



Doing Gender in Pashtoon Culture: An Analysis of Real-Life Talk from the Perspective of Gender Differences in Language Use

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate gender interaction within Pashtoon culture, assessing the applicability of Western-derived language and gender constructs while identifying unique interactional strategies and linguistic markers defining gender roles, power dynamics, and identity within this cultural context. Employing qualitative methods, voice recordings from four families were analyzed using discourse analysis tools, guided by Tannen's theory of gendered language use.

Results indicate the significant influence of both culture and religion on gender identity formation, with gender norms aligned with prevailing cultural and religious ideologies. The use of derogatory terms for women stepping outside prescribed boundaries underscores the enforcement of gender norms. Various factors, including religious beliefs, hierarchical relational structures inherent to collectivist cultures, and the perpetuation of traditional gender ideologies, contribute to the complexity of gendered language use in Pashtoon society. Notably, in rural areas, where religious adherence is pronounced, gender ideology is deeply embedded within religious practices.

This study contributes to existing literature on the intricate interplay among gender, language, and culture within Pashtoon society. However, further research in urban settings is recommended to explore how differing educational and sociocultural contexts may impact these dynamics.

Keywords:

Gender interaction,
Language,
Culture,
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Introduction

Gender identities, expectations, and roles are constructed based on the cultural norms of a society. The unwritten laws of values, norms, and behaviors that the individual needs to align with being male or female is designed by society. The impact of culture on gender is complex and multifaceted which influences not only how an individual is perceived by society but also how an individual perceives him/herself.

The present study is aimed at analyzing gender interaction in Pashtoon culture, to test the extent to which language and gender notions produced in Western culture apply to gender identity in Pashtoon culture. The study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the key interactional strategies that index gender in Pashtoon culture, and how do they differ from or align with Western notions?
2. Are there specific cultural or linguistic markers in Pashtoon discourse that indicate gender roles, power dynamics, or identity, which have not been previously identified in Western research?
3. How might the identification of Pashtoon-specific interactional strategies for gender contribute to a more comprehensive and culturally sensitive understanding of gender discourse?

Literature Review

Maltz and Borker (1982) concluded that 'linguistic differences and miscommunication between American women and men can come about because they 'come from different linguistic subcultures, having learned to do different things with words in a conversation' (1982:200). This learning occurs 'during precisely that period, approximately age 5–15, when boys and girls interact socially primarily with members of their own sex' (1982: 203).

Fishman (1983) in her article 'Interaction: The Work Women Do', recorded data from married couple in their homes and analyzed it through discourse analysis. By analyzing questions, minimal responses an attention beginning in talk, the study found that there is inequality in the talk of men and women and therefore talk is more problematic for women but not for men. In contrast, topics introduced by the men were treated as topics to be pursued.

Elinor Keenan's study (1974, revised 1989) in a Malagasy-speaking community in Madagascar revealed gender differences in communication. Women employed a direct speech style, enabling them to engage in powerful activities like confrontation, bargaining, and gossip, which men participated in less or not at all.

Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992) suggest that gender differences in language use create hierarchies and social structures that may influence the way in which participants will communicate. For example, men use language to assert dominance, for independence, hierarchy, and control. Women's language on the other hand has been said to reflect prestige consciousness, insecurity, nurturance, sensitivity to others and solidarity. These are just some of the variables that create such complexities within mixed gendered communities of practice.

Eckes (2000) agreed to Tannen's view that men show a higher rate of errand practices by giving directions, straightforward answers and showing disagreements directly as compared to women. They utilize the issue solving practice as a chance to exhibit their competence, capability to fathom issues and their loyalty to the relationship. However, women speculate the problems as an approach to fortify the relationships, centering more on sharing and discussing the problem rather than the outcome. Eckes (2000) also concluded that in the mixed gender groups, men hold the floor for much time than women.

Gender and language use in family context, Thornborrow's (2002) contained that family has a hierarchical structure therefore, the definition of power is based on a reflexive relationship between talk and the institutional context it is found in, in which the social meanings are co-constructed by participants through talk, but the talk is always grounded within a specific, local context.

Research Design and Methodology

The research is qualitative in nature. The data has been collected through voice recording from four families, my own, two of my sisters in laws and my maternal uncle's family. Since, mostly people live in joint family systems in village, the recordings include more than two participants which are both males and females. Only those parts of the data have been selected and transcribed which have been thematically important to the study. The data has been analyzed using discourse analysis tools keeping in view Tannen's theory of gender difference in language use.

Many sociolinguists have used voice recording and discourse analysis as tools for data collection and analysis; such as Deborah Tannen, Penelope Eckert, Mary Bucholtz, and Janet Holmes, to explore the role language plays in shaping gender identity.

