table facing each other to answer the question in a form of a panel; having total freedom to interact and interpose, interrupt and overlap one another so as to make the interview as spontaneous as possible in order to reflect on the result as required. Second, the second group included 6 students: 3 males and 3 females. The same theme wasdiscussed in the same manner applied in the first group. The third group included 4 students: 2 males and 2 females. Similarly as with group 1 and 2; the third onetackled the same theme and used the same discussion process. The three panels were carried by the participants where conversational strategies (as mentioned in chapter 1 section 1.3.1) are highly marked in their performances and, therefore, asserting reliable data.

As for the duration of the interview, the topic chosen was a recurrent topic(gender equality); and the allotted time is 10 minutes for each, a total of 30 minutes.

2.4.2.1 Piloting the semi-structured interview

Before scheduling the interview and after our supervisor's agreement of its content, we submitted the interview questions to 4 randomly chosen students among the population so as to verify their comprehensibility of the language used as well as the content. The students were asked to carefully read the questions and comment back if they were easy to understand or not. They did not face any difficulties in understanding or answering the listed questions.Then we were able to set a place and a date for the planned interviews.

2.5 Data collection procedures

Several steps were taken during data collection process summarized as follows. First, after observing that female English students' speech is more intelligible than males' in our class (second year English master class), we expanded the scope of the study context to other classes to check whether the observation is valid or not. Second, we randomly selected 26 students (13 males/ 13 females) in the English department at Yahia Fares University, and recorded their answers on common questions in pairs (a male and a female) each at a time, more precisely; each pair answered one question separately. Then, 14 students among the 26 ones were chosen for the interview relying on some criteria. Before setting a schedule for the interview, a pilot phase took place to make sure that the interview content is graspable. Then we informed the 14 participants about the setting andgrouped them. We also received a verbal consent from the administration and from the participants to record the interviews that lasted for about an hour (30 minute for the interview/ 30 minutes for the organization). Finally, the audio records were classified. One file contained the observation records and the second one contained the interview records. On the one hand, the observation records were analyzed to verify the tone (pitch) of the speakers along with their speech duration, on the other hand, the interview records were analyzed so as to extract the dispositionals and the counter dispositional and, therefore, determine the subjectivity management of both genders (males and females)by applying discursive psychology approach. This holds true for the fact that (as explained in chapter 1 section1) the more subjective a person is, the more he/she is unintelligible.

2.6 Data analysis procedures

Giving that this research adaptsto a mixed method, single case with embedded units' type of study employed an exploratory approach; therefore, both qualitativeand quantitative data collection instruments were exploited. The first data collection method used is observation, more precisely; the participants' tone (pitch) and their speechduration (expressions length) were the first steps towards this study. The audio records rendered data to be analyzed acoustically in terms of the length and the pitch of the expressions used by both genders via Praatsoftware and VLC media player. According to Wikipedia**,**Praatis a free computer software package for analysis in phonetics. It was designed and developed at the University of Amsterdam by two scholars: Boersma and DavidWeenink.(Praat, para.1).Then, we conducted asemi-structured interview and recorded the answersusing a cell phone so as to transcribe and analyze them according to discursive psychology. In order to transcribe the audio files,literal transcription was made use of.Literal transcribing is free computer software that transcribes oral speech into written texts. It is also called verbatim transcribing which is often used in qualitative research where human reactions have to be monitored. (ardup, para.2).

Throughout this analysis, an amount of data was dismissed based on its irrelevance.Moreover; content and statistical analysis were employed to analyze each of the participants' responses to the observation and to the theme of the interview.

2.7 Limitations and delimitations

The current research sought to pull out the different psychological dispositions (dispositionals / counter-dispositionals) that render female English students' speech to be more intelligible than male students. To achieve this goal, we tried to put a list of psychological dispositions including dispositionals and counter dispositionals, drawn from the raw data, to be analyzed. However, some limitations were pointed out as follows.

First, analyzing the participants' attitude is crucial for addressing their intelligiblity; yet, a discursive psychology-based method for analyzing attitude was far from our access. Second, most of the participants did not allow any video-recordings of their oral performances, alias, meta-cognitive cues of the participants, including facial traits, posture, etc…, which are considered key-cues to exploring their subjectivity. In addition, measuring

the degree of the participants'speech intelligibility is of a paramount importance for validating the whole research; nevertheless, it was dismissed due to the inaccessibility to the related software.

On the other hand, having submitted the collected data to an acoustic-based analysis along with the use of a variety of instruments for data collection, including observation and interview were taken as the delimitations to the study.

Conclusion

As a conclusion, throughout this chapter, the applied methodology has thoroughly been described. The research design along with the context of the study is provided. In addition, the participants have also been introduced represented as follows: the population for the observations,and the sampling for the interview. The participants are EFL Yahia Fares University students from Medea. Moreover, a detailed description of data collection instruments, data collection procedures and data analysis procedures have been displayed so as to clarify how the researchers reached the findings and the results. As in any other study, this inquiry faced some limitations, discussed previously (section 2.7)that made the researchers look for some other alternatives.

This research is a qualitative, single case with embedded units' type of study that employed an exploratory approach using a mixed-method-baseddata collection methods in order to list out the psychologicaldispositions (dispositionals/ counter dispositionals) underlying females' higher speech intelligibility. The data collected was analyzed using a discursivepsychological-basedanalysis approach along with Praat software and VLC media player.

Chapter Three: Findings and Discussion

Introduction:

The present chapter includes the results collected for the current qualitative research. However, they are divided into two sections that involve two data collection methods. The first section presents the data collected from the first data collection method: observation, whereas section two presents the data obtained from the second data collection method which is a semi-structured interview. Furthermore, the first data collection was employed to analyze and compare both genders' pitch, sound pressure level and speech duration, while the second instrument was employed to analyze subject-object side management ingender speech through the application of a discursive psychology technique, in addition to measuring and analyzing both genders' intonation so as to answer the suggested questions of the present study.

3.1 findings

3.1.1 Observation Results:

The current study aims at listing out the psychological dispositions that render women to be more intelligible than men. In order to do so, an observation was undertaken to reach grounded evidence that female speakers are in fact more intelligible than male speakers. The observation provided data that enabled us to measure both the pitch and length of the speech of both genders; therefore, 26first, second and third year EFL students at Yahia Fares University,Medeawere designated as participants for the observation. Their speech was recorded and analyzed in terms of the pitch and sound pressure level of the speakers along with the length of their expressions using Praat Software and VLC media player in order to identifywhich gender has both higher pitch and lengthier expressions, which are deemed as two key-factorsto determine the degree of speech intelligibility.

As was mentioned in the description of the observation (chapter2, section 2.4.1), the first section intends to provide an analysis along with a comparison between the pitch, sound pressure level and the length of the speech of both genders.

3.1.1.1 Female/ Male Pitch, Frequency of Speech and Sound Pressure Level:

The first section of the observation deals with the analysis of the pitch, frequency and sound pressure level produced by both genders. As predicted, English female speakers have higher pitch, frequency and sound pressure level in comparison to male speakers based on the diagramresulted from analyzing 26 audio-records using Praat software. The audio records, which were in the form of mp3, were converted into mp4 audio-files using converter software. This step was taken for ensuring compatibility of the file with Praat software.After having analyzed acoustically the audio-samples of both genders (males and females), results indicated disparate speech realizations by female and male participants. The difference lies in terms of two main acoustic-speech features, pitch, frequency and sound pressure level. It was found that females' speech was marked with higher pitch, frequency and sound pressure level than males'. The following table illustrates a spectrogram analysis of 13 females' and 13 males' recorded samples of speech, which yielded the following values:

	Female	**Male**
pitch	It ranges from: 9.8888616Hz, 10.8888616Hz to 11Hz.8888617Hz.	It ranges from 2.972154Hz, 5.944307Hz to 6.9444308Hz.
Frequency	It ranges from 20.205010HZ, 22.777234HZto23.777245HZ.	It ranges from20.105010Hz, 20.666233Hz to 20.676234HZ.
Sound pressure level	It ranges from 0.8638 to 0.69994dB and from 0.95558dB to 0.8886dB.	It ranges from 0.5584dB to 0.7561 dB and from 0.7943 to 0.7976 dB

Figure 3.2 Results obtained from an Acoustic Analysis of Pitch, Frequency and Sound Pressure of Recorded Males' and Females' Speech Samples

Thirteen female and thirteen maleEFL students' speech from YFU was recorded and analyzed via Praat Software so as to measure the pitch, frequency and the sound pressure level. The above figure (fig3.2) represents the different values obtained from the spectrogram analysis.To begin with, the females' pitch varies from 9.8888616Hz, 10.8888616 Hz to 11.8888617Hz. Meanwhile, their frequencies extend from 20.205010HZ, 22.777234 HZ to 23.777245HZ.That is,females' pitch ranges from 9 to 11Hz (vibration) per second.

While males' pitch varies from 2.972154Hz, 5.944307Hz to 6.9444308Hz. Meanwhile, their frequencies extend from 20.205010HZ, 22.777234 HZ to 23.777245HZ. That is to say, males' pitch ranges from 2 to 6Hz (vibration) per second. This nonconformity between the two genders' pitch indicates that women are psychologically disposed to have a higher pitch and;therefore, a higher frequency range rendering them to be more intelligible than men which answers the second part of the second sub-question: "**do lengthier expressions and higher pitch make female students more intelligible than male students?"** as Praat software provided the values proving that females' pitch is higher than that of males'.

