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**Gendered Conversational Strategies in John
Steinbeck's
Of Mice and Men and "The Chrysanthemums"**

*Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for the Requirements of the Master Degree in
Linguistics*

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Declaration:

We hereby declare that the substance of this dissertation is entirely the result of our investigation and that due reference or acknowledgment is made, whenever necessary, to the work of other researchers.

Dedication:

All praises and thanks are for Allah

It is with deep gratitude and sincere words that I dedicate my end of study work,

To my dear parents who sacrifice their lives for my success and lit the way for me with their pieces of advice

To my little family who have warmly supported and encouraged me throughout my path

To my sister, my best friend and my partner Amira for her moral support, her patience and her understanding throughout these years. I wish her all the best in her life

To all my friends in the name of the friendship that brings us together with the unforgettable memories

Fatima Zohra Hiba

Dedication:

My first and last gratitude goes to Almighty Allah who blessed me with everything I have and everything I am.

I dedicate this work to

My dearest parents who provide me with whatever I need and surrounded me with great affection to reach my objectives in this life.

My dearest brothers “Hamza, Habib, and Hassen” who helped me at times of extreme stress and for being a constant source of support, encouragement and love.

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Abstract:

In the study of speech, there were some differences in how men and women use language. Although theoretical analysis is extensive, actual empirical research still needs to converge on a consistent picture of gender language differences. The lack of agreement on the right method to analyze language is an important reason. In this study, the gender differences in language use were examined to analyze a database in John Steinbeck's stories *Of Mice and Men* and "The Chrysanthemums". This dissertation attempts to study the language used in aforementioned works where the two selected stories were set in California in 1937 during the period of the Great Depression. The aim of this research is to examine differences between the speech of women and men in John Steinbeck stories and to typify the linguistic and conversational strategies representing female and male in different social contexts. In the corpus under research, and by using several methods, which are the theoretical literature analysis, the contrastive and qualitative method, the study concluded with results that in some parts, the findings from the two stories serve with and against the two theories that were applied in the second and third chapters, which are Robin Lakoff and Deborah Tannen theories, where men and women use the tag questions, hedges, intensifiers and adjectives, and the use of curse words as conversational strategies in their speech. Also, this study reveals the social status of women in the period of the Great Depression where they were suffering of oppression and male dominance.

Key words: Gender differences, language use, John Steinbeck stories *Of Mice and Men* and "The Chrysanthemums", conversational strategies.

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General Introduction

The main difference between humans and animals is our ability to communicate with one another through language. For different things, emotions, and expressions, we have words. Words are built differently in each language, and the manner they are expressed is also diverse. Over time, society has undergone significant changes that have altered our languages. Language and gender emphasize the connection between male and female languages. Gender differences reflect not just the differences in male and female speech, but also their different lifestyles and perspectives or attitudes. Gender differences are a prominent topic of study in a variety of fields, including psychology, sociolinguistics, and literature. The disparities between males and females in several aspects have been researched from many perspectives using various approaches in these fields.

The study of language in its social environment is known as sociolinguistics. We employ language to socially define and convey who we are, where we come from, and who we interact with. It is really remarkable how often we pass judgment on someone's character by making assumptions about their past and character based only on how they speak. Society has changed dramatically throughout time, and this had an impact on our languages. In our languages, new vocabularies have been created, and old terms have been removed or replaced. Each language has its qualities and, to a large part, reflects society. Several studies have been conducted over the years. During the 1970s, many sociolinguistic studies were conducted, focusing mostly on syntactic, phonological, and morphological differences.¹ Gender, like social class, age, ethnicity, and social status, was once considered a sociolinguistic variable. Science on gender and language did not emerge until the mid-1970s when Robin Lakoff's essay "Language and Woman's Place" was published.

Linguistics, as the name implies, is the study of language as a scientific subject. Language is used as a medium in literature to create works of art. Linguistics offers the building blocks for literature. Words, their morphological and semantic structure, stylistic possibilities, application, and grammatical rules are all investigated. As a result, it is crucial knowledge for a writer since it reveals the full power of language as a tool of communication.

Actually, if we need to connect language to literature, we may say that language is a means of communication that is applied to convey meaning either verbally or non - verbally.

¹ One of the studies that were conducted in the 1970s is the study of Peter Trudgill in his research; Linguistic Change and Diffusion: Description and Explanation in Sociolinguistic Dialect Geography 1974, studies the sociolinguistic variation, linguistic change, dialectology in British English from different aspects.

Gender is and will always be a great part of a person, which is why equality between women and men is so much more important even they differ in their language use. Many reasons for conducting this study; Language is an incredible tool, because it can really shape your way of thinking, so it is meaningful to use that to advance on this front. We both are interested in literature, especially short stories, so we tried to study the differences between the males and females in using language in literary works, to make a combination between the of linguistics and literature.

The bread and butter of this dissertation are the works of John Steinbeck who was born on February 27, 1902, in Salinas, California; His descendants were German, English, and Irish.² Steinbeck lived in a small rural valley; the Salinas valley only fifteen miles from the Pacific. John Steinbeck was very interested in writing early in his adolescence. Steinbeck received his high school diploma from Salinas in 1919. He has been studying creative writing and has enjoyed world history courses, leaving without a degree in 1925.³ Later, Steinbeck's condition deteriorated worse. He began to have increasingly frequent episodes that resembled mini-strokes, and then he died on December 20, 1968, at his home in New York City.⁴ John Steinbeck authored 33 books, with one book coauthored with Edward Ricketts, including sixteen novels, six non-fiction books, and two collections of short stories. Most of his works were set in California, exactly in the Salinas Valley or the California Coast Ranges region.

In this paragraph, we are going to state the problem in this study. The 1930s was the period of the Great Depression that affected men and women in different ways, specifically the differences in the gender role which affect their language use. Writers at that time were depicting what they lived through in their writings and stories. That is what our study is about, and it is the language used in John Steinbeck stories written in the Great Depression in 1937. The study of language and gender may appear to be a specialized discipline, yet it is truly interdisciplinary. This study should be referred to as literary analysis of the speech of the male and female characters in John Steinbeck stories within the field of linguistics. Although men and women belong to the same language community from a particular social class, their language can be different. In all language communities, language forms used by men and

²“Okie Faces & Irish Eyes: John Steinbeck & Route 66”. (*Irish America*, June 2007).

³After he published many works, in 1964, Steinbeck was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Lyndon B. Johnson. Cited in <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/steinbeck-wins-the-medal-of-freedom>. Accessed on July 12th, 2021.

⁴Steve Newman, “John Steinbeck: Death” (December 23, 2018). <https://stevenewmanwriter.medium.com/the-death-of-john-steinbeck-the-most-american-of-american-writers-25341f5c8156>

women are different, in other words, men and women differ in the kinds of language they use during conversations.

The aim of this dissertation is to provide some possible solutions to the question of whether there are differences in how men and women use language, and how they communicate with one another during a conversation. We decided to travel back in time and look at the historical context to find some suitable solutions concerning gender differences in language. We can see evidence of linguistic assumptions about gender differences in language in novels and stories. In this study, we chose to study the different use of language in male and female speech in John Steinbeck's novella *Of Mice and Men*⁵ and his short story "The Chrysanthemums"⁶ which were written in 1937, during the period of the Great Depression.

We have selected the short novel *Of Mice and Men* and the short story "The Chrysanthemums" as a corpus. We chose the selected stories by John Steinbeck for the study as they contain a considerable amount of spoken language patterns in the form of dialogue with both men and women participating in the conversation. Also, the stories were chosen concerning their characteristics such as the differences in gender, which have great relevance to the topic of the research.

By conducting this research which is the analysis of the selected stories by John Steinbeck "The Chrysanthemums" and *Of Mice and Men*, our purpose is to answer the following questions:

- How are the male and female characters different as marked by their dialogues?
- Do the characters in the two selected stories use the linguistic assumptions as conversational strategies?
- How does language reflect and help maintain women's secondary status in society?

In order to find reliable answers to these questions, the following hypotheses have been put forward:

- Male and female characters are different in using language.
- The characters in the two stories use linguistic presumptions as conversational strategies during their conversations.

⁵John Steinbeck, (1937) *Of Mice and Men*. (New York: Penguin, 1997). Hereafter, all references to this work will be cited in the discussion as (*OMM*)

⁶John Steinbeck, (1937) "The Chrysanthemums" in "The Chrysanthemums" & other stories (New York: Penguin, 1997). Hereafter, all references to this work will be cited in the discussion as ("The Chrys").

- John Steinbeck depicts women in an inferior way than men during the 1930s.
- Women suffered from the exploitation and oppression of men during the Great Depression.

In order to answer the research questions, first we used the method of theoretical literature analysis contributed in the presentation of theoretical background. Then, a contrastive method was applied to detect and interpret the differences across gender and language use and for contrasting how males and females use language, which include the qualitative method because we are going to analyze the passages in both stories *Of Mice and Men* and “The Chrysanthemums” to show the differences between both genders. Also, Female and male interactional behaviors in many aspects were identified and typified using linguistic text analysis.

The present study aims at studying the gender differences in the language used in John Steinbeck’s *Of Mice and Men* and "The Chrysanthemums". Our study is divided into three chapters. We start with a general introduction. Then, we continue with the other chapters, which complete each other.

The first chapter is the theoretical part, where we deal with several theories about gender and the relation between language and gender. Starting with a definition of the gender theory, then we deal with its development, where we will define gender in many concepts including gender as a social construct, gender role and identity, and gender performance or performativity. After, we introduce the two theories of Robin Lakoff and Deborah Tannen in the part of gender and language use.

Then the second chapter, is all about John Steinbeck short novel *Of Mice and Men*, starting with an overview and its importance as a literary work, then we analyze the language use between the male and female characters where we apply Robin Lakoff and Deborah Tannen theories, where we deal with some presumption such as the use of tag questions, hedges, the use of intensifiers and adjectives, and the use of curse words. The last part in the chapter is about the death of the female character in the story which symbolizes her position in the society.

For the third chapter, we deal with the short story “The Chrysanthemums”. We follow the same steps like the second chapter, starting with an overview of the work, and then we show its importance in the world of literature. After that, we deal with the language analysis between male and female characters by using the theories of Robin Lakoff and Deborah

Tannen; we deal with the use of hedges, intensifiers and adjectives. Then, we talk about the crying of the female character in the end of the story, trying to find out the social status of the female character in the story.

At last, we will finalize our research report with a general conclusion that summarizes everything that we have done where we will discuss the results we obtained and concluded through our study.

This study is delimited only in identifying and analyzing the male and female characters in John Steinbeck selected stories. This study also determined the differences between both genders, specifically their dialogues which are employed in analyzing the characters in the stories. On the other hand, some theories and findings from other scholars were employed to back up the claims in analyzing and understanding how the characters differ in every aspect.