Tannen (1990) conducted gender-based research within interactional sociolinguistics developed from John Gumperz's work with cross-cultural differences in communicative norms.

Discussion and Analysis

Politeness

The notion of politeness has been studied thoroughly by many researchers (Leech, 1983) Brown and Levinson's (1987), and Grice's cooperative principle (1975). Grice and Leech consider politeness to be rules of pragmatics while the concept of "face" is the central notion as discussed by Brown and Levinson (1987). In their book entitled *Politeness: Some Universals on Language*, they give many illustrations from non-European languages

to explain politeness. According to them, “face” is a human desire which affects their interactions. The concept of face is divided into two: positive face: a desire to be liked and negative face: the desire to be free from any pressure or imposition. Positive “face” thus makes a speech act a face-saving act while negative face makes the speech act face-threatening act.

The data shows that in Pashtoon culture, the interaction is based on the relation between/among the interlocutors, rather than on the concept of negative face. Moreover, the lexical choices by the speakers are based on the social position and relationship they hold with one another.

In Pashtoon culture, the level of politeness is adopted according to the hierarchy of the relationship between/among the participants, for example in the following talks taken from different recordings show that FTA is used with the younger ones or with the women by men because both children and women are subordinate of men at home.

1. *Father to son: Alaka! da mobile har wakh negh negh ma kawa zama makhki , sary sha chrta sa kar ta las wachawa , dwa dre rupy ogata sareya. Da khalko wara wara di ao da plarano sa las kai ao ta zan ta gora.*

Boy! Don't use the mobile every time in front of me, be a man, try to find some work and earn some money man. Others younger boys are giving helping hands to their fathers and looking at you.

2. *(to wife) da tol sta da lasa wran di jahila khaza e nu waro ta ba sa okhay.*

All of the children are spoiled because of you, what will an ignorant woman like you teach to her children.

But the same man uses positive face strategy while talking to his mother or elder brother when he talks of his helplessness by saying that he is unable to meet both ends because of inflation.

3. *To mother: Bebe za ba sa sa kum , pa de granai ki khuday shta, der kha kha khalak preshana di, wara sabaq wai, gham khadi om da , melmana she, dawai durmal she , bs wakh der nazar dy , dua kawa.*

Mother! What can I do? God knows Even affluent people are worried because of the price hiking. Children are being sent to for education, we keep terms with relatives, entertain guests, arrange medication(if needed), time is very hard , pray (for me)

4. *Younger brother: Lala ! da de bill sa bas sa kao , da bill ba warko nu bya ba tash nast e tola myasht.*

What will we do with this (electricity) bill? Depositing the bill money will leave us empty pocketed.

5. *Elder brother: yara sa owaim nu , warkawal kho di.*

What can I say , we need to pay

6. *Younger brother :Khalak kho pe ihtijaj kai*

People are protesting

7. *Elder brother: Kai ba nu pa ihtijajono na samigi da mulk.*

Let them do it, this country cannot be corrected by protests.

FTA can also be used by close friends and in casual conversations.

8. 1st woman: ta bya tali we kosa dabi, khawand drta qarigi na che ara waz plar ka rawana e?

You went to see your parents again, tramp, doesn't your husband scold you for frequent visits to your parents.

9. 2nd woman: ta kho asi swazi ta na kho e nokara jora kare bs tash da kor kar k.

You are just jealous, because he has made you just a maid who does household only.

The data also shows that politeness is shown by those people who are educated, even a little. Those uneducated are mostly prone to use FTAs unwittingly. In the following example, a stranger is received at home who has entered the wrong home and asks for water.

10. *Girl: taso cha ka raghali ye, dlta paki landi lag kinai dera garmi da.sahi kinai.za drla oba rawram*

Whom do you want to visit, sit here under the fan its very hot, make yourself comfortable, i am bringing water for you.

11. *Girl's aunt: da sok da , prady khaza de radanana kare,khuday khabar sa malomat kai*

Who is she? You have let a stranger woman to enter, God knows what she wants to know (about us).

The girl is a student at college in the village, but her aunt is illiterate, therefore she maintains her positive face but her aunt does not care about being presented with a negative face which proves that apart from social relation, education is also a variable in politeness.

Turn Taking and Holding the Floor

Turn taking and holding conversational floor unfolds many culturally specific themes, it is not only a conversational aspect to be analyzed merely on the basis of its patterns or distribution. Some of the themes imbedded in the cross-sex talk has been uncovered in the following talks.

Taking turn, holding the floor for long and topic control are not associated to power. In cross sex talk, women talk more, take more turns, and introduce new topics, though in hierarchy designed by society and particularly religion (that women are lower than men), females are not dominant at all. Secondly, women hold the floor for long because they mostly attach stories to an event or topic being discussed.

