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*Investigating Gender and Linguistic Convergence: A
Conversational analysis of Mixed-Gender Online Chats*

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

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Dedication

To my father the most honorable man I ever knew, the man I am dedicating my life to make him proud.

To my mother the woman who gave me the most precious advice in my life “always trust your heart” thank you mother.

To my Beloved friend Kadda, ‘the brother and life companion’, thank you for being there for me.

To everyone who helps in a way or another to accomplish this research work

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Abstract

The dissertation at hand aims at investigating and analyzing the phenomenon of linguistic convergence in mixed-gender online-chat. This study opts for mixed method that combines both qualitative and quantitative approaches using a structured questionnaire and a conversational analysis. The questionnaire is administered to seventy-four LMD students at Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret (Algeria), while five online conversations are chosen to be analysed using a conversational analysis method. The findings of this research reveal that men and women do communicate differently using both written and spoken form, but for some reasons the context of the communication do control them at the lexical level which create and open the door for language adaptation and convergence.

Keywords: mixed-gender, online chat, conversational style, linguistic convergence.

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General Introduction

The academic study of language and gender is mainly concerned with how and to what extent gender as a variable can affect males and females use language. With very few details, early work on language and gender reflects the commonsense ideas that tell us that men and women use language in different ways. It viewed both genders in a binary opposition, considering them completely opposite to each other and holding gender differences in language as inevitable and natural. Relevant to this, feminist researchers have always valued the findings of the traditional linguistic and gender theories; however, they claim that the problem lies in their assumptions, they treat men and women as homogenous and not heterogeneous groups. Consequently, the proponents of the social construction theory of gender conclude that it is senseless to conceptualize the distinctive female/male linguistic characteristics like a binary opposition and they put a great emphasis on the need to go beyond the simple constant dichotomous categories in linguistic research. In this regard, gender has begun to be approached and conceptualized differently. It is perceived as a social concept category, and a relative dynamic evolutionary process. In the same line of thought, many feminists (West and Zimmerman 1987, Butler 1990) extend their thinking to recognize gender as something done and performed which is the premise of the present research work. To explain, gender as a social dynamic process leads to the phenomenon of language convergence, not forgetting that men and women's linguistic behaviors are not only affected by gender, but also influenced by many other variables such as age, ethnicity, class, race, social status to name but few. So, the research at hand attempts to investigate the link between gender and language convergence, focusing more on lexical choices and conversational styles in mixed gender online chats.

1. Research Motivation

Research on language and gender has been considered worthy of study. Also worthy of mention are those stereotypes of how women and men should speak and of how they actually do. Our interest to recheck and perhaps answer these questions is the main incentive behind conducting the present research.

2. Research Aims

Many studies on language and gender focus on the differences in the language used by males and females, but being convinced that there is no universal correspondence between gender and language, the research work at hand aims at examining the phenomenon of convergence in gender language, and analyzing the lexical and conversational styles adopted by both genders, not forgetting to put an eye on the context of conversation which is it mixed gender online chats.

3. Research Significance

Considering that the study of gender similarities in language is worthy of attention, the findings of this research can be significant in this area of investigation. This study may provide additional evidence for the literature in this field.

4. Research Questions

To meet the aims of this study, the following three main questions are addressed:

1. Does the difference in gender language still exist in mixed online chats?
2. To what extent the degree of convergence, focusing on lexical and conversational styles, occur in mixed gender online chats?
3. How can account for the existence of linguistic similarities in mixed gender online chats?

5. Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses have been put forth as anticipated answers to the research questions above:

- .1. We think there are no significant linguistic differences in mixed online chats

2. Linguistic convergence takes place at the levels of lexical and conversational styles but not at a large extent.

.3. Perhaps other variables such as age influence the similarities in mixed online chats.

6. Research Methodology

To achieve the aims of this research, the process of collecting data is based on an unstructured participant observation of the spaces of investigation. Moreover, for the collection of online chats, Second Year Master female and male students are asked for their consent to provide us with their mixed gender conversations via messenger platform. After careful reading, five online conversations are chosen and conversational analysis is opted for their analysis. For the same aims, the questionnaires are distributed to seventy-four female and male informants of the same sample.

7. Research structure

This dissertation is divided into two parts: the theoretical and practical parts. The theoretical part consists of two chapters. Chapter one is dedicated for a brief review of early work on language and gender along with the feminist contribution. The second chapter is devoted to gender and language of social media along with the basic concepts linguistic divergence and convergence. The second part includes one chapter that shows the characteristics of the target population, the data collection instruments used in this research, the data analysis and the discussion of the findings. It also recommends some implications, stresses the limitations of the study, and further research suggestions. This dissertation ends with a general conclusion which synthesizes the various procedures being opted for during the conduction of this research. In addition to the general conclusion, a list of references and appendices are provided. At last, it is worth mentioning that the whole work is written following the APA style 6th edition.

Chapter One: Overview about Language and Gender

1. Introduction

2. Defining Language

3. Defining Gender

4. Perspectives on Language and Gender

4.1. Deficit Theory

4.2. The dominant Theory

4.3. The Social Constructionist

5. The Relationship Between Gender and Language Use

6. Speech about Men and Women

a. Gender Stereotypes

b. Sexist Language

7. Conclusion

1.1.Introduction

Language is an essential human feature and perhaps in the words of Victoria Fromkin et al. (2003), language distinguishes them from animals. In any language, words are constructed in a certain way and the way of expressing those words has become different. Gender has been an essential variable for such linguistic differences. Additionally, its relation to language has become one of the major issues in sociolinguistics since the early 1970s, « do men and women really talk in a different way? », the language used by women is different from the language used by men their conversational styles in their daily conversations, this study highlights the need to re-examine the conversational styles that both genders respectively use on social-media.