Characterization is an important aspect of any short story or short novel; therefore, analyzing the material a writer commits to character description is useful in appraising his writing style and understanding the mechanics of his techniques in structuring his material. This study on the language used in the stories of John Steinbeck is significant to the society, they may be able to comprehend and enjoy John Steinbeck's stories as a result of our research. This research would be an excellent resource for learning about the renowned author's characters as well as identifying gender and language variations. To the students, this study may also inspire and help other students; particularly the linguistics and Literature students who wish to conduct the same study. The final result of this study may be very helpful to those aspiring researchers who would want to analyze the stories of John Steinbeck. To teachers, the result of this study may be helpful to the linguistics and literature teachers in teaching, particularly on examining and analyzing the works of John Steinbeck. The upshot of this study may serve as a teaching material that will offer further information about the characters in the literary works.

With the current increase of feminist work in many academic disciplines, it is not surprising that the relation between language and gender in recent years has been attractive. To go beyond language presumptions on the use of language by males and females, supposing that women are talkative, use questions and hedges more than men, for example, studies focused on aspects such as nomination and control, interruptions and other features, from different syntactic, phonological or lexical uses of language through to the analysis. While research has only focused on describing differences, other studies have tried to demonstrate

how linguistic differences reflect and reproduce social differences. Jennifer Coates, therefore, suggests that language and gender research can be divided into dominant and differentiated research.⁷

Many of the previous works underlined domination. Robin Lakoff's pioneering paper in 1975, suggested a range of features, including tag questions that were characterized by female speech as inferior and weak.⁸ Research has also demonstrated how men nominated subjects more frequently, interrupted the floor longer, for example, the study of Zimmerman and West "Sex roles, interruptions, and silences in conversation" This approach has therefore mainly focused on showing how patterns of interaction between men and women reflect man's dominant position in society.

However, some studies followed a different approach when they considered not so much power as to how same-sex groups produce certain kinds of interaction in mixed sex interactions. Daniel Maltz and Ruth Borker produced a typical study of this type that lists what they described as masculine and female language features.⁹ It was argued that these interaction standards were acquired in groups of the same sex, rather than in groups of mixed sexes, and thus the problem was not social but rather cultural misunderstanding. For instance, much of the research was conducted on the comparison of the competitive manner of conversation with the cooperative style of women. Despite the fact that some of this type of work, such as Deborah Tannen's, lacks a fundamental dimension, the emphasis on the difference was still important to promote research into the interaction of a specific group between sexes and to emphasize the need to regard the use of women's languages not only as a subordinate but also as a substantial sub-cultural domain, the emphasis on the difference was still crucial to encourage research into the interaction of a sub - group between sexes.¹⁰

Although the distinction made by Coates is useful, it seems obvious that both approaches do not exclude one another. While not working with a simplistic power version and considering language and gender purely in a mixed dynamic group is important, it is important to avoid treating female language behavior as if it existed outside of social power relations. Cameron, Mc Alinden, and O'Leary, asked "Can it be coincidence that men are

⁷ Jennifer Coates and Deborah Cameron, *Women in their speech communities*. (Harlow: Longman 1988).

⁸ Robin Lakoff, *Language and Woman's Place*. (New York: Harper and Row. 1975).

⁹ Daniel Maltz and Ruth Borker "A cultural approach to male-female miscommunication." (1982).

¹⁰ Deborah Tannen, *That's not what I meant: How Conversational Style Makes or Breaks Relationships* (London: Dent. 1987).

aggressive and hierarchically-organized conversationalists, whereas women are expected to provide conversational support?"¹¹ Of course, there is space available for much more research here which is based on male's and female's speech empirical data. For instance, operate with a complex understanding of power and sexual relations so that, for example, women's silence can be regarded both as a site of oppression and possible resistance.

¹¹ Deborah Cameron., F. Mc Alinden and K. O'Leary, "Lakoff in context: the social and linguistic function of tag questions." In J. Coates and D. Cameron, op. cit p.80.

Chapter One: Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the language and gender theories as a means of analysis to encourage the reading of the contexts. First, our discussion begins with introducing gender theory and how it developed. Then it will move to the language and gender and show the relation between them. The focus will then move to gender and language use since our investigation is about the language used in the selected stories by John Steinbeck to show how females and males use language differently. This will be fulfilled by extensively applying the theory to the analysis of John Steinbeck's stories "The Chrysanthemums" and *Of Mice and Men* in the coming chapters.

1. The Gender Theory

During the 1970s and 1980s, gender theory emerged in the university as a collection of ideas that guided historical and other Western studies. Gender theory is the study of male and female behavior in any context, society, culture, applied linguistics, history. This theory recommended that masculinity and femininity be viewed as sets of mutually produced qualities that shape men and women's lives.¹ Gender theory provides new insights into how to comprehend women and men in their various contexts, for example how they behave, talk and communicate in society. In the next part, we will deal with the development of gender theory by defining gender in many concepts including gender as a social construct, gender role and identity, and gender performance or performativity.

2. The Development of the Gender Theory

Gender refers to the socially constructed roles and relationships between males and females; gender is characterized by unfair authority or power in most situations, which often confers specific rights to men only. Judith Zinsser, one of the leading intellectuals of the French Enlightenment, an accomplished mathematician, physicist, translator, and author of original works of philosophy and science, states that "gender" refers to a concept that has long been a source of contention for many people around the world. She also argues that the word "gender" has been applied to the social, educational, psychological, and psycholinguistic dimensions of male and female identity.² People sometimes decide whether someone is a male or female according to their actions, behavior, and the way they speak. It is what is

¹ Bonnie G. Smith, "Gender Theory" Cited in <https://www.encyclopedia.com/> Accessed on March 21st, 2021

² Judith P. Zinsser, *History and Feminism* (The United States: Twayne publishers, 1992) p. 54.

called gender attribution; the latter is the gate that helps us in understanding the gender role. By way of explanation, gender role dictates how men and women should think, speak, perform dress, or behave, in society; for example, women are the keepers or the guardians of their family, when giving birth and raising children, while men are the protectors of the family and the gender identity which means the person's sense of gender and how they present or express their gender to the world. For instance, it could include changing the name, way of dress, and putting on make-up. It could also entail medical modifications such as hormone therapy or gender-affirming surgery.³

After reading several articles and essays, we can say that according to the functionalist theory⁴ of gender identity that gender is defined by biology. However, gender performance on the other hand questions the nature of gender role and identity which are based only on physiological and biological causes. The systematic collection and analysis of knowledge on gender inequalities and social relations accrued to define and explain the social imbalances based on gender brought the gender theory to the forefront of the theoretical scene. Penelope Eckert and Sally McConnell believe that gender is not something that people are born with, and it is not something that people have. It is actually something that people do. Candace West and Don H. Zimmerman state that it is something people perform.⁵ Here we are talking about gender performance or gender performative. Many people are still confused about the difference between genders being “performed” versus gender being “performative”. Accordingly, gender performed means gender is there before the performance, and gender performative means that gender is the performance itself. It means that gender does not exist until it is performed. According to the philosopher, sociologist, feminist and gender theorist Judith Butler in her interview with Big Think journal, It is one thing to say that gender is performed and that is different from saying gender is performative. When we say gender is performed, we usually mean that we are playing a role, we are acting in some way, and our acting is important to who we are and how we present or portray ourselves to the world. She

³Gender affirming surgery, are conducted to harmonize people or transition to their true gender with gender dysphoria. A female, male or non-binary transgender person is eligible for gender affirmation surgery. One person must undergo hormone treatment or hormone therapy for a year before undergoing with gender affirmation surgery. Hormone therapy aims to transform the physical appearance in order to reflect the identity of gender.

⁴The functionalist theory, often called functionalism, is considered as one of the major perspectives in sociology. It is a theory that is concerned with the macro-level of the social system instead of the micro-level of daily life. Economy, media, family and so many domains are crucial in understanding the functionalist theory and the basic organizations that describe society.

⁵ Penelope Eckert & Sally McConnell, *Language and Gender* (New York, Cambridge university press, 2003) p. 08

defines gender performance or performativity, “to say that gender is performative is a little different because for something to be performative means that it produces a series of effects. We act and walk and speak and talk in ways that consolidate an impression of being a man or being a woman.”⁶Being a man or a woman is a concept that is constantly created, so to say gender is performative is to say that nobody is gender from the outset. Although we tend to some patterns of thought and behavior, it does not mean (simply for the fact that we are individuals) that everyone follows those patterns and behavior. It means some break out of that trend. It is not wrong to follow those patterns, but also it is not wrong, it is a fact that speaks for itself. By way of explanation, it’s about how we think in life. Success or failure, whatever we define it, will enhance our mental processes, particularly destructive thinking patterns. Feelings are right behind our thoughts. If our thinking is unhealthy, our self-esteem will most likely suffer as a result. Because emotions are more powerful than rationality, they have the potential to overwhelm us and throw us into a deep hole. Sometimes we don’t follow those patterns of behaviors and thinking. Almost everyone is so focused on getting somewhere or getting anything, that we forget that happiness is found in our perceptions of the world, views of life, our identity, and our thinking. It is not wrong to not follow those patterns, because our real path will be determined by our patterns, not others. Also, determined by what we think and how we think.

Butler images a boy while he follows his father “as he swaggers and sticks out his chest, he is doing everything he can to be like his father, to be a man.”⁷ Butler believes that the father was somehow not swaggering, but the boy is acting in a way that he admires in his adult male role model. Butler maintains the same about a little girl who acts as her mother by dressing up and putting on make-up.⁸ Children's performances or achievements involve elements that certainly surface in adult behavioral patterns for males and females. In the future, the girl somehow will take that swagger sometimes but her childhood playing around and putting make-up on is unlikely to be regarded and considered as "cute" by adults and the contrary for the boy. In all other words, everyone has a gender performance or performativity, but social constraints arise as to who can perform those patterns or ways of acting without being noticed.

⁶Judith Butler, “Your Behavior Creates Your Gender”, interview by Max Miller, (Big Think journal, January 13, 2011). <https://bigthink.com/videos/your-behavior-creates-your-gender>. Accessed on April 4th, 2021.

⁷Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1990) p. 19.