According to a study carried by Kwon (2010) on the fundamental frequency, it was discovered that higher overall intelligibility score was tightly related with higher frequency range and that female talkers had in fact a noticeably higher fundamental frequency range in comparison with male talkers. In other words, formant frequency values are actually used in order to assess speech intelligibility (p. 72).

As for the sound pressure level, it ranges from 0.8638dB to 0.69994dB and from 0.95558dB to 0.8886dB for females and from 0.5584dB to 0.7561 dB and from 0.7943dB to 0.7976 dB for males. It is worth noting that the ability to understand speech is optimum when the level of the recorded speech corresponds to the level of normal speech at a distance of approximately 1 meter. That being said, the recorded speech of the observation was at a distance ranging from0.25m to 1 m with an average of decibels ranging from 55dB to 88dB.According to "Facts About Speech Intelligibility" (2016),in order to measure the sound pressure level of any given recorded speech, the recording distance along with the speech level, which in its turn varies from normal to raised; from loud to shout, must be factored in the equation (n.p).

Therefore, in our observation female speakers' speech level was either considered as shouting or loud as it extended from 69dB to 95dB while male speakers' speech level was either normal or raised as it extended from 55dB to 76dB which indicates that women have a higher speech level compared to men; thus, making them more intelligible.

3.1.2 Female's/Male's Expressions Length Measurement:

The following figures represent female and male speech duration measured in seconds. In order to reach the stated values, VLC media player computer program was made use of.

3.1.2.1 Females' speech duration:

Females	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8	F9	F10	F11	F12	F13
Duration	1.10s	0.39s	1.49s	0.55s	1.15s	0.59s	0.41s	0.45s	1.08s	0.56s	0.26s	0.23s	0.20s

Figure 3.4 Results obtained from an Acoustic Analysis of speech duration of Recorded Females' Speech Samples

3.1.2.2 Males' speech duration:

Males	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10	M11	M12	M13
Duration	0.56S	0.10S	0.29S	0.29S	2.06S	0.44S	0.47S	0.51S	0.51S	0.49S	0.19S	0.22S	0.36S

Figure 3.6Results obtained from an Acoustic Analysis of speech duration of Recorded Males' Speech Samples

The two figures(fig3.4,fig 3.6) indicate that females' speech duration exceeds the ones of males, meaning that first, second and third year EFL female students spoke relatively more than male students which is believed to be attributed to the female's brain that devotes more brain cells to communication "*Women have an eight-lane superhighway for processing emotion, while men have a small country road*,"Brizendine,2006,(as cited in Mehl, Vazire,-Esparza,Slatcher&Pennebaker, 2007, p.2). To further elaborate women's complex emotional processing and dispositionsthat render them to form lengthier expressions while conversing which results inlonger speech duration compared to men. *"Awomanuses about 20,000 words per day while aman uses about 7,000*" Brizendine, 2006, (as cited in Mehl et al 2007, p. 2). Other surveys have showed that men and women do in fact speak the same amount of words at around 16,000words per a day but, it is undeniable that there are certain remarkable speech differences between the two genders.Liberman (2006)also estimated that women speak 8805 words and men6073 words per day, which is taken as a solid prooffor that women do indeed speak more than men(as cited in Mehl et al, 2007, p. 2). This piece of evidence answers the first part of the second sub-question stated above in (section3.1.1.1) where the female speakers' lengthier expressions do in fact make them more intelligible.

In addition to the previously mentioned studies, and in order to investigate the length of the speech of both genders, we measured the speech duration of 26 participants (13 males/ 13 females) using a VLC media player. After, we placed the data in tables represented above and transferred them into a graphic curvefor better analysis. Figure one shows two curves, each color represents a gender. The red curve denotes males' speech duration while the blue curve denotes females' speech duration.

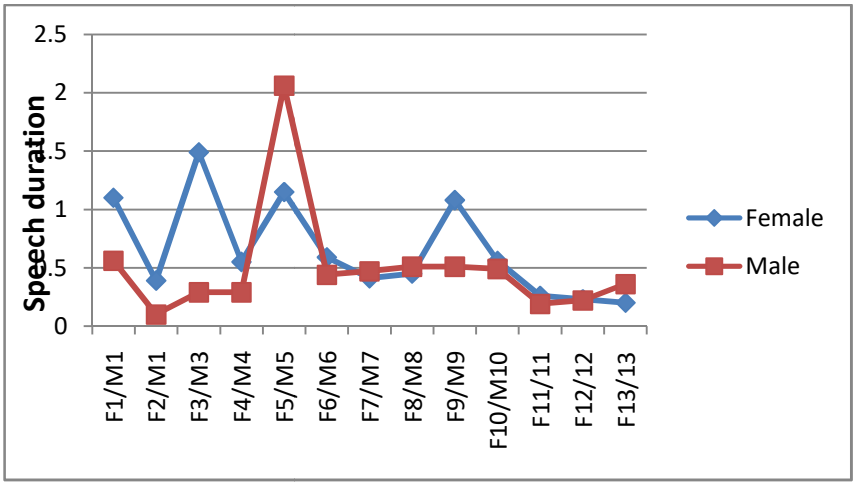


Figure3.7 Male/Female Speech Duration

According to made observations, females' longer speech duration is attributed to the fact that EFL female students at YFU happen to be more competent when expressing their personal opinion, and are more impulsive to answering mundane, everyday questions unlike male students who seemed to be reluctant and more distant.

After conducting a meticulous observation, we employed a semi-structured interview to answer the main question of this research which is: **What are the psychological dispositions laying behind female English students' higher conversational speech intelligibility?**In order to address the concerned research question, we used a qualitative content-analysis-based technique. More concretely,we opted for discursive psychology as a method of analysis to fathom out why and how female EFL students at YFU are psychologicallydisposed to be more intelligible than male students.

The semi-structured interviews were recorded in order to extract the psychological dispositions (subjectivity, speech intelligibility) used by both genders while conversing with others. The task of discursive psychology is to analyze talk in action as it stands as an

analytical technique for conducting qualitative research; therefore, participants' speech analysis is undertaken to scrutinize and detect subjectivity management of participants while conversing with each other in the divided groups and, therefore,indicatinghigher speech intelligibilitylevels. Studies proved that the more one manages his/her subjectivity, the more intelligible they become. In addition to that, the speakers' intonation was also placed under scrutiny as another contributing factor to female participants' higher speech intelligibility.

3.1.2 Semi-structured interview results

3.1.2.1 A Discursive Psychology-Based Analysis of Females'. Males' management of their subjectivity

According to Hepburn and Wiggins (2007), gender speech in Discursive Psychology differs in terms of tone, vocabulary, pronunciation, subjectivity (dispositionals and counter dispositional) and speech intelligibility. Counter dispositionals are themselves dispositionals, yet the speaker's objectivity can be undermined when using dispositionals and enhanced when using counter dispositionals. Our research's main concern is speech intelligibility. Studies have shown that there are various factors (as aforementioned in chapter 1 section 1.4.1)that influence speaker's intelligibility among which is subjectivity. They emphasizedon subject-object side management in social interaction using Discursive Psychology as an analytical technique. DP describes the object side as a factual representation of things or events also known as stake inoculation; whereas, the subject side is described as how speakers reflect their stake and interest on a topic. Furthermore, Potter (1996) stated that stake and interest is a way of reworking the nature of a given event or thing; therefore, Discursive Psychology provided strategies on how to analyze both stake and interest and stake inoculation in speech.

3.1.2.1.1 Interview Content Analysis

The semi-structured interviews provided required data for such an analysis. 14 participants were designated to answer 4 questions in a form of a debate. First, we divided the participants into 3 groups as follows: the first group included 2 males and 2 females, the second group included 3 males and 3 female and the final group included 2 males and 2 females.Second, we recorded the debate of each group to extract the dispositionals and the counter dispositionals used by both genders during the conversation to identify their subjectivity management and speech intelligibility.Third, we used literal transcription

software to transcribe the recorded audio-records in order to highlight and analyze the speakers' subject/object side (stake and interest/stake inoculation) and indicate which gender is more intelligible and why.

In the following examples, we extracted some instances from all the groupsdebating on gender equality.

Group 1

Female Speaker 0:06

***I guess**? Well, I do believe in gender equality, because you know, we are both human, regardless of our biological differences or our thoughts, but we are both human. And we both have brains. And **I think** it would be injustice for both men and women to be regarded and equally, so we should be equal to some extent.*

Male Speaker 0:13

No, yeah, I also really enjoyed equality. But a lot of people think that men are superior than women because of religion, because it's set in our religion that men are privileged in women.

When the first question "*To what extent do you believe in gender equality?*" was addressed to the first group, a female speaker was the first to initiate the conversation. The female speaker immediately took an objective stance as she started her turn using the hedge/prefatory remark "I guess". Hedges are softeners that in fact soften what a person says or writes. Softeners are counter dispositionals intentionally used to manage subjectivity. Also, Hepburn and Wiggins (2007) stated that, "*to manage subject side, one must show themselves as not disposed to make too much of things by showing themselves reluctant to say negative things such as adopting a prejudiced position"* (p.33).In this case, the tentative language "**I guess**" is a way of preventing a claim from being undermined as a product of stake and interest and, thus, this procedure can be called stake inoculation. According to potter (1996), the action of reporting events or representing people can often be undermined by relating it to an interest. (as cited in Potter, 1997, p.197). Ergo, stake inoculation is a counter dispositional practice used to manage subjectivity. And this was elaborated in discursive psychology as Hepburn and Wiggins (2007) claimed that DP focuses on how people handle their accountability for what they say in terms of dispositions to say it. The female speaker used a counter dispositional "I guess" to render her discourse to be more factual, and, thus, making her more intelligible.