1.2. Defining Language

Every physiologically and mentally typical person acquires in childhood the ability to make use of language, as both sender and receiver, of a system of communication that comprises a circumscribed set of symbols (e.g., sounds, gestures, or written or typed characters). The spoken form of a given language consists of noises resulting from movements of certain organs within the throat and mouth. These symbols may be hand or body movements, gestures, or facial expressions. By means of these symbols, people are able to impart information, to express feelings and emotions, to influence the activities of others, and to comport themselves with varying degrees of friendliness or hostility toward persons who make use of substantially the same set of symbols (Sapir, 1921).

Different systems of communication constitute different languages; the degree of difference needed to establish a different language cannot be stated exactly. No two people speak exactly alike; hence, one is able to recognize the voices of friends over the telephone and to keep distinct a number of unseen speakers in a radio broadcast. clearly, no one would say that they speak different languages (Bloch & Trager, 1993). Generally, systems of communication are recognized as different languages if they cannot be understood without specific learning by both parties, though the precise

limits of mutual intelligibility are hard to draw and belong on a scale rather than on either side of a definite dividing line.

Language is primarily human and non-instinctive (not inherent, innate) method of communicating ideas, emotions and desired by means of system of voluntarily (willingly, freely) produced symbols (Sapir; 1921). Language is human, it does not emerge automatically, but it requires atmosphere, symbols are important for language. Although animals can communicate this system lack the ability to communicate about something beyond the here, and now and they do not allow novel messages to be produced or understood(Sapir, 1921).

People use language everyday with little cognitive effort, language is used oral auditory, it is referred to as a speech channel. Language is the institution whereby humans communicate and interact each other by means of habitually-used oral-auditory arbitrary symbols (R.A. Hall. 1968)

Language is the source of communication of ideas that is to say it is system that human uses to convey messages and express thoughts with others, other ways of communication are dance, music, and physical gestures, but symbols(words) are exclusive for communication. According to Halliday language is an activity of four kinds speaking, listening, reading, and writing (Halliday, 1965).

1.3.Defining Gender

On the surface, there are males and females but if we include the term gender, we have to look at them as biologically constructed, socially constructed, individually constructed. Researchers(Heilman, 1983) it is used to think that there was a male brain and a female brain with different structures, outputs and capabilities and this is concerning the biological construction social construction that is to say each society, or culture trains male and female to behave in specific way last to be pointed at is individual constructed each individual constructs his or her own perception of his or her own gender, and decides how to portray that to the world.

These two norms are frequently misused for many reasons. It is not until 18th century that they were clearly defined and distinguished from each other. For example, in the revised edition of *Women, Men and Language* (1993), Coate substituted the term sex with the term gender, showing that scholars had adopted and realized the different concepts of sex and gender. In addition, sex and gender were equated as LGBTQ (lesbians, gays, bisexual, transgender and queer) was not common at the time; thus, sex and gender often coincide with each other. In China, sex and gender are translated the same as “Xingbie” through which we couldn’t detect any difference, misleading people to believe they are same. To be concise, sex identifies with one’s biological features while gender social construction shaped by factors like society, culture, and psychology. West and Zmimerman (1987) stated that sex is a biological category, which is unchangeable and determined by genetic codes: the presence of XX chromosomes for females and XY for chromosome pattern for male, while gender is not something we are born with, or something we have, but something we do. Knowing the difference between sex and gender is helpful in later research as the survey is conducted to learn language differences of different genders rather than of sex.

1.4.Perspectives on Language and Gender

1.4.1. Deficit Theory

Robin Lakoff's (1975) deficit approach describes male language as stronger, more respected, and more popular. She argues that women are socialized to behave like ladies (in language and otherwise), which in turn keeps them in their place because being lady gets in the way of being "strong". The deficit method is considered the first method to study language and gender. This approach, which began in the early 1970s, treats women as disadvantaged language users because their language conflicts with implicit male norms. The protagonist of this theory is Robin Lakoff. The overall picture from Lakoff's research is that women's language is generally inferior to that of men, reflecting their personal and social inferiority complex. Lakoff describes how women's

language styles include features that express insecurity, lack of confidence, and excessive respect or politeness" (Lakoff, cited in Finch: 2003, p. 137).

Robin Lakoff suggests that American women are largely limited to moderating their expressions by: One. Flag questions ("This election chaos sucks, isn't it?") and declarative tone rises (A: "When's dinner ready: "Six o'clock?") b. Use different types of hedges ("that's kind of sad" or "you know") C. Booster or amplifier ("I'm glad you're here") IE. Indirect (say, "Well, I have a dentist appointment", indicating that you are not willing to meet at the suggested time, and may ask the other person to suggest another appointment). e. small man (underpants) f. Euphemisms (to avoid profanity by using terms such as piffle or heck; use paraphrases such as going to the bathroom to avoid "vulgar" or taboo terms) G. Traditional courtesy; especially a form of showing respect to the recipient Language and Gender (2003)

From his point of view, Jespersen (1922) claimed that women's language is almost tasteless because women's language is more mature and they also use less vulgar expressions, while men are due to the nature of women's conversation, women's limited ways of speaking can quickly degenerate into a state of boredom. These points clearly illustrate how women are perceived as language deficient compared to men. Lakoff uses vocabulary that differs at the grammatical level. Additionally, she points out that women have more words to describe color, while men see color as otherworldly and insignificant. In contrast, men have larger vocabulary for sports and business.

1.4.2. The Dominance Theory

Dominance theory represents the power and dominance of men over women. According to those who believe this is true, the submissive role of women in society is reflected in language. The theory states that in mixed-gender conversations, men are more likely to interrupt than women. Language differences between men and women are also caused by unequal power relations between the sexes.

Men use their power to dominate each other Lakoff (1975) argues that men are dominant and women have no power. According to Lakoff, women are bound to be affected by weakness and subordinate to men. In their view, male dominance is the reason for their superiority in society and the subordination of women to men. She further observed that the language used by women has specific linguistic characteristics that indicate insecurity and lack of authority. However, the idea has been criticized for addressing gender disparities as the feminist movement has gone hand in hand with the anti-racism movement. Dominance theory, or more generally power-based theory, argues that men and women live in a cultural and linguistic world in which power and status are unevenly distributed. In other words, the theory focuses on male dominance and gender segregation. However, Lakoff's views on female impotence and indecision have been criticized by many scholars. In this context, Ward Haugh argues: "Dominance is clearly not a universal explanation for gender-linguistic differences".