⁸ Ibid. p. 86

Gender development does not stop with childhood activities. Consistent with Caroline Moser, gender tends to vary as people enter social environments such as the workplace as people learn to behave as secretaries and managers.⁹ Even as people shift the family status and recognize their gender roles as men, women, parents, or uncles, this view continues to evolve. People learn and develop new social behaviors and to meet the demands of becoming men and women. Gender teaches us how to be males and females; also, it teaches us how to behave and act in certain ways for example in workplaces, how to engage in certain relationships, and how to view and see things from different viewpoints or perspective. Gender is a collection of relationships that emerge over time to establish male and female roles and identities. In society, gender roles mean how we should act, speak, dress, and behave on a basic level. In general, for instance, girls and women are expected to be polite, welcoming, and nursing with their typically feminine dress. Men should be strong, aggressive, and courageous in general. Maxine Molyneux believes that gender is profoundly ingrained in all aspects of culture, including higher education institutions, dress, language use, and literary works.¹⁰ Gender is a significant factor in development. It's a method of viewing how social roles and power dynamics affect the lives and opportunities of men and women from various backgrounds and the media, family, community, and culture all affect gender roles.

Butler proposed that gender is a human construct enacted by a large number of social interactions, which lends credence to gender theory's origins as a method for examining biological distinctions.¹¹ Here we are talking about gender as a social construct. Some people have the idea that gender is something socially constructed, similarly to the way that some people believe that race is socially constructed because for them gender and race seems like things that we are just born with, that they are kind of biological realities of who we are as people. But sociologists critically consider how we come to think that things are normal in our life. Sociologist's favorite question is why do we have distinctions between bodies and this basis of gender?¹² If they are naturally existing, for example boys are born liking blue, and girls born liking the color pink, these are learning behaviors and cultural artifacts that are transmitted through society through time, so gender is something that we as a society have

⁹Caroline O. N. Moser, *Gender Planning in the Third World: Meeting Practical and Strategic Gender Needs* (London School of Economics and Political science, World Development, 1989) p. 1801.

¹⁰Maxine Molyneux, *Analyzing Women's Movements in Feminist Visions of Development by Pearson and Jackson* (London: Routledge, 2002) p. 03.

¹¹ Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Op. cit. p.14.

¹²William Little and Ron McGivern, "Introduction to Gender, Sex, and Sexuality" Cited in <https://opentextbc.ca/introductiontosociology/chapter/chapter12-gender-sex-and-sexuality/> Accessed on May23rd, 2021

created and given meaning to. One of the aspects of gender that are socially constructed include the gender binary which is the idea that there are two opposite types of people: There are male body people who are a masculine and female body who are feminine and that literally all human beings are supposed to fit with one of these two categories.

3. Language and Gender

As this research is about investigating the language use in the selected stories by John Steinbeck's "The Chrysanthemums" and *Of Mice and Men*, it is important to tackle the concept of gender and how it relates to language. Actually, the concepts of masculinity and femininity are depicted in a variety of ways. Behaving as either a man or woman can be markedly observed in the way people behave, dress, talk or communicate with one another. It is in this respect that they mark themselves as belonging to either of the genders. According to the researcher on language Nancy Henley, the concentration of language and gender is on femininity and masculinity. It refers to the idea of male and female discrepancies. Language and gender also explain the differences between how men and women use language.¹³ In other words, Gender can seem to be unimportant in terms of language. Gender, on the other hand, has been linked to how language is acquired, created, and used by researchers on numerous occasions and how males and females differ in using language. Gender seems to affect language production.

Gender is reflected in language. As stated by Ralph Fasold, it was examined in terms of how males and females use language, as well as the variations in language usage between the sexes.¹⁴ By way of explanation, since the early 1970s, the relationship between language and gender has been a very important and one of the major topics in sociolinguistics. In today's world, it seems that women and men are on an equal footing. However, the truth is that women are not given an equal opportunity to participate in debates. Currently, the two sexes order different contact styles. To put it another way, women's language use is different from men's language use. Furthermore, women's social status in society has historically been less stable than men's; as a result, it's possible that securing a job has become more important for women and signals their social status linguistically. Men, on the other hand, have historically been judged socially based on their profession, earning ability, and skills. By describing a woman and her position or place, language both represents and helps preserve a woman's

¹³ Nancy Henley, *Body Politics: Power, Sex and Nonverbal Communication* (The United States: New Jersey, Englewood Cliffs, N.J, 1977) P73.

¹⁴ Ralph Fasold, *The Sociolinguistics of Society*,(Oxford, England; New York: Blackwell, 1984) p108.

secondary role in society. Language helps us to interact our thoughts and feelings with others; it can develop and destroy societies. Moreover, many people have never given many thoughts to the implications of the language they use and how it impacts them or their social standing. It is also true that language has an effect on people's personalities and attitudes toward language use to claim a position of dominance by being direct, while women use language to shape and sustain intimate relationships.¹⁵ In other words, our personalities might fluctuate depending on the language we use, and our perceptions of a specific culture might impact the way we act when we speak or use other languages.

Female and male speech patterns vary, and the two sexes are often discussed in various ways. For Henley, females and males interact in an environment marked by sexual disparity and starkly different behavioral norms. Since all interactions with others include some form of communication, both verbal and nonverbal, much of our gendered patterns are formed through communication. To put it in another way, gender studies and language studies are interdisciplinary fields right now and we study such aspects in a subject called "language and gender». Moreover, men and women are different in every aspect of daily life in their mentality, the way of thinking and the way of speaking, like pronunciation. Actually, women have better pronunciation than men. Men tend to communicate more through their actions than their words. As Henley states in her book *Body Politics: Power, Sex, and Nonverbal Communication*:

Differences in language associated with sex interact with those associated with socioeconomic status. The prestigious or "proper" form of speech that is associated with high-status persons involves such niceties as pronouncing the "g" in running, or saying th "correctly", rather than as d, t, f in with. A number of detailed studies of how people choose among these patterns have found that females tend to use the "proper" form more than males do.¹⁶

To rephrase it, the prestige kind of speech related to high-status includes niceties and variations in language-related with sex interact with those connected with social class. So by way of explanation, we try to comment on what Henley said by defining gender patterns. The pattern of gender is a pretty standard sociolinguistic pattern, a typical linguistic variety of sex. The phonological variations in overall female and male speech behavior are defined by the gender pattern. Linguists have mentioned various language trends that distinguish between

¹⁵ Sylvia Xiaohua, Veronica Benet Martinez, Jacky C K NG, "Does Language affect Personality Perception? A Functional Approach to Testing the Whorfian Hypothesis"(Wiley Online library, Journal of personality, 2014) P 02.

¹⁶ Nancy Henley, *Body Politics: Power, Sex and Nonverbal Communication*, op. cit. p.77.

men and women. Women are more correct in their speech than men; it means that women are more conscious of what in the pronunciation is considered right and prestigious.

4. Gender and Language Use

We always think that women are equal to men, but in reality or society, women are not treated equally to men, even in the discussion. This is because males and females have different communication or speech styles, especially in conversation. We can say that men and women use different languages. In this part, differences in using language will be discussed.

In one of Deborah Tannen's studies on conversational styles, she tackled some of its main features that distinguish the communicative style between males and females,

Topic (a) prefer personal topics, (b) shift topics abruptly, (c) introduce topics without hesitation, (d) persistence (if a new topic is not picked up by others, reintroduce it. Data show persistence up to a maximum of seven tries) ... Genre (a) tell more stories, (b) tell stories in rounds... Pace (a) faster rate of speech, (b) pauses avoided... (d) Cooperative overlap... Expressive paralinguistics (a) expressive phonology, (b) pitch and amplitude shifts, (c) marked voice quality, (d) strategic pauses.¹⁷

Women in conversation communicate differently from men. Communication involves the ways people express themselves to others and can be verbal like talking or non-verbal like writing or body language. Women are passive, quiet, nurturing, and group-oriented; by contrast, males are assertive, competitive, and logical thinking in communication. These differences between men and women are not 100% valid. Researchers have shown that women tend to listen to others more than men do. They also tend to ask for and take feedback more than men and tend to be more self-effacing. Tannen discovered that the variations between men's and women's communication styles and language use go far beyond socialization and tend to be innate in each sex's basic make-up. She discovered that men use communication to negotiate their place in a group and to prevent others from moving them around. Men use to talk to maintain their autonomy; females, on the other hand, use conversation to create intimacy and closeness.¹⁸ In other words, women are more relationship-oriented, seeking out similarities and opportunities to interact with other women. Men have an unstable relationship with other men. On the other hand, women emphasize rapport-building

¹⁷ Deborah Tannen, *Conversational style: Analyzing Talk among Friends* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005) p. 258.

¹⁸ Deborah Tannen, *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation* (The United States: the New Yorker, 1990) pp 72-73.

by sharing their perspectives and asking questions. As a result, men and women use different communicative styles.

In general, the terms language and gender refer to the relationship between male and female languages. Gender differences represent not just the differences in male and female living styles and attitudes, but also the differences in their way of speaking or the way they communicate. Men are more interested in things and evidence while women are more interested in individuals, relationships, and emotions or feelings. Men's language use is competitive, indicating their overall desire to gain and retain status; women's language use is cooperative, reflecting their belief in equality and peace. Robin Lakoff states ten assumptions about women's language that serve as the foundation for other speech research. Women use more hedges, speak in super polite ways, use tag questions sometimes, use a lot of adjectives, talk in italics, use hypercorrect grammar and pronunciation, lack the sense of humor, use a special lexicon, and use many questions.¹⁹ We tried to explain what Robin Lakoff stated by providing some examples. Women tend to use hedges more than men; in fact, hedges are most often associated with women and their conversations as defensive mechanisms for the faces of the speaker and hearer. Women are more likely than men to use these features because they are more concerned with protecting their faces to achieve unity, for example, "I see", "I mean", "you know", and "sort of». These phrases or expressions can be used to convey both doubt and assurance about the subject being discussed. But Jennifer Coates contends that it is important to consider the various roles of hedges rather than simply dismissing their usage as a sign of weakness.²⁰ Also, women talk or speak in polite ways and according to the Morocco World News Journal "Polite speech patterns are more associated with women".²¹ They use polite language like "please", "after your permission" or "would you mind". Another remark is that women use tag questions for example "she is very beautiful, isn't she?" Tag questions, according to Robin Lakoff, are correlated with hesitancy, which women use more than men, and that "tag questions decrease the effects of assertions".²²

Women express themselves and their attitude using intensifiers like "so" for example "this is so amazing" (although men can also use it), "just", "pretty", "such" and "quite". And as Lakoff said, women use more adjectives or expressions like "pretty", "adorable" and "cute"

¹⁹ Robin Lakoff, *Talking Power: The Politics of Language* (New York, Basic Books, 1992) p. 204.

²⁰ Jennifer Coates, *Women, Men and Language: a Sociolinguistic Account of Gender Differences in Language* (London & New York, Longman, Harlow, 2004) P88.

²¹ Morocco World News, Are women more polite than men? (Staff writer, 2011).