What makes this finding even more interesting is that it confirms Leaper and Robnett (2011) findings that revealed a small but statistically significant difference between the speeches of both genders, indicating that women were "*somewhat more likely than men to use tentative language".* (p.640) In addition to "**I guess",** the female speaker used the hedge "**I think"** as a counter dispositional which has the same effect on speech intelligibility as "**I guess".**

As for the male speaker, he had a taken for granted tendency to talk in such a prejudiced manner as he stated that religion gives more privileges to men than women. According to Hepburn and Wiggins(2007), "*dispositionals are ways of getting things wrong including being prone to tell tall stories, being prone to exaggerate, being prejudiced and being paranoid or disposed to moan or complain"* (p.33). The male speaker's tendency to believe that gender equality does not exist in the holy book reflects his actual bias towards religion; therefore, making his claims nonfactual by adopting a prejudiced position which mirrors his subject-side. The male speaker's stake and interest highlights his subjectivity for, he has reworked the true nature of the verses (the genuine interpretation of the holy book) into a taken for granted interpretation resulting in being less factual and thus, less intelligible. This finding demonstrates the fact that the female speaker in this case efficiently managed her subjectivity in comparison to the male speaker which immediately answers the first sub-question **"Are English female students more likely to manage their subjectivity in speech than male students?"** in addition to the third sub-question**"Are female English students more likely to adapt a prejudiced position while conversing then male students?"** as it clarifies that male speakers are also likely to adapt a prejudiced position while conversing and that being prejudiced or biased is not a typical female psychological disposition but, rather a lack of subjectivity management that renders the speaker to be less intelligible. At the same time, the findings indicate that female speakers are psychologically disposed to be more intelligible than male speakers by dint of their subjectivity management along with their use of counter dispositionals and their tendency to make themselves clear while conversing with others which in fact make them more intelligible than male speakers and this answers the main question **"what are the psychological dispositions (dispositionals/counter dispositionals) laying behind female English students' higher conversational speech intelligibility?"**

Moreover, we extracted another remarkable instance from the same group in the midst of the debate where a male speaker and a female speakerweredebating on gender equality; however, in this case the speakers didnot seem to respect the one-at-a-time conversational rule.

.Male speaker: 03:25

***Sure** we have we have some privilege on women,*

Female speaker (A):03:27

As a ma…

Male speaker (interruption):03:28

*As a man yes, **of course**, there are some things that we we can do and you women can't do. But I…*

Femalespeaker (A)(interruption): 03:34

Ok based on what no based on what?

Female speaker(B): 03:34

Starting…

Male speaker (interruption) 03:34

*Think that's part of life, life is **never** fair life is not fair*

Female speaker (B):03:37:

Starting…

Female speaker(A):03:38

*. Let's make it **kind of** fair and you just said that women have more equalities, I think, than men*

After analyzing this extract, we concluded that the male speaker was maintaining the upper hand to protect himself from the female speaker's attempt to put him down. According to Tannen (1992), men have the tendency to override others while conversing to preserve independence and preclude failure, whereas women consider conversation as a mere negotiation of closeness in which they attempt to shield themselves from those who tried to

push them away.(as cited in YouqingXu, 2009, p. 5) The male speaker did not keep to the one- at- a -time rule which is a prerequisite to constructing a part of the structural organization of the conversation, and helps the listeners understand their intention; otherwise, there would be no conversation. Also, in any conversation men tend to adopt non cooperative strategies in order to reinforce their dominance by using non cooperative feedback signals such as, delayed minimal responses or even silence to show a lack of interest indifference and impatience and tend to interrupt to change topics to their favor while women have the tendency to cooperate (Xu, 2009,p.6). Thiscan be seen in the extracted instance as the male speaker interrupted thefemale speaker for the sake of dominating the conversation while the female speaker interrupted him in order to cooperate. That is to say, the female speaker only interrupted the conversant in an attempt to ask a question for further details so as to cooperate when in fact the male speaker interrupted his conversant twice to impose his point and such behavior is rather recurrent in male speakers as Zimmerman and West (1983) indicated that in mixed-sex conversations, men infringe women's right to speak, especially women's right to finish a turn, while women are concerned not to violate the man's turn but to wait until he has finished. In a more recent study, it has beenfound that men interrupted more often than women (the average was 75 per cent male interruptions to 25 per cent female).(as cited in Xu,2009,p.9)It was no surprise that the male speaker in this case interrupted the female speaker not once but twice, whereas she interrupted him only once. Zimmerman and West (1975) noted that women are more likely interrupted or overlapped by men than the other way around.(as cited in Xu,2009,p.7)Men's inevitable tendency to dominate and interrupt conversations does not only infringe women's right to speak, but also effects their speech intelligibility. Men's non cooperative strategies used in conversation along with their common violations to turn taking leads to a lack of intelligibility among conversant, since male speakers main concern is to change the topics to their own favor especially, when they master the topic or consider themselves expert of the field under discussion, completely disregarding the flow of the conversation and therefore hindering the intelligibility of their speech.

However, women do not have the intention to dominate as men do, as they are more likely to behave as facilitative and supportive conversationalists who respond positively to others by accommodating their speech. Women have a common tendency to show solidarity and support with the addressees through the use of interactional styles in addition to politeness devices which reinforces intelligibility. Speaking of intelligibility, the males speakers' biased attitude and subjectivity disrupted his intelligibility as he used a couple of

stake and interest devices so as to express his convictions that men are in all cases privileged over women such as "*sure, of course and never* ".

However**,** the male speaker did not manage his subjectivity as he used products of stake and interest like "**sure"** and "**of course"** along with the extreme case formulation "**never"**. To begin with, "**sure"** and "**of course"** are both used to indicate certainty, and that is why the male speaker in this example made use of such devices to express his biased beliefs about gender equality. Not only his certainty about men being privileged over women is not accompanied by any evidence or proof but he also holds prejudiced convictions surrounding this topic referencing stake and interest as he used thedispositionals "**sure"** and "**of cours**e" to justify his claims and to undermine his opponent. This is further argued by Potter (1997) in that he considers"*referencing stake as one principal way of discounting the significance of an action or reworking its nature"*. (p. 196) Furthermore, the male speaker uses the extreme case formulation "**never**" (attribution of cause to the object) in the sentence "*life is never fair*" to justify that there is no such thing called gender equality. He clearly emphasizes that men are superior to women simply because life is never fair. The ECF **"never"** is a device that is used in such situations to indicate the true cause behind gender inequality and that it should be taken into consideration as it is a device for expressing how something should be regarded and not dismissed.

According to Hepburn and Wiggins (2007):

> ECFs are taken as descriptions and assessments that include extreme, ultimate or end-of-the-continuum expressions such as never, always, brand new, everybody, the best and nobody. ECFs also invites being taken nonliterally, and may be treated as an index of the speaker's attitude (subjectivity) rather than as a straightforward description of the world. (p. 34)

A 1986 article by Pomerantz Extreme Case Formulations: A Way of Legitimating Claims (as cited in Hepburn and Wiggins, 2007, p.34).

In describing life as never fair, **"never"**inserts that regardless of the circumstances both genders live in, life can never be fair enough to treat women as equals to men. The male

speaker designates such extreme case formulation as a warrant and attempts to justify why gender equality does not exist. The justification consists of an explanation as to why there is no such thing as gender equality which is immediately attributed to the fact that life is never fair and thus making the given situation inevitable.

The situation that the male participant described is in fact a taken-for-granted situation. Gender equality cannot exist because life is never fair. For his convictions on gender equality to be deemed as reasonable and inevitable, the male speaker makes it elaborately clear that life's unfairness is a taken-for-granted belief that is mostly common and inevitable. He didso by inserting the ECF **"never"**. Most directly, the male speaker used **"never**" to portray his claims as being widespread. Indirectly and after scrutinizing his subsequent convictions vis-à-vis gender equality, wecan deduce that the cause of using **"never"** may reside in the fact that this male speaker does not consider gender equality as an actual matter in the first place which might explain his biased, subjective and ungrounded convictions (Pomerantz, 1986, p.223).

As for the female speaker, she used the tentative language**"kind of"**(also known as a modifier) a softener to take an objective stanceandas a way of preventing her claim from being undermined witch is a product of stake inoculation. Potter (1996) stated:

> there are various ways of resisting such undermining; one of these can be called 'stake inoculation' just as flu inoculation is intended to prevent flu, a stake inoculation is intended to prevent a claim being undermined as a product of stake. (p.165)

"Kind of" is a device that can be called a counter dispositional. That is to say, it provides ways of managing a report's potential subjectivity including its stake and interest. Hepburn and Wiggins (2007) stated that, "*the uses of such devices portray acertain sensitivity to normal and rational accountability"* (p.34). The hedge **"kind of"** manages subjectivity as it proves that what is being reported is genuine and rational and not a figment of a speaker's imaginations. The female speaker used a counter dispositional **"kind of"** to render her discourse to be more factual and therefore more intelligible.This finding demonstrates the fact that the female speaker in this case efficiently managed her subjectivity in comparison to the male speaker

which immediately answers the first sub-question **"Are English female students more likely to manage their subjectivity in speech than male students?**" in addition to the third sub-question **"Are female students more likely to adopt a prejudiced position while conversing than male students?"**as it proves that the female speaker in this given situation managed her subjectivity which rendered her to be more intelligible and non-prejudiced. At the same time, the findings indicate that female speakers are disposed to be more intelligible than male speakers by dint of their subjectivity management along with their use of counter dispositionalsand their tendency to make themselves clear while conversing with each other which in fact makes them more intelligible than male speakers and this answers the main question **"what are the psychological dispositions (dispositionals/counter dispositionals) laying behind female English students' higher conversational speech intelligibility?"**

Moreover**,** we extracted another instance from the same group where the female speaker justifiedthe existence of feminism while the male speaker completely disagrees.