In conversation, “floor” refers to opportunity to start talking, this idea was introduced by Sacks (1972a). There is difference between “floor” and “turn”. Edelsky(1981) regarded floor as a psychological framework which is shared by the interlocutors as the “floor,” plays an active role in shaping how participants in a conversation think and learn about their involvement in that conversation. It serves as a framework that guides, adapts, sustains, fine-tunes, and even generates moments of interaction.

A speaker takes the floor when he/she takes the turn to speak. The listener shares the same floor and can display their engagement through responses like backchannels or non-verbal cues such as eye contact or nodding. Look at the following talk in which a woman talks about a female relative who has been through a long illness. Though the man also contributes to talk still their responses are mostly short. In the analysis T: 1 means Talk no. 1, T:2 means talk no.2.

T.1

1:Man: *da aslam da khazi cancer dy , ma wrta we shukat khanum ta e boza*

Aslam’s wife has been diagnosed with cancer, I told him to take her to Shukat khanum (hospital)

2:Wife : *Alai, da zaka na kha kigi , che wraz terigi nu kamzori kigi , sama zyara shawe , tab a way ka mra kigi. pa wada ki me lidali wa agha bala wraz.*

Oh! That’s why she does not recover, becomes weak with every passing day, has become too pale, one says as if she is going to die, I saw her in the marriage ceremony.

3: Man: *shukat khanum, kha dy che ilaj e sam washi.*

Shoukat kahnum is better for standard treatment.

4: Wife: *ao kana, Allah de rogha ki, wara bachi e di, wai sama pe khafa shum.*

Yes, may Allah grant her good health, (she) has little kids, I feel very sad for her.

5: Mother: *Da chal kho pa seema om o sama dera moda najora wa ,dera sakhta tera kra , pa dasi docrtarano wagarzida , ar cha ba wrta we che na kha kigi, kho bs sa dawayani ao sa khatmona wazifi e wkri nu chrta salor kala pas laga kha shwa os e 4 bachi de , ao wai che bya rabani na da raghali da bemari.*

Seema also suffered from this, she was ill for a long time, (she) went through a very time visited many doctors, everyone told her that she would not recover, but recovered after four years due to medication and supplications, now she has four children and says that the disease has not reoccurred.

Men’s talk is small and exact, and he has offered a solution by asking him to take his wife to the cancer hospital, while women’s talk is more descriptive and detailed where she describes her *pale complexion*, and how *weak* she is. Dialogue 5 narrates a complete story of another woman who had been suffering from the same disease, her experience with doctors and prayers and then her recovery and normal life. It can be noted that there are no repeated uses of pronouns for the person being discussed. The listeners already know who is being talked about. These missing pronouns are the characteristic of female speech as they give long descriptions.

The assumption that women talk more, and their talk is usually about nothing is partially incorrect. Women do talk more but they talk about *something* and that *something* is their responses and reactions towards the things they think and experience about others. For example, talking about another person that does not know her responsibilities is a talk about framing someone as careless and irresponsible.

Moreover, women use interjections, like “*Alai*” and “*Wai*” or “*Akh*” to express surprise, shock and sadness. Men, on the other hand do not use these interjections mostly, they use the expression “*na yara*” (no buddy) or a complete sentence “*das a way*”(what are you saying) to express the emotions of surprise

T:1 (continued)

6: *Mother in law (to daughter) : aghi kho asi sabaq waily nu, nura kho da sa na na da khabar, na da khawand khyal kai , na da melma sa kini, na kor ki sa da makhi kar kai. Bs de ta e preda che sorkhi poder waki ao mobile ki drami ogore ao chrta pa sail lara she.*

She has learnt nothing from her education, (she) is unaware of everything, (she) never takes care of her husband, (she) never entertains guests, never takes responsibility of household, just let her do make up , watch dramas on her phone and go out.

7: *Father in law: nu tam kawa kana sorkhi poder*

So also do make up

8: *Mother in law: bs ingor de kai kana , da pora da.*

Your daughter in law is doing it, that's enough

9: *Son: waya wrta che sa e.*

Ask her when there's is something (to be done)

10: *Mother in law: trelingona (trainings) nsham kawaly, u kal e kido wala dy de kor ki , za na e wara jora kare.*

I can't do trainings, it's about to be one year now in this house, she behaves childishly.

Dialogue 6 shows missing pronoun when the mother in law talks about her daughter in law. In Pashto conversation, the pronouns are mostly omitted as the interlocutors are sharing the same "floor" therefore they know the context and who is being talked about.