²² Robin Lakoff in Jennifer Coates, *Women, Men and Language: a Sociolinguistic Account of Gender Differences in Language* (London & New York, Longman, Harlow, 2004) P90.

than men. Another point, women speak in italics, it means that women use excessive or exaggerated intonation or tension for emphasis, and they convey confusion, for example “I am very frustrated with you”. Also, women use correct grammar more than men; in other words, women for example avoid the use of “ain’t”. Women talk more standard and elegant language than men; also, they maintain attention while speaking. Thus, they use a regular effective style of speaking and use standard formal language like “I did not” or “I cannot”. Lakoff stated that women use a special lexicon. By way of explanation, the most important element in a language is vocabulary. In everyday life, men's and women's vocabulary variations are often ignored. Women spend a lot more time on color-related things such as clothing selection than men do; for example, women tend to use some color terms like aquamarine which means blue-green. Sometimes women do not know the real meaning of these words, but at the same time, such words can show their beauty or their prestigious side. Another point, Studies have shown that women ask more questions than men, and the sociolinguist Joshua Fishman describes this by noting that questions and answers are connected in the discussion. A question gives the speech power rather than a statement.²³ Women indeed ask more questions than men, but their questions are aimed at building a collaborative environment, encouraging an exchange of thoughts, finding out what is important, and reaching the best result. Females focus more on the language by avoiding slang and swear words, and according to Eckert, Swear Word, it is a sort of exclamation to express extreme wrath and anger and is a strong expression.²⁴ Generally, swear words are considered not appropriate for women because women try to avoid using disrespectful words in a conversation. The Use of swears and slang words often involves men rather than women, as men in his speaking are used more frequently. In other words, cursing is a male behavior pattern, and the use of a swear word is strongly associated with a common male language. On the other hand, men are more likely to disrupt other people’s conversations, while women are more likely to be interrupted themselves. Men, regardless of their rank, win the “floor” and retain it for longer periods. However, when the floor is casual, interactive ventured women show a wider range of language abilities.

Women and men are in various interaction styles in terms of conversational styles. Men are more likely to disrupt women in the use of this strategic approach to control communicative subjects, and interruptions in women tend to lead to silence. Women use

²³Joshua Fishman in Jennifer Coates, *Women, Men and Language: a Sociolinguistic Account of Gender Differences in Language* (London & New York, Longman, Harlow, 2004) P 92.

²⁴ Penelope Eckert, *Language, and Gender* (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003) P181.

minimal reactions more to show the speaker assistance and support. According to Coates, it also appears that women ask more questions as men speak more swear more and use the imperative to do things. Tannen believed that women are more likely to talk and hear a language of intimacy and attachment. On the other hand, men talk and hear a language of power and liberty.

Language and gender studies have constantly returned to the issue of how men's and women's language use reinforces their respective social positions. This essentially applies to the male and female speaker's roles. It has been suggested that women are held in a subordinate role because they socialize to adopt powerless speech patterns; and men, on the other hand, retain their supremacy through the use of power-related verbal strategies. As reported by Robin Lakoff in her *Talking Power: The Politics of Language* that "men's language is the language of powerful [sic].... It is the language of people who are in charge of making observable changes in the real world. Women's language developed as a way of surviving and even flourishing without control over economic, physical, or social reality."²⁵ This is not just an indication of a power difference that women are interrupted more frequently than men in cross-sex conversations. It is a way to "do" power face to face, and as much as power involves what it tends to mean to a man or a woman, it is also a means of "doing" gender

5. Conclusion

The theoretical chapter mainly tried to line out essential points on gender theory. We so far introduced gender and how it developed through different concepts. Then we talked about language and gender and how males and females differ in their speech and speech patterns. At last, we shed light on gender and language use and tried to focus on the differences between male's and female's ways of using language and differences in their conversational styles. Language and gender is a branch of sociolinguistics and applied linguistics that looks into the different types of speech associated with different genders or social rules that guide such gendered language use. The study of gender and language in sociolinguistics and gender studies is often credited to Robin Lakoff's 1975 book *Language and Woman's Place*; Robin's theory is that women's speech and language use is different from men's.

²⁵ Robin Lakoff, *Talking Power: The Politics of Language*. Op. cit. p. 205.

Conversations that go well and conversations that go badly are both commonplace in our daily lives. We commonly assign differences in intent to the people involved, although even well-intentioned conversant frequently encounter misunderstandings. Deborah Tannen is a sociolinguist who has spent decades researching how individuals use language in their daily lives, as well as how gender, society, and circumstances influence language usage. Deborah's theory is that males and females have different conversational styles. The two theories will be applied in the coming two chapters.

**Chapter Two: The Conversational Strategies of
Genders Discourse in *Of Mice and Men***

1. Introduction

In this chapter, we will deal with the gender differences in using language in the novella *Of Mice and Men* from several sides where we will apply Robin Lakoff's theory, that is women's speech is different from men's, and Deborah Tannen's theory, which states that male and female use different conversational styles and strategies. John Steinbeck uses somehow poetic and simple descriptive language to describe the places and present the characters. He tends to describe the settings and the characters in many details so he can allow the reader to imagine the place or the person. He uses colors, metaphors, adjectives, imagery, and long sentences, which are different from the dialogues between the characters where he uses short sentences and informal language to describe them and portray how people were lived in that period. Taking into consideration that they were uneducated workers but from the beginning till the end, they did not stop dreaming of a better life

First, we will start with an overview of the story, and then we are going to talk about the importance of the selected work in the world of literature. After that, we move to the representation of male and female differences in the language used in *Of Mice and Men* where we will deal with some presumptions which are the tag questions, hedges, use of intensifiers and adjectives, and the use of curse words. At last, we will talk about the death of the only female character in the story, Curley's wife.

2. An Overview of *Of Mice and Men*

John Steinbeck's short novel *Of Mice and Men* was released in 1937 after he had gained literary fame with his work *Tortilla Flat*, even before authoring *The Grapes of Wrath* and *East of Eden*. The misery of the laborers, the dangers of loneliness, and the hope for a brighter future are all themes and ideas that Steinbeck explored throughout his writings. *Of Mice and Men* is a fantastic vehicle for learning about the life and times of migrant workers in the 1930s. It was set in California during the Great Depression. The work is incredibly easy to follow along with its gorgeous expository dialogue, easily intelligible conversation, and rapid timeline. The distinctive characters entice readers, who, unfortunately, reflect a part of society, which was mostly overlooked at the time. Readers can get a greater comprehension of the book while applying significant lessons to their own lives by analyzing the balance of power, the value of friendship, the role, and the importance of dreams in our lives. *Of Mice and Men* recounts the experience of two migrant ranch workers, George Milton and Lennie

Small, who move from place to place in California to seek new employment opportunities in the United States during the Great Depression.

3. *Of Mice and Men's* Importance in the World of Literature

Of Mice and Men is organized by the dialogue written in the slang of migrants workers during the Great Depression. Although *Of Mice and Men* is a short novel, it has the feel of a play due to its realistic dialogue and a little description. The style of *Of Mice and Men* is objective and realistic, expressing Steinbeck's aim for the story to be read as a novella or staged like a play. Characters' thoughts and emotions are communicated through dialogues and observations of their behaviors and body language. The natural style of Steinbeck in *Of Mice and Men* demonstrated that people were shaped by unconnected environmental and social circumstances. It is believed that Steinbeck also helped to reveal in writing his own experiences the sufferings of a group of people who, due to the Great Depression, had been widely overlooked and abandoned in the story. Apathy and abandonment were the problems of migrant workers. Their rootless existence, their temporary state of affairs, and their worst sacrifice to capitalism were narratives uncovered until Steinbeck offered his views on them in his work. Steinbeck helped to explore and develop a wider vision of what it meant to be American when he articulated what was silent. *Of Mice and Men* give readers an overall picture of the most disadvantaged people of the society such as black people, women, and mentally disabled people, the poor, elderly people, and migrant workers at the time. This is what makes it so high art by showing us all these people, specifically and distinctively, and this is also what marked the story in the world of literature. Many critics showed the quality of the book. For example, Charles A. Wagner asserted that "John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* . . . is just about the closest thing to a little prose masterpiece in the social stir we've seen in years."¹ James Ross Oliver states that "*Of Mice and Men* is what it is because of its inherent simplicity. The plot is not great; nor is its characters great, but both are real and carried through to completion. It is a plot upon which the characterizations and story are laid as effectively as flesh upon bone."² And for Henry Seidel Canby;

Mr. Steinbeck . . . has written a long short story which should please everybody. It should please everybody because it has every element of good story-telling, and it must be remembered that most of our successful novels of recent with any substance

¹ Charles A. Wagner in Michael J. Meyer *The Essential Criticism of John Steinbeck's Of Mice and Men*(the united states, scarecrow press, INC, 2009), p.03.

² James Ross Oliver in Michael J. Meyer, *ibid* p.05.

of art to them, succeeded by violating most of the canons of the storyteller's art in order to deemphasize ideology, the stream of consciousness, or behaviorism.³

In addition, according to Harry Thornton Moore,

[t]his story has that common denominator of most good imaginative writing, a shadow of the action that means something beyond the action. He again shows a deep understanding of both place and people, and his presentation of the ranch and its daily life has the gleam of actuality. The people, human beings reduced to bareness of thought and speech and action, are on the side-tracks of the main line of western culture. They exist in a hard reality, but most of them are susceptible to dreams.⁴

There are many different themes in the story of *Of Mice and Men*; all connected mainly to the central characters of the novella. They plan to own their farm, which also includes both Candy and Crook, and Curley's wife, highlights the concept of dreams and aspirations. For example, when George Milton said, "[f]or two bits I'd shove out of here. If we can get jus' a few dollars in the poke we'll shove off and go up the American River and pan gold. We can make maybe a couple of dollars a day there, and we might hit a pocket." (*OMM* p.36) and "We could live offa the fatta the lan'... It ain't no lie. We're gonna do it. Gonna get a little place an' live on the fatta the lan'." (*OMM* p.64) Also, George and Lennie's unusual friendship introduces the idea of companionship "I got you to look after me, and you got me to look after you, and that's why." (*OMM* p.21) and "When his Aunt Clara died, Lennie just come along with me out workin'. Got kinda used to each other after a little while." (*OMM* p.41) while also contrasting with the loneliness experienced and isolation by other characters such as Curley's wife, Crooks, and Candy "I gotta think about that. We was always gonna do it by ourselves." (*OMM* p.56) "A guy sets alone out here at night, maybe readin' books or thinkin' or stuff like that." (*OMM* p.67) and "I seen the guys that go around on the ranches alone. That ain't no good. They don't have no fun. After a long time they get mean. They get wantin' to fight all the time." (*OMM* p.42)

4. Representation of the Used Language in *Of Mice and Men*

In this part, we aim at presenting an overview of language differences in conversational discourse concerning women and men. According to Robin Lakoff, the distinctive use of language must be explained largely on the grounds of the subordinate social role or position

³ Henry Seidel Canby in Michael J. Meyer, *ibid* p.07.