Female speaker 04:23:

All right, I do believe that women or feminism if you want to tackle this part they're going a ***little bit*** *too far and too wild*

Male speaker: 04:32

Way too far!

Female speaker: 04:33

Yeah, yeah, they are going and he said that because because they're not Muslim and because they don't have rules but I think it can be justified for the discrimination that of the suffered before .Don't you think?

Male Speaker 4:45

This point you can't you can't you can't attack it from this one because look, Jewish have been suffering have been been murdered, killed

Female speaker (interruption) 04:53

But ***all the world*** *has been talking about it!*

Male speaker (overlapping): 04:53

Tortured by Nazi's

The female speaker, in the above extracted instance, used a tentative language **"a little bittoo"**also known as a qualifiers which is a common tendency for women to use tentative speech while conversing, as Leaper and Robnett (2011) confirmed in their studies that "*women were somewhat more likely than men to use tentative speech"* (p.640). The female speaker used the counter dispositionals**"a little bit too"**, alias softener, so as to prevent her speech from being a product of stake and interest, and also to keep herself from taking a subjective and prejudiced position. On the report of discursive psychology, Hepburn and Wiggins (2007) focused on two general ways to manage subject side positions, "*first by showing oneself as not disposed to make too much of things, and second by showing themselves as reluctant to say negative things"* (p.33). That is why the female speaker made use of counter dispositional devices, which are also called softeners in order to provide ways of managing a report's potential subjectivity, including its stake or interest. It has been stressed by Hepburn and Wiggins (2007) that "*claims can be legitimized and grounded by offering them as counter dispositional as reluctantly arrived at, or even precisely counter, not only to what others may think, but also to one's own presumptions and biases"*(p.36).

In light of the aforementioned speakers 'excerpts,we can assume that people can deny that they believe what suits them to believe to steer clear of any possible accusation of prejudice or bias. Managing one's subjectivity is called stake inoculation which is a counter dispositional practice that precludes its producer from being disposed to see things differently as stated by Potter (1996), stake inoculation not only prevents a claim from being undermined as a product of stake, but also provides a factual description of a given event resulting in enhancing speech intelligibility (p, 46).This can be noticed in the above example when the female speaker did not hesitate to acknowledge the fact that feminists exceeded their limits, but could not help not giving them the benefit of the doubt; however, despite the speaker's objective position, she did end up using an extreme case formulation as an attempt to defend her claims. Her use of the ECF **"all the world"** was as a result of a defense mechanism when the speaker anticipated the lack of evidence that she would have to offer to support her opinion, as the male speaker was clearly taking over the conversation and manipulating it to his own interest.

Unlike the female speaker who made use of the ECF **"all the world"** to defend her opinion and stand her own, the male speaker used the ECF **"way too far"**in order to

undermine the female speaker's claims and to render it to be illegitimate. Yet, the female speaker's use of the dispositional ECF **"all the world"** is still considered as an overstatement,even if it was only used as a justification, since it is a product of stake and interest and, therefore, a sign of a lack of subjectivity management which rendered the female speaker to be less intelligible than before. The Extreme Case Formulation **"all the world"**is a frequency of occurrences speaking for rightness as it described the prevalence of the belief that the entire world has been talking about the discrimination that women suffered from before resulting in the creation of feminism. In using the ECF **"all the world"**the speaker proposes that the common belief that women were discriminated back in the days is agreed upon rather than ruled out or disproven. Using the maximum case **"all"**signifies the prevalence und universality of the belief as a proof of its rightness. If everyone believes in something it is automatically right and labeled as common sense. (Pomerantz, 1986, p.225).

Concerning the male speaker,he managed to change the topic to his own favor as the context was about feminism, yet his argument included Nazis and Jewish as a non-cooperative strategy to override others while conversing and, thus, undermining his opponent, whereas women do the complete oppositeas they have the tendency to cooperate. As claimed by Xu (2009) and evidenced from a range of studies, gender differences in communicative competence are presented in male and female speakers' different use of particular conversational strategies (p.1). A lot of research confirmed the stereotype that women tend to adopt the cooperative while men opt forcompetitive conversational strategies. This being said, the male speaker in the above example reinforced his dominance by using non cooperative feedback signals such as changing the topic to his favor which can be identified when the male speaker introduced irrelevant illustrations to stand his ground and eventually,destabilize/overrule the female speaker.

Such strategy led him to subvert his opponents and gain power over them. Surprisingly, the male speaker's non cooperative strategies were not the only factors that allowed him to overrule his opponent and change the topic to his own favor assuggested by Fishman (2009) that the topics initiated by men are more successful than that of womenhence, "*Conversational topics have different survival rates depending upon whether they are introduced by women or men*" (p.6).This is exactly the case of the above example. Since the female speaker was the first to initiate the conversational topic "feminism" as grounded evidence to support her position and therefore attempting to obtain the upper hand during the conversation, the male speaker, on the other hand, changed the topic to his own interest to

achieve the upper hand and override his opponent. The female speaker did respond to this reaction by interrupting her opponent to justify her claims unbeknownst to the male speaker's lack of interest and indifference as he neglected her interruption and preceded his speech. The male speaker's disruptive attitude and subjectivity undermined his intelligibility because he used a stake and interest device so as to justify that feminism has exceeded its limits. He did not manage his subjectivity as he used the dispositional/ ECF **"way too far"** as a product of stake and interest expressing his prejudiced belief about feminism and undermining his opponent's claims.

As maintained in Discursive Psychology, Potter (1996) noted that using stake and interest is a significant way to disregard the value of an action or reworking its nature (p. 196). The extreme case formulation **"way too far"** is an adversarial/defensive stance or an extreme case of **"far"**. It is as far as it can be. From this response, it is made clear that the male speakerhas a determined view on feminism. When his opponent gives out her view on the feminist movement, the male speaker does not seem satisfied with the description **"a little bit too far"**. He gives instead, the appropriate description **"way too far"**. In specifying **"way too far"**, he treats far as an insufficient description to depict the feminist movement. When in adversarial situations, interactants use ECF when they presume that the co-interactants will undermine their claim (Pomerantz, 1986, p.220).After scrutinizing this passage, it goes without saying that the finding demonstrates the fact that the female speaker in this case efficiently managed her subjectivity in comparison to the male speaker which immediately answers the first sub-question "**Are English female students more likely to manage their subjectivity in speech than male students?"** as it proves that the female speaker in this given situation managed her subjectivity which rendered her to be more intelligible.In addition to the third sub-question**Are female students more likely to adopt a prejudiced position while conversing than male students?"** as it proves that the female speaker in this given situation managed her subjectivity which rendered her to be more intelligible and non-prejudiced. At the same time, the findings indicate that female speakers are psychologically disposed to be more intelligible than male speakers by dint of their subjectivity management along with their use of counter dispositionals and their tendency to make themselves clear while conversing with each other which in fact makes them more intelligible than male speakers and this answers the main question "**What are the psychological dispositions (dispositionals/counter dispositionals) laying behind female English students' higher conversational speech intelligibility?"**

Additionally, we extracted another instance from the same group where a female speaker was confronted by another female and a male speaker.

Male speaker 07.24

A lot of women arecompetent. They study hard, I'm lazy I'm lazy I don't study but if I study of course I will bypass you by miles…by miles

Female speaker (A) 07.34 (overlapping)

***I think** we shouldn't link **I think** we shouldn't link intelligence to gender.*

Female (B) speaker07.39

You can see you can see there are positions even if a woman works hard she is not going to get that position

Male speaker07:45 (overlapping)

Of course

Female speaker (B)07:45

Because the man even if he just puts in a little bit more effort

Male speaker 07:47(interruption)

Smarter, stronger, better in all aspects.

Female speaker (B) 07:48 (overlapping)

Yes smarter yes

Male speaker 07:50

*We can **all agree** on this part.*

In the above extract we cited a number of dispositionals and counter dispositionals as the speakers were debating on whether men are more intelligent than women.The male speaker was persuaded that hewas smarter and that he can outsmart all the women just because he is a man. His convictions reside in the prejudiced position that he is adopting which is that men are more privileged over women. His biased beliefs are products of stake

and interest as he has distorted the true nature of common sense believing and making it elaborately clear that women will never be as good as, and that men are unattainably clever. The stake and interest in this case was not only used to express a prejudiced belief, but was also used to undermine the male speaker's opponent (female speaker A). The male speaker did not manage his subjectivity while conversing, which explains his ungrounded claims and convictions, and these flawed beliefs led him to be too subjective and therefore less intelligible.We also noticed that the male speaker used **"of course"**as a product of stake and interest that indicates certainty. He made use of such a device to express his bias about gender and intelligence so as to explain why men are more intelligent than women; however, his claims are not accompanied by any evidence or proof. Instead, he made use of the dispositional **"of course"** to justify his claims and to override his opponent (female speaker A). What is also noticeable is that he interrupted his alley (female speaker B),who was defending him, just to preserve independence and power, as Tannen (1992) explained that,"*men have the tendency to override others to maintain the upper hand"*(p.5). But what is surprising in this case is that the male speaker straightforwardly cut in on the female speaker (B) even though they were on the same side. This indicates that male speakers struggle with keeping to one-at-a-time rule even when with their allies, mostly, for the sake of dominating the conversation.