Women are also in habit of second guessing the thoughts of others and then they present their opinions on it, they indicate it by taking the turn in talk. For example, in the same talk where the mother in law is not happy with the daughter in law she says:

Mother in Law: wrandar e najora (pregnant) da , ar wakh wai che alak ba kigi ka jiny, da de wrta jor sam qar kigi

Her sister-in-law is pregnant, every time she says whether it would be a boy or a girl

Daughter: da aghi kho mkhki na dre lonra di

She has three daughters already.

Mother-in-law: ao kana, zwi washi nu kha ba e

Yes, it would be good if she bears a son this time.

Daughter: agha m sama poya da, ar wakht wai che inshallah zwi ba me kigi. de ta da khalak khra khkare, da kho wrta sama pa tama da che khushala she

She (her sister in law) also knows that is why she says that she will bear a son if God wills. She thinks people are dumb, she is expecting (a bad news that of baby girl) so that she is happy.

Father-in-law: staso da kahabre me bekhi khwakhi na di, chrta sa bal sa owaye.

I entirely, do not like this talk, say something else.

Both the mother-in-law and her daughter guess that the daughter in law is jealous of her sister in-law, though she has not said it clearly. She has just mentioned if she would bear a son or daughter as she is pregnant , maybe the daughter in law is concerned with her another daughter to be born but both of them think that she would feel happy if another daughter is born. Bearing a boy is a plus for a woman , , guessing her thought that she wants her sister in law to have a baby girl.

Moreover, the father-in-law uses an intensifier (bekhi meaning entirely) to show his dislike for their talk about guessing her thought.

Men do not hold the floor as indicated by Spender (1980) rather they tend to listen more, there is stereotypical notion of " *sari duna qisi na kai*" (men don't make stories") in Pakhtoon culture. It is not related to status and power rather it is related to the gender identity assigned to them. The gender identity of a male is of the one who is serious and sober, composed and calculated. Therefore, they are expected to talk in such a manner as to reflect the stereotyped identity of a Pakhtoon male.

Women, on the other hand are not assigned these personalities traits. Therefore, they are more outgoing and talkative.

Thus, the act of listening does not make them lower status as Tannen (1990) indicated in her book *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation*. Rather in Pakhtoon culture, it makes a man more powerful if

he exhibits the quality of listening. Moreover, if a man does not listen and takes frequent turns with women in talk or makes interruptions, there is an idiom used “*da khazo pa shan eray wai*” (a metaphorical term to indicate women’s excessive talk) which means that the man is expected to talk to the point and short and he is not expected to answer everything just like women who consider this important to answer everything in talk or give comment, thus when men take frequent turns, or do interruptions they thought to behave like women.

In the above T: 1, it can be observed that the father and son are sitting but they do not take part in the conversation when women are guessing the thoughts of another woman.

Men don’t give lectures and extra explanation, they are more exact and to the point, there are more directives and suggestions, they are more assertive in asking for things than forming a request.

It can be seen, however, that if men start talking about something about which women have zero knowledge, then their turn may be longer as he tries to explain things.

T:2 (Appendix 1) indicates that Men don’t give lectures and extra explanation, they are more exact and to the point, there are more directives and suggestions, more assertive in asking for things than forming a request which is in contrast to Tannen (1990) identification of the “centrality of lecturing in men’s conversational strategies”. While women use indirect ways of talking to men, the second dialogue “*Bebe monz kai*” (Mother is offering prayer) is an indirect request to wait as one of the elder of the house is not available.

There are four directive structures in the talk, and all are formed by men. the fourth directive is a face threatening act by the husband as the wife just shared what she knew about the patient, but is mostly considered bad for a woman to talk about other men or express knowledge about something which is personal to a man, the comment “*ta te dera khabar e*” (you are well-aware of him) is a sarcastic question indicating that she knows about other men’s problems. The wife’s response using a missing agent “*cha we nu...*” (someone said”) which is also interrupted by the man shows that she is not taking responsibility of what she said about the patients rather she indicates that someone has said so, indicating that she is not interested in another man’s problem. Men use directives while talking as indicated in dialogue 1. Females do not use directives towards fathers and husbands, they either ask rhetorical questions (to do something) or gives a weak statement seeking agreement. This dynamic underscore the gendered nature of directive speech acts, where discussing other men’s issues is considered inappropriate for women. Men’s use of directives and women’s avoidance of them are aligned with distinct gender roles.

In very rare cases it can be seen, however, that if men start talking about something about which women have zero knowledge then their turn may be longer as he tries to explain things.

Women tend to speak more and listen less, that’s why they interrupt more, they bring in new topics quite unrelated to the previous one being discussed and disrupt the flow of the talk. It does not at all mean that women challenge men or their status as it is culturally impossible for a woman to challenge a man, both directly and indirectly.