1.4.3. The Social Constructionist

This theory as previous theories were criticized; researchers such as (Meng, 2011). Realized that constructivism was the answer to many of their problems, which led them to consider a new theory of language and gender. As such, this wave has drawn more attention to understanding gender as a component of social identity construction. In this case; Freeman B. (1996) explained that the use of language shapes understanding of the social world. He also added that language plays a crucial role in shaping relationships and building social identities. Likewise, Cameron (1992) argues that social identities are constructed during the interaction between men and women. Linguists interested in analyzing the makeup of gender identity/gender relations need to go beyond lexical analysis of choice as what, who, under what circumstances and with what consequences

In fact, Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003) claim that the main tenet of the constructivist model is the scientific view of gender as a social construct. Freeman and McElhinny agree, noting that studying the activities of men and women helps to

understand language as constituting reality. As a result, research has shifted from examining differences in positions between men and women to exploring similarities and differences in their languages. So, this will turn to framing gender differences as a social category. Gender differences are limited to a few aspects of social life, including class, race, etc. In the same line of thought, Sunderland (2004) argues that, in contrast to dominance theories, social construction theories of language and gender provide a model framework for the study of language and gender, and Sunderland (2004) concludes that this construction "transcends the spoken and written word".

1.5. The Relationship Between Gender and Language Use

According to Newman, et al (2008), texts generated by men and women were analyzed at the word level, looking for differences in the number of words used, types of words used, and topics discussed. Women talk more about people emotions, internal processes and thought processes; on the other hand, men talk more about external events and conversation topics typically associated with men, such as sports. Several areas revealed on difference in the language used by men versus the language used by women.

1.6. Speech about Men and Women

1.6.1. Gender Stereotypes

Gender stereotypes are common beliefs or prejudices about attributes of a certain group(Heilman, 1983). Stereotypes reflect common expectations of members of certain social groups, but even if there are general differences between these groups, not all individuals the samples in these groups will inevitably differ from each other. General stereotype imply that men are more aggressive, direct, assertive, strict, violent, and use harsher language and shorter sentences. Women are seen as very calm, gentle, talkative and good at describe things or situations, that's why they use more adjectives and pronouns. Gender stereotypes are people's perceptions of masculine and feminine

characteristics. The content of these stereotypes varies by culture and time. These expectations are often related to the role gender plays in their culture (Eagly, 1987, 1997; Koenig and Eagly, 2014).

Gender stereotypes shared assumptions about the different "natures" of men and women. Culture sees men as aggressive, independent and assertive, while women are considered emotional, sensitive, stressed, and docile. Conflicting evidence does not distract from these beliefs - immunity to empirical refutation is stereotypes, and there are mechanisms to perpetuate them. Expectations point the way observations are perceived, encoded, and interpreted, and gender stereotypes are normatively reflected femininity and masculinity, feminine and masculine concept. However, like all aspects of sex, what constitutes a stereotype of femininity or masculinity varies across cultures and other cultures historical time. Gender stereotypes often portray femininity and masculinity as binary opposites or dualisms, such as between sensibility and reason. Stereotype misrepresent the group they are trying to describe (Koenig and Eagly, 2014)

Stereotypes often persist, even when statistical reality, they used to be based on change. For example, stereotypes about women even in countries where most women work full-time, housewives have the upper hand Profession. Gender stereotypes are often generalizations of each gender role are neither positive nor negative; they are only for men and female attributes. Because everyone has personal wishes, thoughts and feelings, no matter what they are their gender, these stereotypes are so simplistic that they simply fail to characterize every person of every gender. While most people recognize that stereotypes are incorrect, many do still making gender assumptions, there are so many stereotypes we can all commit. For example, suppose that all women want to get married and have children, or that all men like to exercise, Women are fragile and not strong enough to go to college, they should obey, do as they say, not politicians never call the shots, like to sing, dancing, speaking of men, they like to work on cars and do "dirty jobs" like construction and mechanics, they are not secretaries, teachers or beauticians, they have fun Hiking, camping, fishing and other outdoor

activities, they are husbands and responsible, Always on top.

1.6.2. Sexist Language

Sexist language is the representation of men and women unequally, as if members of one sex less completely human and have fewer rights than members of the other sex. Sexist language also uses stereotypes of women and men, but more often the disadvantages of women (Labov, 1972) and (Zimmerman & West, 1975).

1. Examples:

“Women are the snares of Satan”, it means that Satan uses women as a tool to reach men. This denotes those women are source of evil.

“On woman’s tears, the sage sees only water”, it means that women are hypocrites and only pretend to be victims and that women are never sincere even when they are crying (double-faced creatures).

“A woman has long hair but short brain”, meaning that women are stupid and hide their stupidity in beautifying physically themselves.

2. The extent to which language systems are sexist:

The use of “men” to refer to both genders, the appearance of the word “man” in “woman” and “mankind”.

3. The extent to which some ways of language are sexist:

Instead of employing the pronouns “they”/“them”/“their” or “one” to refer to both genders, people use of the third singular person pronoun “he” /”him” / “his”.

1.8. Conclusion

Men and women are different not only from the biological part, but also from the way they use language because they don't think the same way and don't embrace situations the same way each one has his own life style and habits that control the way he interacted with others even when it comes to online-chat community. The aspect of society implicates a typical way of having image about the other(social stereotypes) including proverbs and sexist language that remain an obstacle for human language development and avoiding gender discrimination.

Chapter Two: Gender and Language of Social Media

Introduction

- 1. Gender Online Communication**
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 - a. Facebook**
 - b. Twitter**
 - c. Instagram**
- 5. Instant messaging tools**
 - a. WhatsApp**
 - b. Messenger**
 - c. Viber**
- 6. Language of online communication**
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- 9. conclusion**

2.1. Introduction

Since the publishing of Denmark linguist Otto Jespersen (1992)'s book *Language; It's Nature, Development and Origin* which he explored language disparities in different genders. Scholars across the world have been motivated to study language differences, given that gender languages differ from each other, they also share similarities. This paper proposed and tends to prove that gender language convergence exist in today's society.