Furthermore, the male speaker ended up using the extreme case formulation **"all agree"** (frequency of occurrence speaking for rightness). The ECF **"all agree"** is a description of the prevalence of the belief that men are in fact smarter than women. In using the ECF **"all agree"**, the speaker proposes thatcommon belief that men are smarter and stronger than women is completely acceptable and agreed upon. According to Pomerantz, (1986),the male speaker is using the maximum case **"all"** to signify the prevalence and universality of the belief as a proof of its rightness. If everyone beliefs in something, it is automatically right and not negotiable (p.225). The male speaker's use of the dispositional **"all agree"** rendered his speech to be less intelligible as he did not take into account the stance of his rivals such as, the female speaker (B). That is to say, the male speaker spoke for everyone to obtain general agreement, yet his opponents remained silent as a sign of disagreement.

The female speaker's (A) expression **"I think"** is a hedge, alias softener that indicates a significant difference in female speech in order to deny that she believes what suits her to believe to steer clear of any possible accusation of prejudice or bias. According to Leaper and

Robnett (2011), "*women were somewhat more likely than men to use tentative speech" (p.640)*. The female speaker's use of the counter dispositional/hedge was intended to prevent her claim from being undermined as a product of stake, also known as stake inoculation. According to potter (1996),"*stake inoculation is a counter dispositional practice in which the producer characterizes himself as predisposed to see things differently*"(p.46). This is made explicitly clear, in this case, as the female's expression **"I think"** is used to reflect the speaker's politeness and subjectivity management when assuming that intelligence should not be linked to gender. In other words, stake inoculation prevents subjectivity and this makes the speaker factual and therefore being more intelligible.The finding demonstrates the fact that the female speakers in the above extract were not on the same page and did not manage their subjectivity in the same way. In this case female speaker (A) efficiently managed her subjectivity and held an objective stance; whereas, female speaker (B) was biased and subjective while sidelining with the male speaker who was prejudiced and subjective as well. Therefore, this passageanswers the first sub-question "**Are English female students more likely to manage their subjectivity in speech than male students?"** in addition to the third sub-question "**Are female students more likely to adopt a prejudiced position while conversing than male students?"** as it gives elaborate proof that female speakers are not always disposed to manage their subjectivity more than male speakers, since female speaker (B) was as prejudiced as the male speaker rendering them both to be less intelligible than female speaker (A). At the same time, the findings indicate that female speakers are not in all cases psychologically disposed to be more intelligible than male speakers simply because female speaker (B) failed at managing her subjectivity as she used dispositionals that made her adopt a prejudiced positionwhile conversing with each other which rendered her to be as less intelligible as the male speaker, who in his turn used products of stake and interest such as extreme case formulations which clearly reflect his lack of subjectivity management. Female speaker (A) in this setting was the only participant who efficiently managed her subjectivity by using counter dispositionals which made her the most intelligible of all three and this answers the main question **"what are the psychological dispositions (dispositionals/counter dispositionals) laying behind female English students' higher conversational speech intelligibility?"**

Group 02

The following instance was extracted from the midst of the conversation where a male and a female speaker are debating on physical strength and gender.

Male speaker 2:14

*I would say that I mean, the most strict feminist in the world if she is in a in a in a building, and there is fire Yeah, she **would** ask for fireman rather than a firewoman. Because a fireman biologically speaking, they can be faster and can be even stronger, that is my opinion.*

Female speaker 8:13

*I want to say something… which is that men are not they do not represent power. And they they are not this isn't what we know, it's like given the example that you've mentioned that a woman is needed there is fire and that she would call for a man better than a woman. **That's not true.** Because if I were in her place, I would even call a woman if that was available. Man is not a sign. It's not it'snot a sign or it's not something that is a symbolism for strength.*

In the previous example, the male speaker used **"would"** as a stake and interest to rework the nature of the action. His aim was to influence his opponents by making them believe that even the strictest feminist in the world would rather be saved by a fireman than a firewoman. By this, the male speaker gave an ungrounded opinion in an attempt to persuade his opponents. His biased position can be reflected in his subject side as he used the dispositional**"would".** This is clarified by Edward (2006), in that discursive psychology includes extending the study of dispositional uses of modals such as will, would, going to or gonna as in *"I'm gonna hit an old lady"*. Drawing on Edward and potter(2005), "*this operation is a stake and interest in discourse where the psychological states, including dispositions of all kinds are attended to as part of talks situated practices"* (p.32). The male speaker's subjectivity was stake and interest, namely in the sense of self interest. In this regard, Hepburn and Wiggins (2007) stated that "*there are different kinds of tendencies or dispositions to talk in particular ways and dispositional ways of getting things wrong, which may include being prone to exaggerate or being prejudiced"* (p.33). This type of analysis is included in discursive psychology to indicate the speaker's actual bias in social interactions. The dispositional modal **"would"** in the sentence "*she would ask for fireman rather than a firewoman*" represents the speaker's subjectivity/attitude rather than the factual objective description of the situation as he made a priori assumptions that even the strictest feminist would call for a fireman rather than a firewoman without providing any tangible proof, simply because it is a self-evident truth. The male speaker's prejudiced expressions rendered his speech to be too subjective as he provided no evidence to support his claims, making his speech tobe less factual, and, thus, less intelligible.In response to the male speaker's

argument, the female speaker fired back with a counter argument, yet her response was marked with a huge lack of subjectivity management in comparison to that of the male speaker due to her personal involvement with the topic. There was a 4 minute gap between the male speaker's argument and the female's counter argument. This signifies that women are concerned byviolating men's turns as stated by Zimmerman and West (1983).i.e., not only did the female speaker wait until her turn comes, but she also asked for permission to state her counter arguments so as to make the listeners understand her intention. This is for the reason that women consider conversations as a negotiation of closeness in which they tempt to shield themselves from those who try to push them away, unlike men who have the tendency to override others while conversing.(Tannen, 1992, p.5). That is to say, the female speaker accommodated her speech through the use of a politeness device, which in this case was asking for permission in order to validate her intentions by making herself clear and, therefore, sounding more intelligible. Women have the tendency to use cooperative strategies while conversing to achieve their interactional goals and facilitate their speech intelligibility.

However, The target expression **"that's not true"** that the female speaker displayed afterwards, expresses dispositional ways of getting things wrong as she was prejudiced and disposed to complain, which eventually altered her speech intelligibility. The notion being offered is that the female speaker is negating her opponent's arguments by denying the fact that men are physically stronger than women.Thisreflects her prejudiced position and her stake and interest. Despite her subjectivity while complaining, she managed to handle her subject side at a certain point. The female speaker's expression "*Because if I were in her place, I would even call a woman if that was available"* is a displacement in the form of conditional type two that is particularly used to handle the subject side of complaints. As stated by Hepburn and Wiggins (2007) in discursive psychology, there are four ways of handling the subject side of complaints among which is displacement (p. 37). Unexpectedly, displacement not only includes conveying ideas about things that are not physically or temporally present at the time of the communicative event, but also includes prevarication, as termed by (Samuel et al. 2014,para, 17),which is the ability to lie or produce utterances, which do not correspond with reality. This latter, corresponds perfectly with the female speaker's expression as she puts herself in the shoes of the strictest feminist being stuck in a building on fire. This utterance is hypothetical; ergo, itdoes not correspond with reality; primarily because the female speaker is not the strictest feminist in the world and even if she were, she has never been stuck in a building on fire where she could choose a firewomen to a

fireman to rescue her.As the female speaker initiated her counter argument, she made sure to wait for her turn and even asked for permission so as to be heard and understood. This displays her motive to be intelligible which is common for women asthey intend to adapt cooperative strategies while conversing. Nevertheless,she did not manage her subjectivity when sharing her opinion on women's physical strength since she ended up complaining about her opponents' stance and denying a general fact. Her excessive use of negation reflects her disposition of getting things wrong in addition to her lack of subjectivity management, whichis also known as a product of stake and interest resulted in altering her intelligibility.Nevertheless, in the midst of her counter argument, she made use of displacement in the form of conditional type two that made her manage her subjectivity once again because displacement is a way of handling the subject side of complaints,creating by that a balance between her subject-object side. That is to say, the female speaker's conditional expression alleviated her subjectivity, and, thus, rendered her speech to be more intelligible.