⁴ Harry Thornton Moore in Michael J. Meyer, *ibid*, p.19, 20.

of women and the resulting social insecurity.⁵ For example, and like we mentioned in the first chapter, Language style helps preserve women's inferior role in society. Robin Lakoff was one of the first linguists to suggest that female speech is an ineffectual style. The word "women's language" was introduced, meaning that women and men speak different language. As we stated in the first chapter, Lakoff mentioned some assumptions about women's language like the use of tag questions more than men, avoidance of strong taboo language, intensifiers, less speech, use of hedges, and hypercorrect grammar and pronunciation. Also, she stated some presumptions of men's language for example they use more direct style, slang language, use of tag questions, use of taboo and slang language, and the use of hedges.

We know conversations that really go well in daily life and conversations where problems arise. We occasionally attribute the difference to the intentions of the participants, but often even well-meant subjects have misunderstandings. Deborah Tannen is a sociolinguist who has studied for years how the use of language and the effects of gender, culture and circumstances have on language use. Deborah Tannen states that it is not so easy to communicate as to say what you mean. How you say what you mean is important and varies from person to person because language is an apprenticed behavior, the way we speak and listen is strongly influenced by cultural experience.⁶ Males and females are like people who have grown up in two cultural groups; they reveal their social standing in two broadly differing speech styles. Men and women are commonly agreed not to use and interpret the same language. Deborah Tannen mentioned that the changes in the style of communication between men and women and the use of language go beyond social interaction. As we mentioned in the first chapter, she found out that men are using communication to negotiate their position in a group and prevent others from moving around. Men talk to keep their autonomy; on the other hand, women talk to create intimacy and closeness, which means that men and women use different communicative strategies and styles.

We will provide the discourse and linguistic analysis of women's and men's use of language as represented in the selected work with the focus on dialogues in John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*. The theoretical context behind the research is the sociolinguistic theory of gender differences in communication styles, and the use of language between men and women. Our study will be based on a combination of the theory of the different conversational strategies between men and women by Deborah Tannen, and linguistic assumptions on women's and men's language. Debora Tannen states that

⁵ Robin Lakoff "Language and Women's Place", (New York, Harper & Row, 1975), p.17.

⁶ Deborah Tannen "The Power of Talk: Who Gets Heard and Why" (Harvard Business Review, 1995), p.138.

[c]onstructed dialogue represents a reality lacking in transcripts, but rather that artificial dialogue may represent an internalized schema for the production of conversation. If, then, we are interested in discovering the ideal model of conversational strategy, there is much to be gained by looking at artificial conversation first, to see what these general assumptions are.⁷

In this regard, and as we mentioned in the first chapter about Deborah's Tannen one of her conversational style studies, she analyses several conversational strategies that men and women may use during conversation, which we are going to relate them with some assumptions from Lakoff's theory which we chose from them the use of tag questions, hedges, use of intensifiers and adjectives, and use of curse words.

We will outline the representation of male and female character's variations in using language, drawing on the examples from dialogues in John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*. We suggest that the distinction in gender should be reflected in history because John Steinbeck aims to portray the present truth to make the piece realistic and credible while representing women and men. In the story, John Steinbeck uses speech characteristics to communicate or expose specific social contexts which are most often associated with women or men.

4.1. Use of Tag Questions

In sociolinguistic studies, it is widely believed that men and women employ questions differently in talks. Strength, lack of effect, competitiveness, independence, and control are all characteristics of men. Women are more likely to ask questions. They use tag questions as it is mentioned by Lakoff before, to avoid making strong comments, to indicate their conservatism, status consciousness, uncertainty, nurturance, emotional expressivity, and unity. According to George Yule,

[t]ag questions are short questions consisting of an auxiliary (don't, isn't) and a pronoun (it, you), added to the end of a statement (I hate it when it rains all day, don't you?). They are used more often by women when expressing opinions.⁸

As Lakoff remarked, in some contexts, women use question tags more often than men do. She describes the tag question as a "declarative statement without the assumption that the statement is to be believed by the addressee: one has an out, as with questions."⁹ The tag allows the addressee some discretion, rather than forcing them to agree with the speaker's viewpoints. However, further research about whether men or women use more tag questions

⁷ Deborah Tannen "*Gender and Discourse*" (London: Virago, 1994), p.24.

⁸George Yule "*The Study of Language*" (Cambridge university press, 2017) p.766.

⁹ Robin Lakoff "*Language and Women's Place*", op cit, p.16.

has produced conflicting results. For example, Robin Lakoff states that women use tag question more than men; on the other hand, other researchers like Betty Lou Dubois and Isabel Crouch find that men use more tag question than women.¹⁰ It is worth noting that tag questions can also be used as politeness expressions or dialogue facilitators. Janet Holmes stated that men use tag questions more frequently to convey uncertainty, whereas women use them to facilitate dialogue.¹¹

We are going first to start with the use of tag questions in the novella by the only female character, Curley's wife.

I'm lookin' for Curley," she said. Her voice had a nasal, brittle quality. George looked away from her and then back. "He was in here a minute ago, but he went." "Oh!" She put her hands behind her back and leaned against the door frame so that her body was thrown forward. "You're the new fellas that just come, ain'tya?" "Yeah. (*OMM* p.34)

The interpretation of the above-mentioned example allows us to claim that the female character Curley's wife uses the tag question in her statement during the conversation as a conversational strategy to express her feeling to build a relationship with George and Lennie and also, to create intimacy and closeness. The male speaker is presented, on the contrary, his statements are clear and confident and at the same time, he wants to get rid of her. Another example of Curley's wife using tag question which is

Candy laid the stump of his wrist on his knee and rubbed it gently with his hand. He said accusingly, "You gottahusban'. You got no call foolin' aroun' with other guys, causin' trouble." The girl flared up. "Sure I gottahusban'. You all seen him. Swell guy, ain't he? Spends all his time sayin' what he's gonna do to guy she don't like, and he don't like nobody. (*OMM* p.71)

This example shows us that Curley's wife uses the tag question in her statement to express anxiety, hesitation, and a little bit of anger because the male character Candy was attacking her somehow. So she felt powerless and needed a man's support.

Some of the passages in the story serve as a piece of perfect evidence against the study by Robin Lakoff claiming that men produce fewer tag questions than women do in conversations. On the other hand, we think maybe we cannot prove which one of the genders

¹⁰ Betty Lou Dubois and Isabel Crouch "Language in Society: The Question of Tag Questions in Women's Speech: They Don't Really Use More of Them Do They?" (Cambridge university press, 1975) p.289-294.

¹¹ Janet Holmes "An Introduction to Sociolinguistics" (London, Longman, 1992), p.319.

uses more tag questions in the story because the novella is full of the male character and there is just one female character which is Curley's wife.

George motioned with his spoon again. "Look, Lennie. I want you to look around here. You can remember this place, can't you? The ranch is about a quarter mile up that way. Just follow the river?" "Sure," said Lennie. "I can remember this. Di'n't I remember about not gonna say a word?" "'Course you did. Well, look. Lennie-if youjus' happen to get in trouble like you always done before, I want you to come right here an' hide in the brush. (*OMM* p.22)

[i]f he tangles with you, Lennie, we're gonna get the can. Don't make no mistake about that. He's the boss's son. Look, Lennie. You try to keep away from him, will you? Don't never speak to him. If he comes in here you move clear to the other side of the room. Will you do that, Lennie?" "I don't want no trouble," Lennie mourned. "I never done nothing to him. (*OMM*p.33)

The modal function of tag questions should be considered while analyzing the aforementioned instances since it demonstrates that the tags are speaker-oriented. Throughout the above-mentioned passages, we noticed that the male characters in the story use tag questions as conversational strategies to express or demonstrate a request for further information or a confirmation of the information. We assume that male characters in John Steinbeck's story use tag questions as conversational strategies more often asking for information, confirmation, and sometimes to express hesitation about something while the female character uses tag questions to ease communication and create intimacy.

4.2. Use of Hedges:

Hedging is one of the characteristics of women's speech, according to Lakoff, which also states that men use hedges but less than women.¹² The speaker's uncertainty, impotence, and unwillingness to convey both women and men's views or avoid making specific remarks are demonstrated by phrases like "kinda/kind of," "sorta/sort of," "It seems like," "I guess", "I think", "I mean", "you know", "maybe", "might", "well", "you see", and "I could be mistaken". Furthermore, she says that a hedge is utilized when the speaker is making a claim but does not have complete faith in its reality and hence avoids making a forceful assertion.

Hedges are usually associated with women, and they are viewed as a speaker's hesitation to make a strong statement or reveal personal opinions. We took some dialogues between Curley's wife and other male characters to illustrate the use of hedges as a conversational strategy by the female character. For example,

¹²Robin Lakoff *Talking Power: The Politics of Language*, op cit., p.204.

George said brusquely. "Well he ain't now." "If he ain't, I guess I better look some place else,".... Lennie watched her, fascinated. George said, "If I see him, I'll pass the word you was looking for him."..... "Nobody can't blame a person for lookin'," she said She turned her head. "Hi, Slim," she said... "I'm tryin' to find Curley, Slim." "Well, you ain't tryin' very hard. I seen him goin' in your house. (OMMp.35)

[a]fter a pause Crooks said, "Maybe you better go along to your own house now. We don't want no trouble." "Well, I ain't giving you no trouble. Think I don't like to talk to somebody ever' once in a while? Think I like to stick in that house alla time?" Candy laid the stump of his wrist on his knee and rubbed it gently with his hand. He said accusingly, "You gottahusban'. You got no call foolin' aroun' with other guys, causin' trouble. (OMM p.70)

The passages above support Lakoff's observations about the use of hedges by females. We notice that Curley's wife uses hedges as a conversational strategy to show or reflect her insecurity, aversion to expressing her views, or an attempt to prevent making specific assertions as well as to provide a perfect illustration for female's solidarity and powerlessness. The following passages show how Curley's wife use hedges to express her personal opinions, certainty, and a way to raise the topic with others by using lexical items like "I know" and "I think"

She stood still in the doorway, smiling a little at them, rubbing the nails of one hand with the thumb and forefinger of the other. And her eyes traveled from one face to another. "They left all the weak ones here," she said finally. "Think I don't know where they all went? Even Curley. I know where they all went. (OMM p.70)

Curley's wife moved away from him a little. "I think you're nuts," she said. "No I ain't," Lennie explained earnestly. "George says I ain't. I like to pet nice things with my fingers, sof' things." She was a little bit reassured. "Well, who don't?" she said. "Ever'body likes that. I like to feel silk an' velvet. (OMM p.80)

Male characters in the story, on the other hand, use hedges in their speech several times, like "well", "I think", "you know", and "I guess", as shown in the examples below

[w]hit said, "I guess you guys really come here to work." "How do ya mean?" George asked. Whit laughed. "Well, ya come on a Friday. You got two days to work till Sunday." "I don't see how you figure," said George. Whit laughed again. "You do if you been around these big ranches much Guy that wants to look over a ranch comes in Sat'day afternoon. (OMMp.49)

[w]ell, this girl squawks and squawks. I was jus' a little bit off, and I heard all the yellin', so I comes running, an' by that time Lennie's so scared all he can think to do is jus' hold on. I socked him over the head with a fence picket to make him let go. He was so scart he couldn't let go of that dress. And he's so God damn strong, you know. (OMM.p42)

In these passages from the story, we notice that the male characters use hedges as strategies to express their certainty and to give their personal views or opinions, or to create a topic so they can start a conversation with others.