2.2. Gender and Online Communication

When it comes to communication between men and women, there is a stereotype in society that women are verbally more polite, direct and powerful than men. According to Holmes (2001), women tend to speak less forcefully than men, and men tend to swear much more than women. For example, Holmes points out that many researchers have found that conversations in male conversations focus on movement, aggression, competition, teasing, and things, while in female conversations, conversations focus on self, feelings, relationships with others, family and life.

Women reportedly use more polite forms and give more compliments than men. Many studies have shown that men generally dominate conversations compared to women. In an experimental study of same-sex and mixed-sex group conversations among college students (1976); found that men in mixed-sex groups were more personally oriented, talked to individuals more frequently, and talked more about themselves and them feelings, whereas in an all-male environment, they were more focused on expressing competition and status.

However, women in mixed-gender groups have little contact with other women, allowing men to dominate the conversation. Women in the same group as men tend to assert themselves or take the lead. In the 1990s, when sociolinguists first discussed language on the Internet, it was believed that gender roles were more balanced because forms of communication were more anonymous than traditional or face-to-face

communication (Baron, 2004). Women are braver and more controversial than men. He explained that some of the reasons why women deviate from feminine styles may stem from the context of communicating with women who are trying to smear their disadvantaged users by sending messages to gain dominance over male users. This finding stands in stark contrast to the traditional communication cliché that women are less dominant than men.

Herring (2003) found that in online chat discussions, men tended to post longer messages and were often the ones who started and ended the conversation in mixed-gender groups. In contrast, women tend to post relatively short messages. Herring (2003) also found that women were more likely to thank, appreciate, apologize, and resent polite violations. Conversely, men generally care less about politeness. They break online codes of conduct and are often more vulnerable to freedom of speech than to appearing in the social faces of others, so men and women can communicate differently in any type of setting. The masculine style is characterized by reasoning: contempt, strong, often contradictory claims, tirade, frequent posting, self-promotion, and sarcasm.

While the feminine style is more reassuring, use the welcome phrases of appreciation, gratitude, and community building. In addition to helping and contributing in the form of advice (Herring, 1994).

2.3. Online Communication

With the advent of electronic media, there are arguably two modes of communication, verbal and non-verbal, but with the advent of the World Wide Web, there are many strategies that individuals can currently use to communicate with each other. The definition of online communication today refers to how people and computers communicate with each other through computers and the Internet. Not a shocking number; people are turning more to online communication than traditional forms because of its multiple focus, and the adaptability it provides for individuals to communicate with others across the globe.

At the touch of a button, guardians, children, and friends and relatives living in different corners of the world can be brought together. This communication framework also offers benefits to users who communicate their ideas more conveniently by writing them down on paper, which means writing them down in a chat window or email; expressing their considerations fairly. It also gives people the opportunity to change and correct what they need to communicate. As online communications are recorded, they may be retained for future reference and are known to be important, especially to legitimate potential clients. Online communication also saves a lot of time compared to having to show verbal communication on both sides, because users can continue to communicate flawlessly while doing different things.

Generally speaking, online communication refers to the ways in which people and computers can communicate with each other over a computer network such as the Internet. These channels include: chat rooms, email, instant messaging and social networking sites.

2.4. Online Communication Features

- a. Online communication makes a kind of semi-Speech that's between speaking and composing, and comparable to face-to face intelligent. According to (Lee S.J :2009);
- b. It may be a way of data trade, which is abnormal, compared to face-to-face interaction, however they are discussions, as expressed by (Gem: 2003);
- c. The nearness of shortened forms, unconventional punctuation and incorrect spelling, as well as the use of visual like emojis, as detailed by Lee, L Toyoda. & Harrison (2002);
- d. It depends on both writing and reading aptitudes Abram's (2003) states that it is different frame of verbal talk in its composed scripts. Hence, users may require more time for the comprehension of the input and the output;

e. Linguistic economy seen through abbreviations, clippings, orthographic reduction, shortening, ellipsis, as stated by Ferrara, Brunner, and Whitemore, 1991; Murry, 1990; Werry, 1996);

f. Averianava (2012 :15) states that the one of the kind etymological and iconographic features of electronic composing include but are not restricted to imaginative abbreviation (acronyms, logograms, letter-numeral hybrids and letters- morpheme substitutes, vowel deletion, etc.) Emoticons abbreviated rearranged language structure disregard of capitalization rules, etc.;

g. The creation of modern implies to communicate feelings and facial expressions. They invited linguistic gadgets like onomatopoeia (e.g.: LOL = laugh out loud) and keyboard symbols, smiles (e.g.: :), . They are commonly used in E-discourse to make up for the absence of paralinguistic features of real time communication. (Lee, 2001, 2006).

2.5. Main Online Communication Tools

Among the exceptionally essential communication tools accessible in any online environment, we have:

2.5.1. Social Networking

According to the site, Little Trade aims to create bundles, trade data, and scale as an essential part of social life in an ultra-modern world. Social networks are invaluable tools for web presentations because they provide an easy-to-use and deeply open platform for sharing articles and curating information for illustrative purposes, if someone likes to contribute to your business web, journal or website. Comment, please share with their peers (friends) on Facebook, Twitter, etc.

2.5.2. Facebook

Facebook is a popular free social networking site that allows registered users to create profiles, upload photos and videos, send messages, and keep in touch with friends, family, and colleagues. Available in 37 different languages, the site was originally developed for college students but is now open to anyone over the age of 13. Every Facebook profile has a "wall" where friends can post comments. Because the wall is visible to all of the user's friends, wall stickers are essentially open conversations. So it's usually best not to post personal information on your friends' walls. Instead, you can send a private message that will appear in his or her private inbox, similar to an email.