While men listen more and give minimal responses. Culturally it is not to show connection or Rapport building rather it is considered that this the usual way of men talks.

In pukhtoon culture, men do not use silence to make a woman silent rather he uses louder voice or forms of rebukes, and sometimes name calling. Silence is used to indicate the next person can continue as he is listening.

Throughout this talk, the turns are mostly taken by women, they express their opinions through turn taking and holding the floor for long. They also introduce new topics in the talk. While men listen more and give minimal responses. Culturally it is not to show connection or *Rapport building* (Tannen; 1990) rather it is considered that this the usual way men talk. It is not related to status and power rather it is related to the gender identity assigned to them. The gender identity of a male is of the one who is serious and sober, composed and calculated. Therefore, they are expected to talk in such a manner as to reflect the stereotyped identity of a Pukhtoon male. Women, on the other hand are not assigned these personalities traits. Therefore, they are more outgoing and talkative. Agreeing to men, as indicated in like 31, where the sister agrees with brother’s opinion and decides not to go to market is due to women’s lower status religiously and culturally. So it cannot be said that women always seek connection by showing agreement rather it is imbedded in culture to be showing agreement, if a women tend to disagree she will

tailor her response in the form of a tag question, a rhetorical question or a request that her opinion should also be considered.

Use of Intensifiers

Intensifiers are not specific to female talk only; men also use them. In line 2, grandfather uses the word “zorawara” meaning very hot weather which an intensifier and personification of the hot weather. In line 7 the wife uses the intensifier “tak kar” (no task /work) to indicate that the children do nothing at all.

Similarly, line 19: shows a conditional form being used by the women to form a request that is to ask the children to complete their school task. The man uses the intensifier “ Mazboot” (hard) it is used in metaphorical sense , otherwise “ mazboth “means strong . It is used as intensifier. The father threatens the sons to beat them hard id they got failed.

19:Wife: (to husband) , *ka waro ta de da school da kar owe nu, chuti khatmigi.*

If (you) Ask/ the children for homework, vacations are about to end.

20:Son: *alaka kar m khatam kai kha. Ka fail shwai nu kha mazbot waal hm di*

Boys, complete your homework, if you get failed , you will be beaten hard.

Women’s Dependency on men

Women are not allowed to go outside home that’s why they face difficulties if they need something, and men are not at home. Women are not allowed to go outside home that’s why they face difficulties if they need something, and men are not at home.

Women are dependent partly because their position as women do not allow them to take certain responsibilities which are assigned to men by society and partly since men have made them dependent on them for offering to do things for them. For example, dialogue 5, indicates that when men are not at home and women need something they face trouble:

5:Grandma: *sari lar she sa rawri nu taso da sa gham na kawai , bs che ozai nu makham razai mung aryan nast u che sok lar rashi.*

Men go(to market) and bring things but you (both father and son) leave home and return in the evening. We are in trouble if someone (guests) visits.

Similarly, the dialogue between sister and brother (line 22-31) in which girl ask for permission to go to market shows that the brother offers his service to bring whatever she is in need of instead of letting her go. In the dialogues 32-39 also show that culturally a woman is always and must be in need of a man as she cannot stay alone. The dialogue *Grandma: wai nu da khaza ba yawazi e bya nu , jor tash wara de wrsa.* (Oh, so this will be alone then, just with children) shows the concern of the grandma about the lady being staying alone, while the dialogue from the daughter *Daughter: ka sary kor na e nu khamakha ba wrla sok shpe la khpalo ki.,* (If there's no man at home, then someone will definitely come at night (to stay with her) reaffirms the dependency of women over men.

Women consider men as a source of confidence and strength. As indicated in line 39. The female includes all the people by saying “*khalak*” that people feel confident with the presence of man at home which is actually referring to females that the presence of men makes the female confident.

This shows that in talk people create roles for themselves and for the others simultaneously and then they tailor their talk to that role expecting others to do so as well.

Identity Building: Naming and Labeling

The participants, while taking turns and talking about multiple topics reveal various culturally specific ideas regarding gender identities that are assigned to women by society. For example, when the wife complains that the children neither participate in any household chores nor do their school tasks, she is talking to her husband but the turn is taken by the grandmother herself (line ,9), and uses her turn to build certain identity of the girls by describing their behavior. She is second guessing the girl’s thoughts that they do things wrong so that no one asks them to do it again. She then holds the floor for long where she first contrasts their (girls’) behavior to the already specified behavior of women concluding that they don’t abide by those principles which are set for a woman to follow.