It is worth mentioning that despite the female speaker's excessive use of negation in her counter argument, she was still more intelligible than the male speaker thanks to her cooperative, conversational strategies (waiting her turn/asking for permission), and her use of displacement as away of handling her subject-side, whilethis was not the case of the male speaker due to his use of a self-evident truth.This finding demonstrates the fact that the female speaker in this case efficiently managed her subjectivity in comparison to the male speaker which immediately answers the first sub-question **"Are English female students more likely to manage their subjectivity in speech than male students?"** in addition to the third sub-question **"Are female students more likely to adopt a prejudiced position while conversing than male students?"** as it proves that the female speaker in this given situation managed her subjectivity which rendered her to be more intelligible and non-prejudiced. At the same time, the findings indicate that female speakers are psychologically disposed to be more intelligible than male speakers by dint of their subjectivity management along with their use of counter dispositionals and their tendency to make themselves clear while conversing with each other which in fact makes them more intelligible than male speakers and this answers the main question **"What are the psychological dispositions (dispositionals/counter dispositionals) laying behind female English students' higher conversational speech intelligibility?"**

The following instance was extracted from the midst of the same conversation where a male and a female speaker are debating on faculties and gender.

Male speaker10:34

Yes, there's a story in World War One. I don't know which country but they needed some some soldiers. They hire these woman's to drive these eight tanks there was a tank and then you know, so by the end they found that seven tanks were destroyed and fail the job and only one tank survive they found that it is Stuck in the tree, ***they did not do anything.***

Female speaker (A) 11:50

Look why have you chosen that example *and why you haven't gone to the Algerian ones. I mean during the Algerian revolution they were helping, women were helping their husbandsand were helping men to pass medical stuff.Your choice of choosing women fail at doing a mission, you are* ***you are a racist****.*

The male speaker's biased position can immediately be detected as he started off his argument with an alleged war story, in which he claimed that women are good at nothing. To further justify his claims, he added an extreme case formulation **"*they did not do anything*"** as an attribution of cause to the object. In giving a reason why women are good at nothing, the male speaker depicted an alleged historical event. The latter was about how women failed on a mission due to their lack of faculty as women. He described the situation by using the ECF "**anything**". Such maximum case is a device that stipulates women's inaptitude to accomplish anything, and, thus, this should be taken into consideration. The use of the ECF **"anything**" can only be attributed to the state of the object, which is in this case the state of the seven tanks that were destroyed by the women. This explanation was offered in such a way to sound legitimate and factual. The precipitating situation that he described is a problem situation: all the women failed on their mission and destroyed all the tanks. He clearly attributed this failure to the women's gender as he firmly believed that women can never succeed at accomplishing a so called man's mission (Pomerantz, 1986, p. 223). His argument is a sheer product of stake and interestin which he did not manage his subjectivity by turning an alleged historical event into his own interest as a proof to his biased beliefs. His prejudiced position not only made his expression unreliable, but made him less intelligible as well.

The female speaker waited for approximately 76s to make a counter argument. This indicates that women are concerned not to violate men's turns as suggested by(Zimmerman and West, 1983, p.9). The female speaker respected turn taking conversational strategy to state her counter arguments so as to make the listeners understand her intention and to be more intelligible. This was, according to (Tannen, 1992, p.5), due to the fact that women consider conversations as a negotiation of closeness in which they tempt to shield themselves from those who try to push them away, unlike men who have the tendency to override others while conversing. The female speaker's expression "*look why have you chosen that example"* is an announcement that is specifically used to handle the subject side of complaints. Accordingly, Hepburn and Wiggins (2007) indicated that in discursive psychology, there are four ways of managing the subject side of complaints, among which is announcement. "*An announcement is used to project an upcoming complaint that signals the complainer's stance or attitude"* (p.37). This latter corresponds perfectly with the female speaker's expression as it announces an upcoming complaint, the substance of which is provided in the extract. Such announcement formulates the complainer's sense of disagreement by reporting her emotional response to the male speaker's argument.This, as argued by (Drew, 1998), "*enables complaints to characterize how far the other's behaviors have caused offence"* (p.37).Since the announcement is a way of handling the speaker's subject side while complaining, the female speaker's use of such conversational strategy rendered her speech to be more intelligible as she started her argument with an announcement of the complaint about the male speaker's alleged war story. However, the female speaker's subjectivity management was somewhat altered at the end of her statement when she accused her opponent of being racist. According to Hepburn and Wiggins (2007): "*there are words for other dispositional reasons for speaking (racism, sexism, paranoia, boasting, axe-grinding, etc.)"* (p.37). The absoluteexistences of these terms indicate lack of subjectivity-management.The female speaker's expression **"*you are a racist*"**reflects her lack of subjectivity management because, as maintained by discursive psychology, the word**'racist'**,among other dispositional words mentioned in the book, must be replaced or reformulated to handle subjectivity.

Despite the female speaker's use of dispositional, she still remains more intelligible than the male speaker due to her turn-taking conversational strategy along with the announcement of complaint statement. As for the male speaker, his argument was alleged and biased.This finding demonstrates the fact that the female speaker in this case efficiently managed her subjectivity in comparison to the male speaker which immediately answers the

first sub-question **"Are English female students more likely to manage their subjectivity in speech than male students?"** in addition to the third sub-question **"Are female students more likely to adopt a prejudiced position while conversing than male students?"** as it proves that the female speaker in this given situation managed her subjectivity which rendered her to be more intelligible and non-prejudiced. At the same time, the findings indicate that female speakers are disposed to be more intelligible than male speakers by dint of their subjectivity management along with their use of counter dispositionals and their tendency to make themselves clear while conversing with each other which in fact makes them more intelligible than male speakers and this answers the main question **"What are the psychological dispositions (dispositionals/counter dispositionals) laying behind female English students' higher conversational speech intelligibility?"**

Group 03

The following instance was extracted from the midst of the conversation where a male and a female speaker were debating on gender and physical strength.

Male speaker 0:33

Let's just keep religion out of the topic, let's take it from how our society, honestly like yeah, the professional careers we cannot take women and men in the same careers for example, building buildings, things. Yeah. ***For example, building cars, engineering, etc****. So, in this in this field, they cannot be equal, but in other fields, they can* ***totally be equal****.*

Female speaker 1:03

Well, my point is, is that, yes, women and men can be equal. And ***I think*** *it's just incorrect and it is wrong to ban the fence from like from the start. So you say that women do not have the rights to be builders, because there are women who are really strong and they have the physical, and they have strong bodies and they can do this job. And it is also incorrect to say that a man like he has like a specific interest, for example, he needs to work this and this and we ban him or we, we did not give him the rights to work as a hairdresser, for example. So I mean the rule has to be that they have the rights to choose whatever they want, if they want to.*

So we do not ban them from the very first place, and then you expect them to so we give them the choice.

The male speaker was clearly handling his subjectivity until he gave an example that distorted his subjectivity-management as he adopted a subjective/ biased position. The expression ***"For example, building cars, engineering, etc."***reflects his prejudiced opinion on women's faculties, for his illustration does not correspond with his prior statement that revolves around physical strength and gender. Building cars and engineering in this time of age does not require a particular strength simply due to sophisticated assembling vehicle devices. His ill judgment is a product of stake and interest because he reworked the nature of the event by statingungrounded evidence that does not represent reality as an attempt to influence. This was elaborated by Edwards and Potter (1992)by claiming that,*"subjective or 'subject side' accounts are ones that reflect a speaker's 'stake and interest' in a topic"* (p.510). He then, finalized his argument with an Extreme Case Formulation **"totally be equal".**The ECF used in this case represents a defensive stance taken by the speaker. From this expression, it is made clear that the male speaker had a firm view on gender equality as he gave an appropriate description to specify his stance. In specifying **"totally be equal"**, he treated equal as an insufficient depiction for gender equality. When in defensive situations, interactants use ECF to accentuate the importance of a given statement.(Pomerantz, 1986, p.222). His expression invited others to take him nonliterally and may also reflect the speaker's attitude/subjectivity rather than a straightforward description of the world.

On the other hand, the female speaker happened to manage her subjectivity by exposing her neutrality on the topic.The female speaker's expression **"I think"** is a hedge, also called softener, which indicates a significant difference in female speech in addition to legitimizing claims by offering them as counter dispositional to one's own presumptions and biases.According to Leaper and Robnett (2011) *"women were somewhat more likely to use tentative speech than men do"*(p.640). The female speaker's use of the counter dispositional/hedge was intended to prevent her claim from being undermined as product of stake also known as stake inoculation. According to Potter (1996),"*stake inoculation is a counter dispositional practice in which the producer characterizes himself as predisposed to see things differently*" (p.46). This is made abundantly clear in this case as the female's expression "**I think**"is used to reflect the speaker's politeness and subjectivity management when expressing her point of view on gender and physical strength. In other words, stake inoculation prevents subjectivity, and this makes the speaker factual, and, therefore, more

intelligible.This finding demonstrates the fact that the female speaker in this case efficiently managed her subjectivity in comparison to the male speakers which immediately answers the first sub-question **"Are English female students more likely to manage their subjectivity in speech than male students?"** in addition to the third sub-question **"Are female students more likely to adopt a prejudiced position while conversing than male students?"** as it proves that the female speaker in this given situation managed her subjectivity which rendered her to be more intelligible and non-prejudiced. At the same time, the findings indicate that female speakers are disposed to be more intelligible than male speakers by dint of their subjectivity management along with their use of counter dispositionals and their tendency to make themselves clear while conversing with each other which in fact makes them more intelligible than male speakers and this answers the main question **"What are the psychological dispositions (dispositionals/counter dispositionals) laying behind female English students' higher conversational speech intelligibility?"**

3.1.2.1.2Results of Females' and Males' (Pitch)Intonation Measurement

After identifying the participants' subjectivity management and speech intelligibility of the above three groups during a semi-structured interview, the participant's intonation (pitch) was measured via Praat software as an attempt to identify both male and female speakers' speech performances along with their speech intelligibility. Murray and Arnott (1996) discussed paramount factors, affecting speech intelligibility, with respect to a number of phonetic-acoustic features prior to speech variability (p.1). We measured the pitch as an acoustic indicator of intonation regarded as one of the main factors in the intelligibility of speech.