2.5.3. Twitter

It is a social networking site that allows users to post short messages that are visible to other users. These messages are called tweets and are no longer than 140 characters. Users find Twitter to be used for many different purposes, including basic communication between friends and family, as a way to promote campaigns, or as a customer relationship tool for businesses to communicate with customers. Founded in 2006, Twitter had an estimated 4 to 5 million users as of 2008, making it the third-largest social networking site after Facebook and Myspace.

2.5.4. Instagram

Instagram is an American social networking service for sharing Facebook-owned photos and videos. It was created by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger and launched in October 2010. It also allows you to use filters and send messages to friends.

2.5.5. Instant Messaging

Instant messaging, often abbreviated as IM or IM'ing, is the near real-time exchange of messages through stand-alone applications or embedded software. Unlike chat rooms where many users participate in multiple overlapping conversations, IM conversations typically take place in private back-and-forth communication between two users.

2.5.6. WhatsApp

Launched in 2009, WhatsApp quickly became one of the most popular messaging apps — it now has as many as 1.5 billion monthly users from more than 180 countries, sending 60 billion messages a day. WhatsApp is free and lets you make audio and video calls over Wi-Fi or data, bypassing international call charges. When it comes to ease of use and security, it's unrivaled.

2.5.7. Messenger:

Facebook Messenger is a free mobile messaging app for instant messaging, photo sharing, video sharing, recording and group chats. The free downloadable app allows you to communicate with your Facebook friends and mobile contacts.

2.5.8. Viber:

Viber is a mobile messaging app that allows users to make free calls, send text messages and pictures, and it also offers a lot of free user data to anyone who wants to listen. According to researchers at the University of New Haven in Connecticut, the Viber app sends user information -- including photos, videos, graffiti, and location images -- in unencrypted form. Viber recently reached a major milestone: 100 million concurrent users.

2.6. Language of Online Communication

As John Paolillo said in the introduction to an article on virtual language communities; "If we really want to understand how the Internet shapes our language, it is important that we try to understand how the Internet uses different language changes body (cited in Crystal: 2011). It is important to note that, as we will see, the web is probably the primary combined medium associated with speech; why many authors usually refer to internet language as written language. It can be is composed electronic dialogue, which is often studied as composed speech.

It is also known as Netspeak communication; it consists of Net, which refers to the network and language, including written and spoken. It can substitute for electronic dialogue when the focus is on interactive and conversational elements, Internet language or computer-based communication, and when the focus is on the medium itself. It is important to recover our information about the nature of spoken and written language and the components that separate them. Discourse can be timeless, face-to-face, socially intelligent, freely organized, instantly modifiable, rhythmically prosperous. On the other hand, writing in typical space-constrained art is externally decontextualized, truly communicative, well-structured, always modifiable and graphic-rich (Crystal D, 2011). However, it's important to note that Netspeak and face-to-face communication can be easily confused because they are different, as previous communication required unbiased feedback.

Messages sent over the network are complete and one-way. Momentary contrast is the first to be slower in the rhythm of the interaction, which can last from an instant to a longer time. Third, Nestspeak requires all the paralinguistic cues essential for face-to-face interaction, but they provide so-called emojis and emojis. As a result, the way people connect has changed, face-to-face communication is no longer essential, and people can communicate through email, chat, video conferencing and social systems, which can change the era of "online communication".

2.7. Linguistic divergence

1.Vocabulary

a. Insult terms: for men insults terms attack intellectual capability, physical strength, and masculinity. For women insult terms attack sexuality; while, insults for both are fairly generic.

b. Symmetry and Asymmetry

- Symmetry:Terms used to represent males and get equal usage and scope of use as terms used to represent females.
- Asymmetry:Terms used to represent males and females, the do not get equal usage and scope of use.

Symmetry	Asymmetry
Horse (adult generic)	Human (adult generic)
Stallion (adult male)	Man (adult male, human generic)
Mare (adult female)	Women (adult female)
Foal (young generic)	Child (young generic)
Colt (young male)	Boy (young male)
Filly (young female)	Girl (young female)

Table 2. Symmetry and Asymmetry terms

c. Titles

Superior	Inferior
Gentleman	Lady
Boy	Girl
Bachelor	Spinster
	Bachelorette

d. **Unmarked and Marked Terms:** Unmarked terms represent terms without specific ending indicating that the words are only used to talk about females, on the other hand; marked terms are terms with specific endings indicating that the words are only used to talk about males or only used to talk about females.

Male	Female
Prince	Princess
Count	Countess
Duke	Duchess
Waiter (unmarked)	Waitress (marked)
Actor(unmarked)	Actress (marked)
Host (unmarked)	Hostess (marked)
Comedian(unmarked)	Comedienne (marked)

Table 2. Marked and Unmarked terms

e. **Semantic derogation:** A word that is normally positive takes on a negative connotation in specific situations.

Table 3. Semantic derogation

2. Speaking like a Male or a Female

a. **Verbosity:** Do men speak more than women or do women speak more than man?

Studies are inconclusive. Within certain contexts, women are more verbose, and in other contexts men are more verbose, closely linked to power dynamics.

b. **Turn-Taking and Interrupting:** Who takes more turns and interrupts more frequently in a conversation?

Studies are inconclusive. Within certain contexts, women take more turns and interrupt more, and in other contexts, men take more turns and in interrupt more, personality plays a key role.

3. **Back Channel Support:**

4. Does the listener support the speaker through active listening strategies, eye contact and facial expressions?

The listener encourages the speaker to keep speaking by saying things like (Really? / Wow, that is interesting! /. I didn't know that. / Asking open ended questions/ Interested facial expression. / Forward leaning posture.) slightly more use of back-channel support by women.

a. **Mitigating:**

strategies and words that we use in order to decrease the power of what we are saying, there are three tools that are used:

1. Hedging: hesitation (sort of, kind of, um)

2. Epistemic Modals: reducing forcefulness (should, could, may)

3. Other Mitigators: (possibly, probably)

People with less power in a situation mitigate more and people with more power in situation, mitigate less.

e. Rising Intonation: Adds a questioning tone, or degree of uncertainty to a statement.