The grandma labels the girls as “*Nar*” (male) which is used for a woman or girl to insult them for not having wome- like behavior.It shows that women have been assigned specific personality traits to which they must

abide , deviating from which make them “Unwomanly”. The woman “traits” or “ behavior “ include , doing cleaning, and participate in cooking. . It shows that teaching girls “how to behave” is mandatory for their married life but not for the boys. Secondly, the grandmother is concerned not with the learning of basic life skill, but she seems to be concerned about what other people would say about their mother’s training for not teaching them to do household chores. It is also evident that a woman is judged on the basis of how she manages house or do chores, that is of primary importance.

It can also be noted that, the wife complains about the boys’ behavior as well, though they would also marry and bring someone’s else’ daughter for which they need to learn taking responsibilities, but it is not discussed at all which reveal that that the prescriptive behavioral patterns should only be observed by girls, boys are exempted from learning such patterns. She is not apprehensive that their wives or the families would call them irresponsible but the grandma does not say anything about their behavior, though they would also marry and bring someone’s else’ daughter for which they need to learn taking responsibilities, but it s not discussed at all which reveal that that the prescriptive behavioral patterns should only e observed by girls, boys are exempted from learning such patterns.

Another labeling practice can be seen in line30 where the son defines women who raom about in market-places as “ Qalandari”

30:Son: khazi ba bazarono ki na garzi, dagha ba chrta qalandari e , ya bae pa sar sary na e .

There is no exact translation of this word. It is used for a woman who breaks the stereotypical identity traits, normally assigned to women in society. Another phrase “pa sar sary” (guardian) is a metaphor for guardians whose job is to protect women and let them not break the limits which must be observed by them. He also uses plural form for “bazaar” which is “bazarona” to indicate his displeasure with women who go to market.

The labeling practice, which results into the construction of identity, is used by both men and women. People are labeled according to their social actions or in other words, social actions define the labels assigned to a person.

In cross sex conversation, turn taking is not indicated by " excuse me" rather the person who wants to take turn, starts speaking in a louder voice. The females uses a prolonged" Naaa" (No) to attract the attention of others they she has more valid argument or point to present while men openly ask for turn by saying" ta zama khabara wawra" (you listen to me) or za waim (I am saying). This is the reason that in female talk, after taking the turn, anyone else can interrupt her but in male talk, men tend to listen completely. The turn is given to the other by addressing him/her. There are certain forms of addresses used for this purpose. This shows that in talk people create roles for themselves and for the others simultaneously and then they tailor their talk to that role expecting others to do so as well.

Use of Metaphors

Pashto is a highly metaphorical language. Some of the metaphors used in day-to-day talk are analyzed here. The dialogue 5 (Appendix 1):

5:Grandma: *sari lar she sa rawri nu taso da sa gham na kawai , bs che ozai nu makham razai mung aryan nast u che sok lar rashi.*

Men go (to market) and bring things but you (both father and son) leave home and return in the evening. We are in trouble if someone (guests) visits.

The word “Aryan” (hairan) is used as metaphor for being in trouble as the literal meaning of aryan(hairan) is surprised but in day today talk.

In dialogue 7(Appendix 1) : *da school kho preda da jinaki kho da kor tak la m ghwati na warwri , da sa kar wrta owaim nu awal kho pasi na ao che pasi nu kha e osharmai.*

Let alone the school work, they(girls) never touch anything (they never do the household chores)

The phrase “ da kor tak” is used as metaphor to refer to the household chores , *ghwati na warwri* (doesn’t touch)is another metaphor for not doing anything at all. Another metaphore is ; *Kha e osharmai* (completely spoil) is used to indicate that they spoil everything they do.

Similarly in T:2 , The mother in law is using a lot of metaphors while describing her daughter in law and her behavior, such as; *da melma sa kini* (never sits with guests) is a metaphor for entertaining guests, *na kor ki sa da makhi kar kai*(never takes responsibility of household) is metaphor for taking responsibility, *sorkhi poder waki* (do

lipstick and powder) is a metaphor for makeup and *chrta pa sail lara she* (to go on outing) is metaphor for her to be interested in outing and less interested in staying at home. These metaphors have been used to build her identity as an irresponsible woman. It shows that our social actions give way to the labels and identity we receive from others. It can also be observed that men do not participate in giving their opinion, rather they are just listening.

Honorifics/ Forms of Addresses

There are predefined forms of address or honorifics in Pashtoon Culture observed by all community members. These forms of addresses or honorifics are based on gender, relational hierarchy and age.

If the speaker selects someone as addressee, he/she is addressed by name or any honorific form. If the addressee is male and relative, the honorific or form of address is decided based on gender and relational hierarchy with the addressee. For example, An elder male will be addressed as “Mama, (maternal uncle) Kaka, (paternal uncle), Lala/ Bhai jan (elder brother) addressee of the same age and not relative, he is addressed as rora / rori (brother) and ameer saib (if he is having beard) or Mashra (elder one) Females address each other with “a jiny (o girl) ya khazi (o woman) if they know each other, but don’t use the same forms for stranger woman where using (khore) sister, is the frequently used form.