4.3. Use of Intensifiers and Adjectives:

Intensification is a linguistic grading system that enhances the expressive quality of communication. According to Partington, It is a tool for impressing, praising, convincing, criticizing, and generally influencing the listener's reception of the message.¹³ Intensifiers are adverbs or adverbial phrases that demonstrate empathy and strengthen the meaning of other expressions. Absolute, entirely, very, highly, rather, really, so, too, totally, utterly, very are some of the words we regularly employ as intensifiers. A noun is frequently followed by an adjective. Some adjectives are used to describe attributes that can exist in variable levels or amounts. To do this, the adjective will transform typically by adding “er” or “est”, or will be combined with words such as more, most, extremely, and barely.¹⁴ Adjectives tell the reader how much, or how many, of anything you're talking about, what you want to be passed to you, or what kind of stuff you're looking for.

[t]hey was so little," he said, apologetically. "I'd pet 'em, and pretty soon they bit my fingers and I pinched their heads a little and then they was dead-because they was so little. "I wisht we'd get the rabbits pretty soon, George. They ain't so little. (OMM p.18)

[s]lim's voice came through the door. "Hi, Good-lookin'."
"I'm tryin' to find Curley, Slim."
"Well, you ain'ttryin' very hard. I seen him goin' in your house.(OMMp.35)

The above passages from the story are the male characters using intensifiers and adjectives in their speech; we noticed that the majority of the male characters use intensifiers and adjectives as conversational strategies to inform or confirm the information

[g]ot five left, huh?"
"Yeah, five. I kept the biggest."
"What kinda dogs you think they're gonna be?" "I dunno," said Slim. "Some kinda shepherds, I guess. That's the most kind I seen around here when she was in heat. (OMM p.38)

In this passage, the male character uses the hedge “I guess” to express his uncertainty.

¹³Alan Partington “*Corpus Evidence of Language Change: The Case of The Intensifier, Text and Technology*” (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1993), p178.

¹⁴Merriam Webster, cited in <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/adjective> , Accessed on 2021.

According to Lakoff, as we state in the first chapter, women use many adjectives and intensifiers in their speech, although men can use them also but rarely. Curley's wife from the beginning of the story until the end uses just one intensifier which is "too" in "Curley's wife laughed at him. "Baloney," she said. "I seen too many you guys. If you had two bits in the worl', why you'd be in gettin' two shots of corn with it and suckin' the bottom of the glass. I know you guys." (OMMp.72) we observed that the female character uses the intensifiers "too" as a conversation strategy in her speech to develop emotional links in conversation and to tell her own opinion. Also, she uses two adjectives in the entire story

"Who's George?" she asked. "The little guy you come with?"

Lennie smiled happily. "That's him," he said. "That's the guy, an' he's gonna let me tend the rabbits." (OMMp.72)

And "Wha's the matter with me?" she cried. "Ain't I got a right to talk to nobody? Whatta they think I am, anyways? You're a nice guy. I don't know why I can't talk to you. I ain'tdoin' no harm to you." (OMM p.78) In these two passages from the story of the female character using adjectives, we believe that she uses adjectives in her speech as a conversation strategy to create intimacy and closeness.

When it came to using intensifiers and adjectives in *Of Mice and Men*, it is noticed that the male characters use them much more than the female characters, which is against Robin Lakoff statement that women use adjectives and intensifiers more than men, but the result is not one hundred percent correct, as we mentioned before, since there is only one female character in the story.

4.4. Use of swear Words:

Steinbeck's goal was to give a true portrait of Central California's landscape and people. That means creating a dialogue with profanity, swear, taboo, and slang as if it were spoken by actual people. In truth, the book's language is the primary reason for its widespread criticism. Like we mentioned in the first chapter, and according to Robin Lakoff, women strive to avoid using insulting terms in conversation; therefore, swear words are not considered proper for them. Men are more likely than women to use swear words and slang phrases, as men are used more frequently in their speech. Cursing, in other words, is a masculine behavior pattern, and using a swear word is closely related to masculine language. As George Yule states in his book *The Study of Language*,

[i]n a study of the linguistic differences among “Jocks” (higher status) and “Burnouts” (lower status) in Detroit high schools, Eckert (2000) reported the regular use of taboo words among the “Burnouts,” both males and females. However, among the higher status group (the “Jocks”) males used taboo words only with other males, while females didn’t seem to use them at all. Social class divisions, at least in the use of slang, are already well established during adolescence.¹⁵

In the story, we found that the males characters use many swear and curse words in their conversations, from the beginning till the end.

he said angrily, We could just as well of rode clear to the ranch if that bastard bus driver knew what he was talkin’ about. ‘jes’ a little stretch down the highway, ‘ he says. ‘jes’ a little stretch. ‘ God damn near four miles, that’s what it was! Didn’t wanta stop at the ranch gate, that’s what. Too God damn lazy to pull up. Wonder he isn’t too damn good to stop in soledad at all. Kicks us out and says ‘jes’ a little stretch down the road. ‘ I bet it was more than four miles. Damn hot day. (OMM p.13)

[h]e looked into his box shelf and then picked a small yellow can from it. "Say. What the hell's this?"

"I don't know," said the old man.

"Says 'positively kills lice, roaches and other scourges.' What the hell kind of bed you giving us, anyways. We don't want no pants rabbits.(OMM p.24)

The story is full of curse words, especially used by the male characters, and these two passages show that the male characters use curse words in their speech to express their anger and disappointment. We noticed also that the male characters use the word “Jesus Christ” almost in every chapter of the story; these are some American swear words. From the story, we can notice that men use them in their speech many times during the conversation.

The only character in the story who rarely use any swear or curse words is Curley’s wife, though she used the word “damn” in just one sentence

[a]wright, cover 'im up if yawanta. Whatta I care? You bindle bums think you're so damn good. Whatta ya think I am, a kid? I tell ya I could of went with shows. Not jus' one, neither. An' a guy tol' me he could put me in pitchers" She was breathless with indignation. (OMM P.71)

Here in this passage of the female character, we notice that she uses the curse word “damn” to express her anger because the male workers were attacking her. Women are possibly more stylistically flexible and gentle than men. As a result, they attempt to avoid using swear words because they are regarded as offensive and belong to the category of banned words for

¹⁵George Yule “*The Study of Language*“, Ibid p727

women. Indeed, women are more likely than men to use linguistic strategies that emphasize solidarity. The story reveals that the woman rarely says anything. The woman rarely uses swear words like "damn," as we said before, she uses it just one time in the story as evidenced by the dialogue between her and the other men workers. Instead, she used the phrase "Baloney" to communicate their emotions. For instance, "Baloney! Wat you think you're sellin' me?" (*OMM* p.71)

5. The Death of Curley's Wife Beyond Words:

To begin with, Curley's wife is a disadvantaged character in *Of Mice and Men* who connects to the themes of dreams and loneliness. She is significant in the story because she represents traditional 1930s American women and is the only unnamed female character. Although Steinbeck portrays her negatively, the reader develops sympathy for her by the end of the work. Even though the United States was in the midst of the Great Depression, the American Dream continued to hold sway in the public imagination. However, in the case of Curley's wife, Steinbeck appears to make an argument that the American Dream and everything it stands for offers a false hope of self-improvement to those seeking to escape their mentally, emotionally, and materially impoverished lives. Curley's wife, too, is trapped in a hopeless illusion of little dreams. She dreamed about becoming an actress and blowing Hollywood, but when Curley appeared, all he represented was escape which was better than nothing.

[c]oulda been in the movies, an' had nice clothes-all them nice clothes like they wear. An' I coulda sat in them big hotels, an' had pitchers took of me. When they had them previews I coulda went to them, an' spoke in the radio, an' it wouldn'ta cost me a cent because I was in the pitcher. An' all them nice clothes like they wear. Because this guy says I was a natural. (*OMMp*.33)

Curley's Wife faces oppression and solitude because she is a woman. She is a stock figure used by Steinbeck to show her as another form of the outcast, symbolizing that woman was inferior to males at the period. While Lennie and George are outcasts due to Lennie's mental disability and their strange friendship, Candy is isolated due to his age and injuries, and Crooks lives alone due to his race; Curley's Wife suffers from the same isolation due to her gender. Curley's Wife is unable to converse with others since she is a woman, but most of the guys on the ranch are allowed to do so. Because she is a woman, she is unable to physically move around the ranch as others do without being subjected to inappropriate remarks and suspicion. Because she was a woman, she gave up on her dreams for a better life

and married to provide some security during the insecure times of the Great Depression. Finally, Curley's Wife must endure treatment from Curley even though she is a woman. Curley's Wife suffers from physical and verbal abuse and receives no outward compassion or even justice because of her gender and position as the nameless Curley's Wife.

From the beginning of the story, we saw how Lennie deals with animals when petting them, so killing Curley's wife was somehow expected when following the events of the story. Lennie only wants to look after the rabbits. The guy cannot help himself; he is a softie. He cannot get enough of any smooth texture, from rabbits to pups to women's hair. Curley's wife died prematurely as a result of an unfortunate set of circumstances. These events were triggered more by the actions of other characters than by Lennie's own. Curley's wife is to be primarily blamed, even though she was the victim. She may have become attention-seeking due to the negligence of her husband, Curley. Curley's wife wanted someone to love her and talk to her. She was seeking attention due to her loneliness. If Curley and his wife had acted differently, and Lennie's impairment had been taken into account, her death might never have occurred.

6. Conclusion:

This chapter is about the language used in the novella of John Steinbeck, *Of Mice and Men*. We start with an overview of the work. Then we tried to show its importance in the world of literature which gained many positive critics from several writers. After that, we moved to the representation of gender differences among language used in the story where we applied the two theories of Robin Lakoff and Deborah Tannen at the same time. So we chose some presumptions from Lakoff's theory, such as tag questions, hedges, use of intensifiers and adjectives, and the use of curse words.