For example: "I'm going out tonight." Certain.

"I'm going out tonight?" Uncertain

The use of rising intonation is much more frequently used by females, particularly, female teenagers.

2.8. Linguistic Convergences

The strategy whereby individuals adapt to each other's communicative behaviors in terms of a wide range of linguistic-prosodic-nonverbal features including speech rate, pausal phenomena, and utterance length, phonological variants, smiling, gaze, and so on" (Giles et al., 1991: 7).

Convergence in gender languages can be reflected in various levels such as lexical expressions and conversational level. In these two levels, emotional words, topic nomination, turn-taking, tag questions represent detailed aspects to research on. Limited by the form of questionnaire, this study will center around vocabulary choices including following four aspects:

1. Intensifiers

Intensifier refers to adverbs that add a high degree of intensity to words it modify but have no contribution to the propositional meaning of a clause. It is used to strengthen intonation and emotion. Words like really, pretty, quite, so, absolutely, extremely are some examples of intensifiers. According to Lakoff and other scholars, females tend to use more intensifiers than males. Digging the rationale behind this phenomenon, it is not difficult to tell, by applying intensifiers, women want to catch more attention from others, revealing their lack of confidence and subordinate role to men. Today, it seemed unclear if this is still the case as women's place in society has been lifted in past years.

2. Hedges

Hedges are employed to avoid giving a direct or exact answer or promise, showing speakers' uncertainty and tentativeness. Expressions like I think, you know, sort of, kind of, It seems, maybe, perhaps, well, I guess are some examples of hedges. In previous studies, hedges are found more often used by women rather than men. Women's use of hedges is viewed as a sign of their weakness and inferior position to men (Lakoff, 1973). Compared with men's dominance in a conversation, women seem to be less confident in their speech. However, with the uprising of female's position in all walks of life and male's participation in some typical female industries, this conclusion remains a question.

3. Swear words

Swear words stand as socially taboo words or phrases used in swearing or cursing. They are usually profane or obscene. Most English swear words are four-letter words such as fuck, damn, and hell. It has been a convention that it is acceptable for males to articulate these words but not for females. The primary reason for the unfair judgment can be traced back to society's different expectations toward men and women. Women are raised and cultivated not to speak any swear words because a lady should be polite, affiliative and linguistically correct. As a result, women speak less swear words than men. In today's life, women are emancipated to air their voices with fewer constraints, therefore they may use swear words as much as men do. Also, men may use less swear words than before as they attend coed school and enjoy same education environment with women.

4. Interjections

Interjection can be any member of a class of words expressing emotion or remark after an abrupt action such as Oh My God/ Goddess! Ugh! Oh Dear! Dear me! Oh no! Similar with intensifiers, interjections are common in female speech. In Sun Weiqi (2015)'s study on linguistic gender difference—Based on the Corpus of Lines of Friends, she found male accounts for only 25.9 % of using the phrase Oh My God while female 74.1%.

2.6. . Conclusion

Chapter two is a summary of the most significant investigations in the filed of language and gender. The differences in language have been examined and over viewed from many angles that is why many theories and approaches were included to

provide a significant result. Men and women do communicate differently using both written and spoken form, but for some reasons the context of the communication do control them at the lexical level, and this might be applied on the non-virtual life (social media) .

Chapter three Research Methodology, Data Analysis and Interpretation

- 3. 1. Introduction
- 3.2. Research Design
 - 3.2.1. Mixed method: Qualitative and Quantitative approaches
- 3.3. Setting, Population and Sampling of the Study
 - 3.3.1. Setting
 - 3.3.2. Population and Sampling
 - 3.3.2.1. University EFL Students
 - 3.3.2.2. Excerpts of online chats
- 3.4. Data Collection Instruments
 - 3.4.1. Description of the Questionnaire
 - 3.4.2. Description of Conversation
- 3.5. Data Analysis and Interpretation of the Findings
 - 3.5.1. The analysis of the questionnaire
 - 3.5.1.1. Discussion of the questionnaire's results
 - 3.6.2. Mixed Gender Online Chats Analysis
 - 3.6.2.1. Discussion of the online Chats' results
- 3.7. Synthesis of the Main Findings (both questionnaire and CA)
- 3.8. Recommendations
- 3.9. Suggestions for further Research
- 3.10. Limitations
- 3.11. Conclusion

3.1.Introduction

In an attempt to meet the aims of the present study and answer the research questions, this chapter emphasizes the methodological design and the discussion of the results obtained. It, thus, presents how the investigation was conducted; encompassing profound descriptions of how the sample is selected, how data are collected, what questions are asked, how they are analyzed and how the obtained data are interpreted.

3.2. Research Design

Undoubtedly, the research design is the fundamental step of any research after determining the problem and setting of the hypothesis. According to Zikmund and Babin (2007), the research design provides a framework or plan of action for the research. On this basis and due to the nature of the research problem investigated, we opted for a mixed method in the current study. More precisely, the details of the research design planned for the study at hand are demonstrated in the figure 3.1.below:

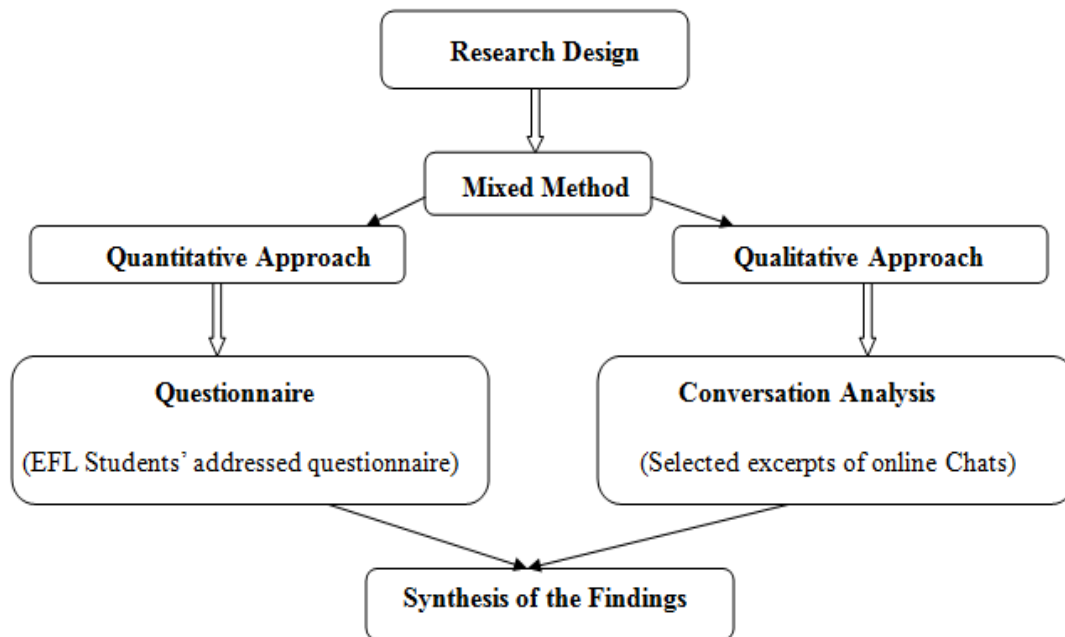


Figure 3.1. The research design of the present study

3.3. Mixed Method: Qualitative and Quantitative approaches

This research aims at examining the conversational styles female and male chatters use in their daily online chats, focusing on the degree of convergence that may occur in mixed gender online chats and the reason behind their use. To achieve these aims, a mixed method is the suitable methodology. We opt to have both quantitative, and qualitative methods using questionnaire distributed to a sample consisting to seventy four (74) third year female and male bachelor students studying at IbnKhalidoun University of Tiaret. According to Kothari (2004), a quantitative study is based on the measurement of quantity or amount. It is applicable to the phenomenon that can be expressed in terms of quantity. It includes frequencies, percentages, tables, charts and diagrams to characterize the sample.

In addition to this quantitative tool, a qualitative method is employed. Gray and Airasian (2000) as quoted in Yilmaz (2013: 311) reported that the qualitative approach is “the collection of extensive data on many variables over an extended period, in a naturalistic setting, in order to

gain insights not possible using other types of research”. In this regard, an analysis of seven (7) online chats is employed to get in-depth facts from participants and avoid possible errors when dealing with numerical details. For the collection of online chats, some students from the same sample are asked for their consent to provide us with their mixed gender online chats that are selected on several criteria identified.

3.3. Setting, Population and Sampling of the Study

3.3.1. Setting

The present research investigation is conducted at the University Ibn Khaldoun of Tiaret, more precisely, at the department of English. Ibn Khaldoun University is a public higher education institution located in a small city named Tiaret in the south-west of the capital of Algiers, in the western region of high plains, and about 150 km from the Mediterranean coast.

3.3.2. Population and Sampling of the Study

Selecting an appropriate sample in any research project is of vital importance. Schofield(2006: 26) argues that “the aim of sampling is to save time and effort, but also to obtain consistent and unbiased estimates of the population status in terms of whatever being researched”. Put simply, the sample is a set of elements selected from the empirical investigation, whereas population is a group of people whom the research project is about.

The target population in our study is EFL students enrolled in the faculty of letters and Foreign Languages at the University of Ibn Khaldoun of Tiaret, (Algeria).

3.3.2.1. University EFL Students

In the study at hand, for the questionnaire method; a random sample which is relatively a group of seventy four (74) first year EFL students is selected. It is assumed that this sample is representative of the target population. It is worth mentioning that both students’ gender and age

are variables of interest in this study; other variables such as class and location are not taken into consideration. The respondents consist of twenty four (24) males and fifty (50) females.

3.3.2.2. Excerpts of Online Chats

For the collection of the online chats, a group of the same sample selected for the questionnaire method is asked for their consent to join them in some of their mixed gender online chats. As non participant observers, we have been good patient listeners who have maintained non judgmental manner and asked relevant questions. It must be said that the participants were reluctant to do so before explaining to them the aim of our research. Therefore, they were guaranteed anonymity for ethical reasons.

After the collection of many online chats, seven excerpts are selected based on the presence of some elements (turn taking, interruption, politeness...) we need to analyse using conversational analysis method.

3.4. Data Collection Instruments

Needless to say, data collection is an important part in any research study. It is about gathering answers to the research questions that the researcher has formulated. To this end, for the present study, after being convinced of the significance of the triangulation method, two methodological instruments are used: a questionnaire and a conversational analysis.

3.4.1. Description of the Questionnaire

The designed questionnaire contains 9 questions. Each questions tends to achieve a specific objective. Below is the analysis of each question separately.

3.4.2. Description of Conversation Analysis

After several readings of the collected online chats, seven excerpts were selected on the basis of the criteria shown in the description of the conversational analysis as a methodological tool. Here is a selection of the participants' online chats and their analysis using conversation analysis:

_grey color Female speaker

_Move color Male speaker

3.5. Data Analysis and Interpretation of the Findings

3.5.1. The Questionnaire Analysis

The designed questionnaire contains nine (9) questions with four (4) sections. Each question tends to achieve a specific objective. Below is the analysis of each question separately.

1. Personal information

The respondents were asked about their gender and age.