If the addressee is female and relative, the form of addresses are: Trori (both maternal and paternal aunt) .If the female is stranger she is addressed as khore/ trori.

An elder person (male/female) addressing the younger will use (bachiya/zoyea, (child, son)) for both males and females.

Father is called as Baba, Abu, Daji, Dada, and modern form papa.

In the same way every female or male relative has specific form of address. Paternal and maternal aunts are 'tror' but the forms of address vary according to the People as children address them with any name they are taught by elders.

While paternal uncle is called kaka, maternal as mama. Grandpa is Baba or dada, grandma as Abai or bebe. Elder sister is *Apa or baji* or *khora* and the Elder brother(s) is *Lala, Khan G or Bhai jan*. Sister-in-law (brother’s wife) is addressed as *bhabi* or *wrandar*.

The form of address indicates the social relationship and the footing of the speaker. It is also indexing the social convention as well. Like a younger one cannot address the elders with name, (first and Last) as it is taken as disrespect towards them.

If a third person is talked about his/ her name succeed an honorific form for example, *zar gul kaka, samina tror* etc.

These forms of address are equally used by both males and females. Interestingly the forms of address used to signal family relationships are also used for strangers: For example.

Kina tror za drla oba rawra.

Sit down aunt (tror), I will bring water for you.

The lady is just a stranger who entered a house for drinking water. But the girl calls her “tror” aunt.

These forms of address also reflect social identity. In Pukhtoon culture, the forms of address are based on the hierarchical structure of relation and gender, every elder person has specific form of address.

Terms of Endearment/ Social identity

The data shows that the terms of endearment used by males for females, (wives, daughter and sister) are mostly descriptive of their bodies or complexion. Interestingly, these terms of endearment are mostly the names of animals or birds. The following text has been extracted from different cross sex talks to identify terms of endearment:

1. Husband (to wife) *Melo dalta rasha*

Bear! Come here.

The terms *Melo* (Bear) is used here to show affection but mostly this term is used to describe a foolish person in Pashto.

2. Bro (to sister) *tori mekhi ma drta da obo owe*

Black buffalo, I have asked you for water.

Both *Tora* (black) and *Mekha*(buffalo) has been used as adjectives to describe the physical appearance of the girl. It should be kept in mind that dark complexion is not considered as good for women because the standard of beauty is “sra spena”(fair complexion) in Pushtoon culture.

3. Father (to daughter) : *chanchanri , school kar di oko?*

Sparrow! Have you done your school task?

Chanchanra(sparrow) is used for little girls to show affection.

On the other hand females’ terms of endearment indicate the notion of ‘beauty’ when they use it for males. Such as:

4. *Mother to Son: Hamza lag dukan ta lar sha Khaperya*

Hamza! Would you go to the shop, my fairy?

In English there is no distinctive word for a male fairy, but in Pashto the term is gendered with the use of phonological variation that is “Khaperya” for boy and “Khapera” for a girl.

5. Sister to brother: *da kho zama shehzada ror dy.*

My brother is a prince.

6. *Poochai ta chrtta ze?*

Bud !where are you going?

Poochai(bud) is a flower bud in Pashto which is used by a sister for a brother.

These addresses can be a way to frame a person into a specific identity. Females are described in terms of animals or birds but the term used by females for males show describe their charm and handsomeness.

Rhetorical question

Rhetorical questions are the utterances whose nature and function does not match with each other as these utterances have the shape of question but they are not aimed at eliciting a response from the addressee rather they display a potential of assertion. (Sadok, 1971, Borkin 1971, Banuazizi, 1999) . Quirk et al. (1972, 1985) hold that a rhetorical question is interrogative in structure but for the most part does not expect an answer. Rhetorical inquiries can reinforce declarations and also relax criticisms. The purpose of rhetorical questions is not to elicit a response but to affirm or disprove a point implicitly.

In T:3 both man and woman use rhetorical questions. For example *Male: Khaa pa radio taso da om awrai?*(Ooh , you listen such things on radio?) and *Male: zmng din kho da knhazo da hifazat din dy kho sok pe amal kai?*(Our religion is the religion of security for women but who abides by it?) and *Female: zmng de kali ki suna jianki sabaq la ze ao nokari m kai*(how many girls in our village go for education and do job as well)

“....*Dlta suna khazi di , yawazi zmng de kali ki che nokari m kai ao da kor m khyal ka?*(How many women, just in our village, do jobs and take care of their household happily?)