Steinbeck employs conversational strategies such as tag questions, hedges, use of intensifiers and adjectives, and the use of curse words, thinking that female speaker's utterances provide male addressees leeway rather than forcing them to accept their views. Females tend to employ tag questions and hedges as conversation and relationship-building strategies and intensifiers and adjectives to develop an emotional link with the other person in the conversation or to give her point of view. The passages of the male characters in using tag questions, hedges, and intensifiers and adjectives portray males as information seekers, dominance seekers, and conversation controllers through imposing their statements and expressing their points of view and for using curse words, women place a greater emphasis on

language etiquette and civility, so they avoid using swear and curse words. Through male's speech in the story, we noticed that they use many curse words like damn and hell. Maybe this is because of the place, the lack of education, the period, and the society they lived with. As result males are different from females when they use swear words which confirms the theory of Robin Lakoff. Finally, we talked about the death of Curley's wife beyond words; she is the only unnamed female character in the story that faced oppression and male dominance, which symbolized the social position of women at that time.

**Chapter Three: The Conversational Strategies of
Genders Discourse in “The Chrysanthemums”**

1. Introduction

This chapter aims to deal with the differences between the male and female characters in John Steinbeck's short story "The Chrysanthemums" by applying both Robin Lakoff and Deborah Tannen's theories. To begin with, we will start with an overview of the work and show the importance of the story as a literary work. Then, we move to the differences between both genders in using a language where we will discuss two assumptions which are the hedges and the use of intensifiers and adjectives. In the end, we will talk about one obvious theme in the story which is the crying of Elisa Allen at the end of the story.

2. An Overview of "The Chrysanthemums"

The story was initially published in Harper's Magazine in October 1937. "The Chrysanthemums" was included in John Steinbeck's collection of short stories in 1938, *The Long Valley*. In various significant ways, this miserable marriage narrative is typical of Steinbeck's fiction. It takes place in California, in Salinas's valley. "The Chrysanthemums" is a short story that depicts the struggles of a woman in society, particularly when her role is interpreted as obedience to man's order. The symbolism of Chrysanthemum flowers, which Elisa uses to find peace from the emptiness of her life, dominates the plot. Her husband Henry appears to play a limited part in filling the void in her life, leaving her with no alternative but to occupy her in the garden and try to figure out how to fill the void on her own.

Elisa lives on a small cattle ranch with her committed husband in a peaceful generally satisfied life. She is approaching middle age with a fine property to maintain but no children. Steinbeck makes it obvious that Elisa is a creative person, despite the fact that he does not identify any deep creative strands, she has abandoned such as painting or music. She satisfies that part of herself with gardening. She encounters with the homeless tinker, put new insight on what she had imagine was her happy life. The passion with which she speaks to the traveler, as well as the romantic notions she has about his single life, lead some sparks to rise. Elisa's characters is complex in that a big portion of her genuine nature has become the contended farm-wife even if this identity did not always occupy so much of her time, any further pursuit of the unfulfilled romantic side would mean losing anything as she values. So it must remain a fantasy.

3. The Importance of “The Chrysanthemums” in the World of Literature

This story has generally been recognized as one of Steinbeck's finest works of literature. It remains one of the author's most widely appreciated and disputed stories, more than sixty years later. Whether Elisa is sympathetic or unsympathetic, powerful or powerless, is a point of contention among critics. Few contemporary short stories have accumulated as much critical acclaim as "The Chrysanthemums" as readers attempted to deduce Elisa's reasons for her unhappiness with married life. "Steinbeck highlights the emotional side of women by using the business arrangement struck with the vendor is used by John who offers her his services. Elisa is a strong woman who does not require the assistance of a man, so she declines.

Every woman's soul is symbolized by chrysanthemums. From a male perspective, Elisa Allen embodies the feminine ideal of equality and its ultimate defeat. The Woman Rights Movement is symbolized by the chrysanthemums and Elisa Allen; just as Elisa Allen lives a confined existence cut off from all social and sexual pleasure, so did women. Elmer Davis, in *The Saturday Review of Literature*, called the collection of John Steinbeck short stories "certainly some of the best writing of the past decade."¹ Women's roles in literature received more critical attention after the rise of the women's movement in the 1960s and 1970s. Previous works were investigated for hints as to the relative standing of women in society, and new works by and about women produced. In 1965, Mordecai Marcus started a debate in *Modern Fiction Studies* about the implications of Elisa's displeasure. Marcus, who thought "The Chrysanthemums" was "one of the world's great short stories," assumed Elisa's biggest dream is to become a mother and that,

her devotion to her chrysanthemum bed is at least partly an attempt to make flowers take the place of a child... Denied a child, a wider world of experience, and that projection of oneself into the world of fresh and broad experiences which a child.²

In 1974, Charles A. Sweet discovered an "embryonic feminist" in Elisa and viewed the story as "Steinbeck's response to feminism."³ He believed that Elisa was "the representative of the feminist ideal of equality and its inevitable defeat."⁴ The two writers sympathize with Elisa

¹Davis Elmer, Review of the Long Valley: The Steinbeck Country (*The Saturday of Literature*, 1938), p.11.

²Marcus Mordecai, The Lost Dream of Sex and Childbirth in "The Chrysanthemums" (*Modern Fiction Studies*, 1965), p.55

³ Sweet Charles, A, Ms. Elisa Allen and Steinbeck's "The Chrysanthemums" (*Modern Fiction Studies*, 1974), p.213.

⁴id..

and identify the reason for her dissatisfaction as being tied to sex and gender, as well as the constraints that marriage imposes on a woman.

“The Chrysanthemums” represents Elisa's femininity. It reflects her femininity and sexuality at first, and then her children. Elisa is dissatisfied with her life because her marriage to Henry lacks children and romance. Furthermore, her husband is unappreciative of her feminine features as well as her emotional needs. The importance of John Steinbeck's short story “The Chrysanthemums” in the literary world makes this story interesting and controversial, and the way this story is written motivates the reader to take an interest in it and read it with passion.

4. Representation of Language Used in “The Chrysanthemums”:

As we mentioned in the first chapter, Robin Lakoff states some presumptions about women's and men's language such as the use of tag questions, the use of intensifiers and adjectives, and the use of hedges. On the other hand, Deborah Tannen mentioned that the changes in the style of communication between men and women and the use of language go beyond social interaction. She discovered as we discussed in the first chapter, that men use conversation to negotiate their place in a group and prevent others from moving around. Men converse to maintain their independence, but women converse to promote intimacy and connection. This implies that men and women use distinct communicating tactics and styles.

We will provide a rhetorical and linguistic examination of how women and men use language in the selected work with a concentration on conversations from John Steinbeck's “The Chrysanthemums”. Our study will be based on a combination of the theory of the different conversational strategies between men and women by Deborah Tannen and linguistic assumptions on women's and men's language. We will focus on how male and female characters use language differently while using excerpts from dialogues in John Steinbeck's short story as examples.

4.1 . The Use of Hedges

Hedging is a linguistic phenomenon that can be found in both written and spoken language. It's a communication strategy that causes the statement's utterance force to be weakened; making it sound rough, impolite, or plain. Like we stated in the first chapter, Lakoff mentioned that both men and women use hedges in their speech. Some of the hedges

are "kinda/kind of," "sorta/sort of," "It seems like," "I guess", "I think", "I mean", "you know", "maybe", "might", "well", "you see".

Hedges are usually associated with women, and they are viewed as a speaker's hesitation to make a strong statement or reveal personal opinions.

[h]er eyes sharpened. "Maybe I could do it, too. I've a gift with things, all right. My mother had it. She could stick anything in the ground and make it grow. She said it was having planters' hands that knew how to do it. ("The Chrys" p.45)

"When they get started?" she asked.

He smiled for a second. "Yes. When they get started."

"Well," said Elisa, "I think you'll save time if you go back to the Salinas road and pick up the highway there." ("The Chrys" p.48)

In the two above-mentioned passages from the story which belong to the female character, we notice that she used the hedges "maybe", "well", and "I think" as conversational strategies to express her personal opinion or her point of view.

Male characters in the story use hedges many times in the story and more than the female character, which serves against Robin Lakoff theory who states that women use hedges more than men,

[j]ust fooling, Elisa. We'll go to a movie. Let's see. It's two now. I'm going to take Scotty and bring down those steers from the hill. It'll take us maybe two hours. We'll go in town about five and have dinner at the Cominos Hotel. Like that?
Of course I'll like it. It's good to eat away from home. ("The Chrys" p.46)

The male character in this passage uses the hedge "maybe" as a conversational strategy to express his uncertainty. In the next passage from the story, we are going to show how the male character use the hedge "I know" and "kind of" as a conversational strategy to raise a topic and at the same time to emphasize kindness and solidarity

[s]cissors is the worst thing," he explained. "Most people just ruin scissors trying to sharpen 'em, but I know how. I got a special tool. It's a little bobbit kind of thing, and patented. But it sure does the trick.
No. My scissors are all sharp. ("The Chrys" p.49)

For the hedges like "I know" and "I mean", the male character use them to express his point of view,

[w]hy—why, Elisa. You look so nice!"
"Nice? You think I look nice? What do you mean by 'nice'?"
Henry blundered on. "I don't know. I mean you look different, strong and happy."
"I am strong? Yes, strong. What do you mean 'strong'? ("The Chrys" p.56)

4.2. The Use of Intensifiers and Adjectives

An intensifier is a term in English grammar that emphasizes another set of words. The intensifier's role is to make the adjective more extreme, as the name implies. The use of these intensifiers is conventional; thus, it is a good idea to memorize them. In a sentence, an adjective describes and modifies nouns and pronouns. It usually signifies a word or pronouns characters, size, shape, time, emotions, contents, and more. Adjectives are not just for modifying nouns; they can also be used in conjunction with linking verbs with the verb to be.

In the following passages of the female character, we noticed that she uses intensifiers and adjectives to express hesitation and seeking for information,

[b]efore they bloom?" he asked.

"Yes, before they bloom." Her face was tight with eagerness. "They'll grow right up again. About the last of September the buds will start."

She stopped and seemed perplexed. "It's the budding that takes the most care," she said hesitantly. "I don't know how to tell you." She looked deep into his eyes, searchingly. Her mouth opened a little, and she seemed to be listening. "I'll try to tell you," she said. "Did you ever hear of planting hands?" ("The Chrys" p.51)

[h]enry," she asked, "could we have wine at dinner?"

"Sure we could. Say! That will be fine."