Female performance	**8.585490HZ**	**11.261490HZ**	**24. 965490HZ**	**10.261480HZ**
Male performance	**3.041490HZ**	**4.409490HZ**	**3.029490HZ**	**1.565490HZ**

Figure3.9, Female and Male Intonation (Pitch)

The above figure represents the different values obtained from the software .To begin with, the females'intonationvaries from 8.585490HZ to 11.261490HZ to 24.965490HZ to 10.261480HZ. That is, females' intonation ranges from 8 to 24Hz (vibration) per second.While males' intonationvaries from 3.041490HZ to 4.409490HZ to 3.029490HZ to 1.565490HZ. That is to say, male's intonationranges from 1 to 4Hz (vibration) per second. This signifies that female speakers out performed male speakers, which in its turn engendered a significant nonconformity between the two gender's pitch. This indicates that women are psychologicallydisposed to have a higher intonation(pitch).As maintained by (Orazbekovaa, Shyngyssovab, Mamyrovab&Zhumabayevab, 2015); females' speech is characterized with more varied intonation patterns in comparison to the one of males'. Female speech differences are often associated with female emotionality, which results in an excessive use of standard pronunciation and prestigious forms of grammar while males' speech is usually characterized with stiffness and reticence(p.11). In addition to that, (Marklund&Zackariasson, 2014) confirmed that "*there is a straight forward connection between intonation and intelligibility after conducting a quantitative cross-section study"* (p.13). The results showed that a monotone intonation reduces intelligibility while a lively, varied and high intonation increases intelligibility. That is to say, listening to a monotone/low intonation would affect the listener's ability to maintain his or her concentration and attention simply because a monotone/ low intonation is not associated with any form of engagement, which in its turn confuses the listener's perception of the speaker's attitude and intentions. Consequently, a lack of intelligibility is generated .However, a lively/ high intonation is perceived as dedicated and clear, since the listener can detect the speaker's attitude and intentions ,and, thus, resulting in an increased intelligibility.

As it can be perceived in the graphic below, in which all the above values were transferred, the female speakers' intonation is exceedingly higher to the one of male speakers. The graphic shows two curves, each color represents a gender. The red falling curve denotes males' intonation while the blue rising curve denotes females' intonation, which can be attributed to the females' psychological disposition.

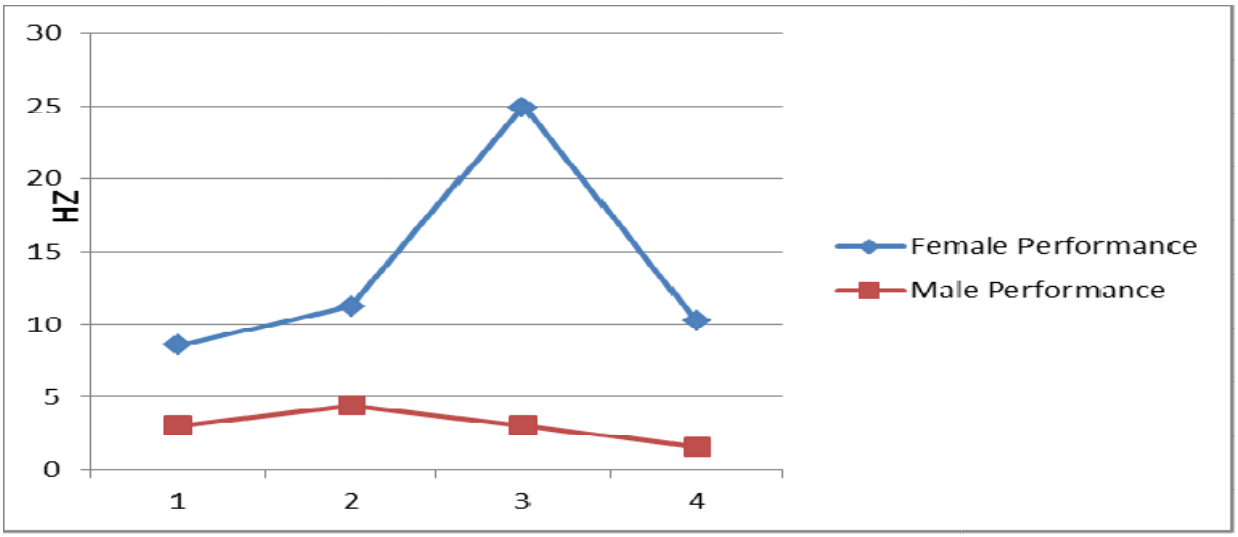


Figure 3.10 Male/Female Intonation Patterns

The females' emotionality is clearly reflected in their speech as it influences the intonation by making it noticeably higher. This is perceptible in figure 3.10 and, therefore, rendering the females' speech to be more intelligible. That is to say, a high intonation helps the listener maintain attention and concentration by being able to identify the speakers' attitude and intentwhich answers the second part of the second sub-question: **"do lengthier expressions and higher pitch make female students more intelligible than male students?"** as Praat software provided the values proving that females' intonation (pitch) is higher than that of males'.

Chapter four: Conclusion and Pedagogical Implication

Introduction

The following chapter represents the fourth and final part of the enquiry at hand. First, the chapter is initiated by a brief summary of the research findings obtained from chapter three. Second, it is preceded by the pedagogical implications and recommendations this research would provide. Third, it lists out the study limitations found during the research process. Fourth, this research employed a number of suggestions for upcoming researches. Finally, a general conclusion is provided.

1.4.1 Summary of the Research Findings

The semi-structured interview analysis revealed that female EFL students were disposed to be more intelligible than male EFL students due to their sufficient use of counter dispositionalsthat indicate subjectivity management as well as their cooperative conversational strategies and their noticeably higher intonation. Discursive psychology helped in extracting, analyzing and comparing male/female speech in terms of the dispositionals and the counter dispositionals to measure their subjectivity management, which in its turn was used to gauge the speakers' intelligibility. The results manifested certain biased and prejudiced positions adopted by the male participants that rendered them to be subjective while displaying their arguments and counter-arguments as products of stake and interest. In addition to their subject side, the male participants casually violated turn taking and maintained non-cooperative strategies throughout the debate in order to dominate and override the female conversants. The male speakers' tendency to infringe the adversaries' right to speak along with their predilection to turn the topic to their own interest had serious repercussions on their speech intelligibility. Not only did the dispositionals and the non-cooperative conversational strategies hinder the male speakers' speech intelligibility, but their remarkably low intonation as well. It was noted that there was a salient gap between the males' performance and females' performance in terms of intonationsince, male speech is characterized with a less varied intonation pattern in comparison to the one of females' which has an immediate impact on the males' speech intelligibility. As for the female speakers' findings, female speakers adopted a rather object-side that helped manage their subjectivity when expressing their argument and counter-argument. Their noticeable use of counter dispositionals as products of stake inoculation rendered them to be more intelligible. Also, their cooperative conversational strategies enabled them to accommodate others while

conversing by showing solidarity and support. Female speakers are concerned not to violate male speakers' turn and wait until they are finished in order to make listeners understand their intentions. The female speakers' tendency to act as facilitators and accommodators reinforced their speech intelligibility. Last but not least, the female speakers noticeably high intonation is attributed to the females' varied intonation pattern in comparison to the one of males' resulting them to be more intelligible. Observation as the first data collection instrument was used to answer the sub-questions related to the intonation and the speech duration produced by the participants. The computer software Praat was used so as to measure and analyze the intonation, frequency and sound pressure. The results showed a noticeable difference between males' intonation and females' intonation as the males' intonation reached only 6 vibrations per second maximum while the females' intonation reached 11 vibrations per second maximum. This indicated that female speakers are psychologically disposed to have higher intonation and therefore a higher frequency range which rendered them to be more intelligible than male speakers. As for the speech duration, VLC was used as a measurement device that revealed that female speakers were in fact more impulsive and expressive in comparison to male speakers. That is to say, 31% of female speakers have exceeded one minute while only 8% of male speakers did so and this is attributed to that fact that female speakers have more brain cells for communication in comparison to male speakers. This case study intends to list out the dispositionals and the counter dispositionals that render female English speakers to be more intelligible than male speakers while conversing.

4.2 Pedagogical Implications and Recommendation

The following list of pedagogical implications is derived from the findings of this study. Those implications aim at raising the teachers' and students' awareness of the concept of gender speech intelligibility for the sake of promoting this concept among first, second and third year English students at UYF-Medea.

1- Listening and speaking sessions should inculcate speech intelligibility as a primordial factor for better communication.

2- Speech intelligibility should be instructed in phonetic lessons as an essential chapter in the curriculum.

3- Students should be informed about how speech intelligibility varies from male to female.

4- Students should be encouraged to manage their subjectivity while conversing with one another to avoid being taken nonliterally which eventually renders them to be less intelligible.

5- University should be equipped with sophisticated phonetic laboratories where speech should be measured and analyzed in terms of its degree of intelligibility. This should help students recognize and remember the myriad contributing factors that lead to a higher speech intelligibility which in return should help them improve their speech intelligibility while conversing with one another.