The female uses rhetorical questions to elaborate her point that those ladies who are educated or doing jobs in Pukhtoon culture still follow the rules of the gender role assigned to them by the religion. She also draws a line of difference between common women and the women from media who do not abide by the principles given by the religion for the female gender.

The use of rhetorical questions is not specific to any gender, rather it is contextual.

Gender ideology is embedded in religion as indicated by dialogue 3 and 5 in which the women elaborate what Islam says about the rights, position and protection of women, that the women and their honor is preserved by veiling and covering themselves properly and that they are safe if men are with them if they go out of home. Since religion is of prime importance in Pukhtton culture, the gender ideology is strictly followed.

Moreover, dialogue 2 indicates the use of inclusive pronouns by the man, such as “ taso” (you all) and “mung”(we /men) which shows that the use of inclusive pronouns is not gender specific as well.

The data analysis demonstrates how the communication patterns vary between men and women in Pukhtoon culture, revealing noteworthy discrepancies from Western conventions. Men lectured or detailed way of speaking rather use a more assertive and direct speech style. They tend to give suggestions and directives contrasting Tannen’s (1990) identification of the "centrality of lecturing in men's conversational strategies."On the contrary, women often make use of indirect forms of communication, as in the phrase "*Bebe monz kai*" ("Mother is offering prayer") which is used as an indirect request, suggestive of the mother’s unavailability.

Interruptions and the introduction of unrelated topics are significant in women's speaking. However, their talk is never aimed at challenging men's status as it is culturally deemed prohibited.

In contrast, men listen more and offer minimal responses. This behavior doesn't aim to establish rapport as Tannen (1990) indicated, but to align with cultural norm that dictates that men should talk in serious and sober manner. The use of silence is also different from Western contexts, Pukhtoon men use louder voice, rebuke, or name-calling for expressing annoyance or affirm domination, rather than using silence to suppress women's voices. (Spender, 1980)

Overall, topic introduction, turn-taking are done by women typically while men remain more passive, do more listening, and give minimal responses. This difference is not indicative of asserting dominance rather it is linked to the gender identity assigned to them by the culture. Women's responses, whether in agreement or disagreement, are shaped by cultural norms and religious expectations, rather than asserting independence or challenging male dominance.

The use of intensifiers is prevalent in Pukhtoon culture, highlighting the importance of emphasis in communication. For instance, men and women use intensifiers to strengthen their expressions, employing metaphors for added effect.

The data also highlights the dependency of women on men due to norms and cultural roles both set by society and embraced by women, thus restricting their mobility outside the home. The talk reveals women's reliance on men for protection and in doing various tasks

Women are being judged on the basis of adherence to the prescribed behavior, their social responsibilities for household chores, and gendered expectations. For this purpose, naming or labeling practices are used to construct gender identity.

The use of forms of addresses or honorifics (both gender and age-specific), signal social relationship, social identity, and hierarchy in Pashtoon

The terms expressing endearment also carry meaning, with females focusing on handsomeness and charm and males' physical traits. The data indicates that gender identity construction is reflected through them.

Rhetorical questions are used as a great tool to emphasize making indirect assertions and points of view. It is also notable that both males and females use them.

Religion is the most significant variable in defining the gender ideology in Pushtoon culture, as it dictates observing modesty, veiling, and having a male companion around women to protect honor. Hence, gender roles, and cultural norms are intertwined with religious belief roles.

The findings also highlight that using intensifiers, terms of endearment, and forms of address, is not restricted to gender, but contextual.

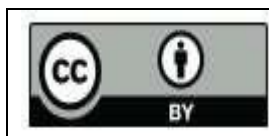
Overall, the analysis unearths the intricate relationship between language, culture, and gender within Pashtoon society offering important insights into the role language plays in shaping and reflecting norms, religious beliefs, and gender roles.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this research underscores the intricate interplay of linguistic practices, cultural markers, and interactional strategies shaping the gender discourse within Pashtoon society. The findings illuminate the pivotal roles of culture and religion in molding gender identities, with gender appropriation closely aligned with prevailing cultural ideologies. The usage of derogatory terms for women transgressing ideological boundaries underscores the enforcement of gender norms. Gender differences in language use within Pashtoon culture are multifaceted, influenced by religious concepts, hierarchical relational structures, and traditional gender ideologies, even among educated individuals in rural areas. The robust influence of religious practices in rural settings underscores the deep embedding of gender ideology within Islam. Moreover, the examination of gender discourse through the lens of Islamic teachings highlights the profound influence of religion on gender ideology within Pashtoon culture. While this study contributes significantly to understanding the complex relationship among gender, language, and culture in Pashtoon society, further research in urban areas is warranted to explore how varying educational and sociocultural contexts may alter these dynamics, thereby enriching our understanding of gender discourse within Pashtoon society.

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