She was silent for a while; then she said, "Henry, at those prize fights, do the men hurt each other very much?" "Sometimes a little, not often. Why?" ("The Chrys" p.57)

Also, the female character uses intensifiers and adjectives to express her personal opinion with certainty and she indicates her emotional expressivity,

[y]ou sleep right in the wagon?" Elisa asked.

"Right in the wagon, ma'am. Rain or shine I'm dry as a cow in there."

It must be nice," she said. "It must be very nice. I wish women could do such things." ("The Chrys" p.53)

For the male character, Henry, he uses the intensifiers "so" and the adjective "nice" to express his intimacy, and at the same time he uses them as a conversational strategy to raise a topic with the other person in the conversation.

Henry came banging out of the door, shoving his tie inside his vest as he came. Elisa stiffened and her face grew tight. Henry stopped short and looked at her. "Why—why, Elisa. You look so nice!" "Nice? You think I look nice? What do you mean by 'nice'?" ("The Chrys" p.56)

5. The Crying of Elisa Allen Beyond words:

In John Steinbeck's short story "The Chrysanthemums", Elisa Allen is portrayed as a strong capable woman. She is pleased with her labor at home and in her garden. Steinbeck makes it obvious that her husband appreciates the care she takes on their farm. On the other hand, Elisa has an issue with this. She wants her husband to see her as a sexual being and value her femininity. When the tinker walks down the road, he gives her the kind of attention she craves, reawakening a passion in her that she had previously suppressed for her garden.

Elisa Allen hopes that once the tinker goes, her marriage will develop similar devotion. Elisa's hopes are dashed when her husband fails to notice her carefully crafted appearance and instead informs her that she appears "strong enough to break a calf over [her] knee." ("The Chrys" p.56) The beginning of the end comes when she questions her husband about fights and their violent nature. He says that while she does not think she will enjoy it if she truly wants to go, he will take her. This serves as further proof to Elisa that her husband does not regard her as a lady. Bloody fights were not a place for a respectable lady. And the reality that her husband could take her there proves that her marriage will never change.

When Elisa cries "weakly like an old woman" ("The Chrys" p.58) at the end of the story, John Steinbeck presents to the reader that Elisa has accepted her destiny as a woman trapped in a loveless marriage. Elisa was just thirty-five years old, and while that may have been older than we estimate thirty-five to be now, she was far from an elderly woman. The fact that she cries is not nearly as essential as the fact that she now considers herself to be elderly because femininity and sexuality are typically connected with such a woman.

She cries like an old woman because she has been humiliated and is helpless and powerless to change anything. She is crushed in the idea that the man from the repair wagon exploited her, and she misread the situation, believing that he cared about her and even showed an interest in her concerns, almost suggestively, while all he wanted was a sale. It reinforces, in a way, that her husband is not the only man she has problems comprehending, and that male-female disparities are universal. This realization makes her feel lonely and isolated than before, out on the farm with no one who appreciates her, like an elderly woman who has outlived her generation and is considered "outmoded" by some. Elisa understands that she cannot do anything other than herself on her small farm with her husband. She's "stuck" there, and she will never be able to persuade her husband to appreciate the aesthetic beauty of the flowers she adores. Actually, Elisa's tears demonstrate the impact the man had

on her. He reminded her of how unhappy she was. She is crying for a life she never had and will never have. Elisa will never be as strong as she was with the tinker in those times.

The country was recuperating from the Great Depression when John Steinbeck's short story "The Chrysanthemums" first appeared in October 1937. For most women, independence was a long and difficult battle that generally ended in defeat. The battle for equality is depicted in "The Chrysanthemums" by Steinbeck's character Elisa Allen. According to Stanley Renner, "The Chrysanthemums" depicts "a strong, capable woman kept from personal, social, and sexual fulfillment by the prevailing conception of a woman's position in a world dominated by men."⁵ Elisa's appearance, attitude, and voice reflect women's frustrations in Steinbeck's male 1930s environment.

Elisa begins to change from the male role of equality to the feminine role of submissiveness throughout the story. Her dissatisfaction with a male-dominated world leads her to abandon her ideals of emancipation and become the timid woman that society wants her to be. Steinbeck portrays women in the context of his day. Elisa is a classic example of a woman of the 1930s.

6. Conclusion:

This chapter deals with the analysis of male and female characters in "The Chrysanthemums". In the beginning, we presented an overview of the work and showed the importance of the story as a literary work. Then, we tackled the male and female differences among their language in their dialogues, where we dealt with the use of hedges, intensifiers, and adjectives.

In this story, the female characters use the hedges in her speech as a conversational strategy to make a statement by expressing her personal opinion; on the other hand, the male characters use them to show their uncertainty and point of view. Meanwhile, they use the hedges as a strategy to raise a topic during the conversation. For the use of intensifiers and adjectives, the male character uses them to create intimacy and a way to raise a topic or build a relationship with the other person in the conversation. In contrast, the female character uses intensifiers and adjectives to express many things, such as hesitation, personal opinion, certainty, and a way for seeking information.

⁵Renner Stanley, "The Real Woman Inside the Fence in The Chrysanthemums" (modern fiction studies, 1985) p.306.

Concerning the use of hedges, we found that the male character uses them more than the female, which serves against Robin Lakoff's theory. And for the use of intensifiers and adjectives, the female character uses them more than the male characters, where we can see the differences between them. In fact, this fulfills and serves for Lakoff's theory. In the end of the chapter, we explained our view about the crying of Elisa Allen at the end of the story which shows the differences in the gender roles of men and women back at that time, where women were inferior to men.

General Conclusion

The term sociolinguistics could be defined in relation to social system as the philosophy of literature. It is the descriptive study of the effects of the use of language and society's effects on the language of all aspects of society, including cultural standards, perceptions and contexts. It differs from linguistic sociology that focuses on the social impact of language. A sociolinguistic study of literature provides insights into how people think, believe and understand. The sociolinguistic lens can be used to view a variety of literature, for example novels, poetry and short stories, like the selected work in this research. Thus, studying literature and the language it uses gives insights into culture.

Every literary text is constructed with language. Determining how a certain writer has used language abilities to negotiate meaning is imperative. The responsibility for determining the language best in aesthetically, morally or psychologically and cultural triangle is not only for writers but also for readers. Literature reflects aspirations, sources of inspiration, values, convictions and the social system.

This study attempted to determine gender differences in language use among the short stories of John Steinbeck. Specifically, it answered the following questions of how are the male and female characters different as marked by their dialogues. The second question is about how the characters in the two chosen stories use linguistic assumptions as conversational strategies. Also, how does language reflect and help maintain women's secondary status in society.

Using the theoretical literary analysis and the contrastive methods, this study analyzed two of the stories by John Steinbeck namely, *Of Mice and Men* and "The Chrysanthemums". Also, by utilizing the findings of some scholars and with the help of the dialogues, it is pointed out to some of the differences in using language between the male and female characters in the stories of John Steinbeck.

This study concluded with some results which are females character in *Of Mice and Men* tend to employ tag questions and hedges as conversation and relationship-building strategies and intensifiers and adjectives to develop an emotional link with the other person in the conversation or to give her point of view. The passages of the male characters in using tag questions, hedges, and intensifiers and adjectives portray males as information seekers, dominance seekers, and conversation controllers through imposing their statements and expressing their points of view and for using curse words, women place a greater emphasis on

language etiquette and civility, so they avoid using swear and curse words which serves with the theory of Robin Lakoff.

On the other hand, the female characters in “The Chrysanthemums” use the hedges in her speech as a conversational strategy to make a statement by expressing her personal opinion while the male characters use them to show their uncertainty and point of view. They use the hedges as a strategy to raise a topic during the conversation. For the use of intensifiers and adjectives, the male character uses them to create intimacy and a way to raise a topic or build a relationship with the other person in the conversation. In contrast, the female character uses intensifiers and adjectives to express many things, such as hesitation, personal opinion, certainty, and a way for seeking information. The study reveals that the male characters use hedges more than the female which serves against Lakoff’s theory.

This research study faced some problems, first of all, the lack of time, due to the corona virus; it was hard task to study and conduct a research in the same time. Also, this study did not come up with one-hundred percent results because there was no balance in the number of male characters with the female characters.

This research indicates the male and female characters in John Steinbeck stories *Of Mice and Men* and the “The Chrysanthemums” use different language in their speech during conversation. Based on the results of the research, there are some recommendations that could be formulated in order to provide some simple insights and ideas that they are useful for conducting similar studies in the future. This study recommended for a further study on gender differences in other works of John Steinbeck o, on gender differences on other works of other authors. Furthermore, studies on the differences between men and women in using language in other literary works such as dramas, novel, and poetry are highly recommended.

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Abstract in Arabic

في دراسة الكلام، كانت هناك بعض الاختلافات في كيفية استخدام الرجال والنساء للغة. على الرغم من أن التحليل النظري واسع النطاق ، إلا أن البحث التجريبي الفعلي لا يزال بحاجة إلى الالتقاء حول صورة متسقة للاختلافات اللغوية بين الجنسين. يعد عدم الاتفاق على الطريقة الصحيحة لتحليل اللغة سبباً مهماً. في هذه الدراسة ، تم فحص الاختلافات بين الجنسين في استخدام اللغة لتحليل قاعدة البيانات في قصص جون شتاينبك حول *الفران والرجال* و "الأقحوان". تحاول هذه الرسالة دراسة اللغة المستخدمة في الأعمال المذكورة أعلاه حيث تم وضع القصتين المختارتين في ولاية كاليفورنيا في عام 1937 خلال فترة الكساد الكبير. الهدف من هذا البحث هو دراسة الفروق بين كلام النساء والرجال في قصص جون شتاينبك وتصنيف الاستراتيجيات اللغوية والمحادثة التي تمثل الإناث والذكور في سياقات اجتماعية مختلفة. في المجموعة قيد الدراسة وباستخدام عدة طرق وهي التحليل النظري للأدب والمنهج المقارن والنوعي توصلت الدراسة إلى استنتاجات مفادها أنه في بعض الأجزاء تخدم نتائج القصتين مع وضد النظريتين. تم تطبيقهما في الفصلين الثاني والثالث ، وهما نظريات روبن لاكوف وديبورا تانين ، حيث يستخدم الرجال والنساء أسئلة الإشارة ، والتحوطات ، والمكثفات والصفات ، ويستخدمون الألفاظ النابية كاستراتيجيات محادثة في خطابهم. تكشف هذه الدراسة أيضاً عن الوضع الاجتماعي للمرأة خلال فترة الكساد الكبير ، حيث كانت تعاني من الاضطهاد والسيطرة الذكورية.

الكلمات الأساسية: الاختلافات بين الجنسين ، استخدام اللغة ، قصص جون شتاينبك عن *الفران والرجال* و "الأقحوان" ، الاكتئاب الكبير ، استراتيجيات المحادثة.