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# GENDER AND ITS EFFECT ON LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

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## ABSTRACT

Learning foreign languages has become an influential part of our life, however, it is affected by many non-linguistic factors. As well as, language acquisition is a complicated process including several factors and that this process is incredibly influenced due to the flexibility of the brain. Moreover, the nature of memory systems involved in females and males also have a fundamental role that makes the genders different. Furthermore, age and gender are significant factors deeply influencing language acquisition process.

**Keywords:** Age, Gender, Acquisition, Affective, Second Language, Factors, Difference, Effect.

## INTRODUCTION

Current researches show that in learning foreign languages girls tend to achieve higher marks than boys. Gender can be regarded as an incredibly affective factor playing a exact role and influencing to the language acquisition of people. It is indisputable that there are some important differences between men and women in learning. Accordingly their researches, the theorists of SLA (Second Language Acquisition) Boyle and Ehrlich emphasize that female learners have possible superiorities in the process of second language learning. Therefore, students learning English with exact programs will gain or counteract the learning efficiency due to their gender difference and it has become an important issue of second language. Some visible gender differences occur in the understanding of different topics at early stages of acquisition, but not at more advanced stages (1).

## METHODS AND MATERIALS

There is no doubt that language acquisition is a complex process which involves several factors, and that this process is highly influenced due to plasticity of the brain. Also, the types of memory systems involved in females and males are also

have a pivotal role that makes the genders distinct. Age and gender, are among the factors that run in parallel with other factors and deeply influence language acquisition process. Given the importance placed on the role on age and gender, the researchers hold age and gender are not the necessary conditions for second language acquisition.

Learning style and learning strategies have been the topic of discussions for a long time. Many researchers have been trying to find possible factors that affect learning style and strategies. One of the factors that caught the attention is gender differences. As for learning strategies, various learners' factors have been identified as factors related to language learning strategies, including language being learned, level of language learning, proficiency, gender, affective variables such as attitudes, motivation, and language learning goals.

## RESULTS

The aim of this study is to investigate the importance of age and gender prolems and their impacts, as well as, to identify the difference between them and to identify the relationship of some internal and external factors involved in learning English as a foreign language. The results of this research demonstrate the problems related to age and gender difference and the difficulties of students faced with them and to select their instructional strategies more effectively related to gender and age of students.

The relationship between language and gender has long been of interest within sociolinguistics and related disciplines. Early 20th century studies in linguistic anthropology looked at differences between women's and men's speech across a range of languages, in many cases identifying distinct female and male language forms

Gender and Language is a different and rapidly developing field, which has both academic and popular aspects. The 'turn to language' across the humanities and social sciences, and the impact of linguistics and scientific analysis, have contributed to a reframing of questions on gender and language. The current and new directions in the study of gender and language, in terms of theoretical and analytical frameworks, are the result of a scientific rethinking of linguistic analysis, feminist theory and feminist linguistic analysis. This also involves a lack of consensus on how to evaluate the claims of the literature, and to what extent to reinvestigate previous summaries. The terms *sex* and *gender* are sometimes used interchangeably as synonyms. Language and gender theorists have generally made a difference between

sex as physiological, and gender as a cultural or social construct. According to this distinction, *sex* refers to biological maleness and femaleness, or the physiological, functional, anatomical differences that distinguish men and women, whereas *gender* refers to the traits assigned to a sex – what maleness and femaleness stand for – within different societies and cultures. Gender can then be seen as a broader and complex term. The many different life experiences of women and men cannot be simply explained by biological differences between the sexes.

## DISCUSSION

Current theories of gender recognize not only that behaving as men or women within a society will vary from one situation to the next, from one social grouping or community to another, and according to different goals, aims, and interests, but also that people are active agents involved in their own 'gendering' or 'doing gender'.

The distinction between sex and gender is significant and political. Biological explanations of socially constructed differences between men and women are often used to justify male superiorities or reassert traditional family and gender roles. For example, women's natural role is important like mothers and nurturers. As well as, theorizations of the difference between sex and gender have developed in recent years.

Cultural differences, such as the pressure (intentional or not) on girls to 'be nice' and polite and on boys to be strong and competitive, are likely to lead to the learning of different interaction styles and the adoption of different linguistic choices by girls and by boys. Some of these choices, and the related broader gender ideologies, often work to disadvantage girls and women.

The notion of gender differences is still important, but instead of assumptions about *a priori* binary differences, current approaches focus on the difference gender makes. Differences are also relevant in the sense that it is important to examine how we talk about them and what we do with them.

Educational settings are important settings for the construction of gender and the production of a range of gendered norms, practices, relations, representations, and identities. According to R. Lakoff researches, in terms of foreign language acquisition, findings are inconsistent and depend on different factors, such as:

- the setting where learners are exposed to a new language;
- the motivation for learning a foreign language;
- the learners' perceptions and attitudes towards the language,
- the language teacher, and the language learning materials and activities (2).

## CONCLUSION

In almost all societies and cultures, people usually believe that men and women are different in their linguistic behavior. There is a large literature available which tries to explain the gender difference of linguistic behaviour in diversified societies, cultures and speech communities.

Language and gender constitute society. Language used by one gender is often, very different from the one, used by the other gender. It is often claimed that language is discriminatory against woman. In spite of much progress in women' rights, women are still not equal to men. They are not provided with equal opportunities of speaking and communicating.

The differences that are found in two different forms of language used by men and women are known as gender-preferential differences (3). This gender – preferential differences distinctly reflect the various attitudes adopted by societies towards male and female gender.

Whether all, one of the best European scientists who conducted research on this topic and made a contact with Carib tribe, comments about them, ― The men have great many expressions peculiar to them, which the women understand but never pronounce themselves. On the other hand, women have words and phrases which the men never use or they would be laughed to scorn. Thus it happens that in their conversations it often seems as if women have another language than the men.

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