4.3 Study Limitations

We have encountered the following limitations during our research:

1- Limited access to primary data.

2- Inaccessibility to certain measuring devices.

3- Facial expressions and poster, which are contributing factors to speech intelligibility, were ruled out as the participants did not consent to a video recorded interview.

4- Data collection limitations due to the pandemic.

5- Emotional dispositions such as attitude could not be measured owing to its sheer complexity.

4.4 Suggestion for further Research

This study can be a landmark for future researchers with the same topic interest. The following suggestions can be insightful.

1- Individual analysis of waveform and intonation trace of emotional expressions.

2- Convergence between nonverbal social interaction and discursive psychology.

3- Investigation of other dispositionals apart from the emotional ones.

4- Considering other settings of social lives for a better comprehension of subjectivity management and speech intelligibility.

5- Considering precision-timed placement of expressions within the conversational flow to better understand the speakers' intentions.

6- Doing a comparative study on the same topic by considering English as second language.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented the results obtained through students' observation and semi-structured interviews in addition to the results of the data analysis using a mixed method approach. The observation allowed us to gather data that answered the research sub-questions related to the intonation and length of the expressions produced by both genders from first, second and third year EFL students at Yahia Fares University. The results showed that the female speakers are psychologically disposed to use higher intonation and lengthier expressions while conversing. The data obtained from the observation was analyzed using Praat software to measure the intonation and sound pressure level. As for the length of the expressions, we used VLC media player to extract the speech duration. The second data collection instrument "semi-structured interviews" allowed us to gather the data required to answer the main question of the present study. The aim of this enquiry is to extract, analyze and compare the dispositionals and the counter dispositionals used by the participants (13/ males & 13 females) in order to measure their subjectivity through the application of Discursive Psychology as a method of analysis so as to verify which gender is psychologically disposed to be more intelligible while conversing.

The final results indicated that women managed their subjectivity through the use of a sufficient number of counter dispositionals that deemed them to be more intelligible than the male speakers, who in their turn, used dispositionals that were products of stake and interest. The latter rendered them to be too subjective and therefore less intelligible. Also, concerning speech and conversation, female EFL speakers adopted cooperative strategies as they kept to the one-at-a-time rule of turn taking while conversing which had a positive effect on their speech intelligibility. That is, female speakers reinforce their intelligibility by showing solidarity and support with the addressee. Male speakers; however, used non cooperative strategies owing to their tendency to dominate and override other speakers, resulting in a lack of speech intelligibility. In addition to the dispositionals, the counter dispositionals and the conversational strategies, the intonation of the participants' voice was measured and analyzed to identify their speech performance and, therefore, speech intelligibility. The findings have revealed that the female speakers' dispositions to having a varied/ high intonation made them more intelligible as it helped the listeners identify the speakers' attitude and intentions. However, male speakers were psychologically disposed to having a rather less varied/low intonation. This has a negative effect on speech intelligibility as the listeners were not capacitated to make out the speakers' intentions and attitude.

General Conclusion

The present case study aims at investigating first, second and third year EFL students' speech intelligibility at Yahia Fares University-Medea.In order to answer the main question along with the three sub-questions, this enquiry is divided into four chapters. Chapter one presents the literature review that includes a general introduction, a thorough illustration of speech intelligibility, a list of previous studies on gender speech intelligibility, a definition of gender speech and finally, a painstaking explanation of discursive psychology.

The second chapter is devoted for the methods and the methodology that is applied in this research. This chapter includes a detailed explanation of the data collection instruments along with the rationale behind the application of each method which are: an observation and semi-structured interviews to answer the main question and the tree sub-questions. It also includes the context, the population and the participants of this study. This chapter is finalized by mentioning the limitations and the delimitations confronted while conducting this enquiry and a conclusion.

The third chapter is devoted for analyzing, deducing and discussing the collected data. On the one hand, the observation provided data to analyze both the pitch and the speech duration produced by the participants. The audio records were analyzed by Praat to obtain quantitative data regarding the participants' pitch. As for the speech duration, VLC media player was made use of to measure the speech duration. On the other hand, the semi structured interviews provided qualitative data so as to extract the psychological dispositions used by the participants while conversing and to measure their speech intelligibility. Finally, the intonation of both male and female students was measured via Praat software in order to find out which gender has the highest intonation and, therefore, the highest intelligibility.

The fourth chapter is devoted for the conclusion and the pedagogical implications this research suggests. First, the chapter provides a summary of the research findings. Second, it lists out a number of pedagogical implications and recommendations for the educational system. Third, it displays the study limitations found throughout conducting this research. Fourth, it provides a number of suggestions for further research concerning this study. Finally, this research is finalized by a general conclusion.

In addition to the literature review that provided the framework for this study and the methodology chapter that provided the essential data to answer the research questions, chapter

three describes the findings and discussion of these questions. The semi-structured interview analysis revealed that female EFL students were disposed to be more intelligible than male EFL students due to their sufficient use of counter dispositionals that indicate subjectivity management as well as their cooperative conversational strategies and their noticeably higher intonation. Discursive psychology helped in extracting, analyzing and comparing male/female speech in terms of the dispositionals and the counter dispositionals to measure their subjectivity management, which in its turn was used to gauge the speakers' intelligibility. The results manifested certain biased and prejudiced positions adopted by the male participants that rendered them to be subjective while displaying their arguments and counter-arguments as products of stake and interest. In addition to their subject side, the male participants casually violated turn taking and maintained non-cooperative strategies throughout the debate in order to dominate and override the female conversants. The male speakers' tendency to infringe the adversaries' right to speak along with their predilection to turn the topic to their own interest had serious repercussions on their speech intelligibility. Not only did the dispositionals and the non-cooperative conversational strategies hinder the male speakers' speech intelligibility, but their remarkably low intonation as well. It was noted that there was a salient gap between the males' performance and females' performance in terms of intonation since, male speech is characterized with a less varied intonation pattern in comparison to the one of females' which has an immediate impact on the males' speech intelligibility. As for the female speakers' findings, female speakers adopted a rather object-side that helped manage their subjectivity when expressing their argument and counter-argument. Their noticeable use of counter dispositionals as products of stake inoculation rendered them to be more intelligible. Also, their cooperative conversational strategies enabled them to accommodate others while conversing by showing solidarity and support. Female speakers are concerned not to violate male speakers' turn and waited until they were finished in order to make listeners understand their intentions. The female speakers' tendency to act as facilitators and accommodators reinforced their speech intelligibility. Last but not least, the female speakers noticeably high intonation is attributed to the females' varied intonation pattern in comparison to the one of males' resulting them to be more intelligible. Observation as the second data collection instrument was used to answer the sub-questions related to the pitch and the speech duration produced by the participants. The computer software Praat was used so as to measure and analyze the pitch, frequency and sound pressure. The results showed a noticeable difference between males' pitch and females' pitch as the males' pitch reached only 6 vibrations per second maximum while the females' pitch

reached 11 vibrations per second maximum. This indicated that female speakers are psychologically disposed to have higher pitch and therefore a higher frequency range which rendered them to be more intelligible than male speakers. As for the speech duration, VLC was used as a measurement device that revealed that female speakers were in fact more impulsive and expressive in comparison to male speakers. That is to say, 31% of female speakers have exceeded one minute while only 8% of male speakers did so and this is attributed to that fact that female speakers have more brain cells for communication in comparison to male speakers. This case study intended to list out the dispositionals and the counter dispositionals that render female English speakers to be more intelligible than male speakers while conversing. Throughout this investigation, a number of limitations dwindled the scope of the enquiry. To investigate subjectivity, attitude is the most accurate and crucial factor ; however, a discursive psychology-based approach for analyzing attitude was far from our access in addition to being unable to video record the conducted interviews to analyze the facial traits and poster, etc… as the participants did not consent to it. Measuring speech intelligibility was also unattainable due to the inaccessibility to the related software. Instead, dispositionals and counter dispositionals substituted attitude to analyze subjectivity. The inquiry at hand may open a wide scope of upcoming researches as it represents the first step of applying discursive psychology as a method of analysis at Yahia Fares University, Medea and might also be projected on a national level.

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Appendix A

VERIFICATION OF THE OBSERVATION

Questions were submitted during the observation for first, second and third EFL students at Yahia Fares University (40 students)

A pair of students was designated to answer a common everyday life question.

Questions:

Question 1

What is happiness to you?

Question 2

What angers you the most?

Question 3

Do you believe that hatred is growing stronger in the world?

Question 4

Do you think that your parents' generation is better than yours?

Question5

Does art play a huge role in your life?

Question 6

What is a solemn friend to you?

Question 7

What are your future plans?

Question 8

Can injustice be life threatening?

Question 9

What is your favorite subject?

Question 10

What is your favorite movie?

Question 11

Do you prefer social media or face to face communication?

Question 12

Do you study smart or hard?

Question 13

What is the most efficient way to learn English?

Appendix B

Section 1: Background Information

Please mark (X) as appropriate:

1. Your gender: Male ☐ female ☐

2. Your age:

3. Your nationality: Algerian ☐ other ☐

4. Your mother tongue language: Arabic ☐ English ☐ other ☐

Section 2: Discursive psychology and gender speech intelligibility differences

Question 1

To what extent do you believe in gender equality?

Question 2

What does religion say about gender equality?

Question 3

What does feminism say about gender equality?

Question 4

What does the society have to say about gender equality?