Table 1: the distribution of the sample

Gender	Number of students	Percentage
Female	50	67.6%
Male	24	32.4%
Age (more than 18)	74	100%
Total	74	100%

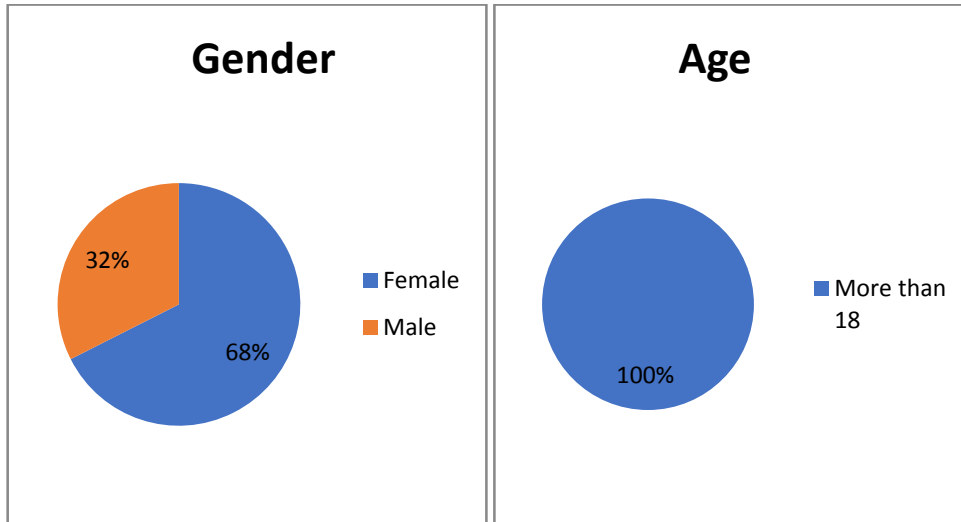


Figure 1: The distribution of the sample

The sample is not very evenly split between female, and male students presented in the table (1.1) indicates that the majority of the respondents are females (68%) (50), while males constitute only (32%)(24). It was difficult to find male students to fill in the detailed questionnaire, besides; immediately after sending them the questionnaires, they appeared to show very limited curiosity to know about the issue.

For the age variable, it can be easily noticed that all the participants are more than 18 years old.

Question 2: Do you chat online to communicate with people? Say why please?

Gender	Students who chat online for the purpose of communication	Students who do not chat online for the purpose of communication
Female	50	0
Male	24	0
Total	74	0

Table 2: Chatting Online to communicate with people

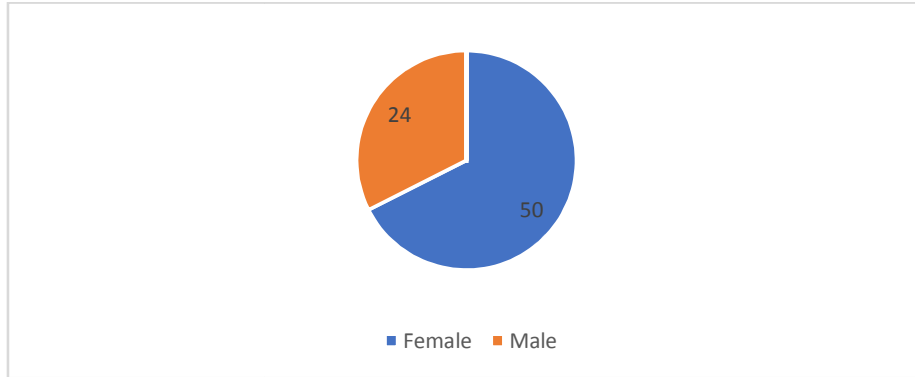


Figure 2: Chatting Online to communicate with people

The sample shows that 100% of the students divided into (24 % for females and 50% for males) use online chats because it became a tool of communication that save time and make a person in touch with his community

Question 3: Do you prefer to be involved in : same-gender online chat or mixed-gender online chat?

Gender	Same-gender online chat	Mixed-gender online chat
Female	24	26
Male	3	21
Total	27	47
Percentage	36.5%	63.5%

Table 4: Expressing Preference about joining same or mixed-gender online chats

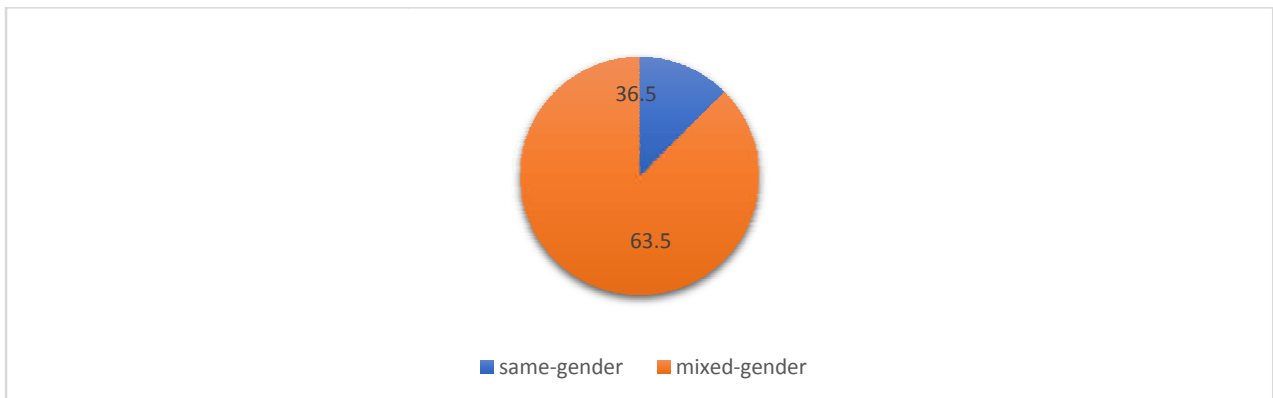


Figure 3: Expressing preference about joining same or mixed-gender

Figure 3 indicates that while (87.5%) of males prefer to join mixed gender online chats, only (12.5%) of them prefer to be involved in same-gender online chats. In the same context, for females the statistics are different, (52%) of them prefer mixed-gender chats and (48%) of them prefer same-gender chats. So, as we can see, more than the half are ready to be involved in mixed with the other gender .

Question 5: Do you use the same conversational style when chatting online with male and/or female partners?

Gender	Students who use the same conversational styles	Students who use different conversational styles
Female	9	41
male	10	14
Total	19	55
Percentage	25.7%	74.3%

Table 5: The conversational styles used when chatting with the opposite gender

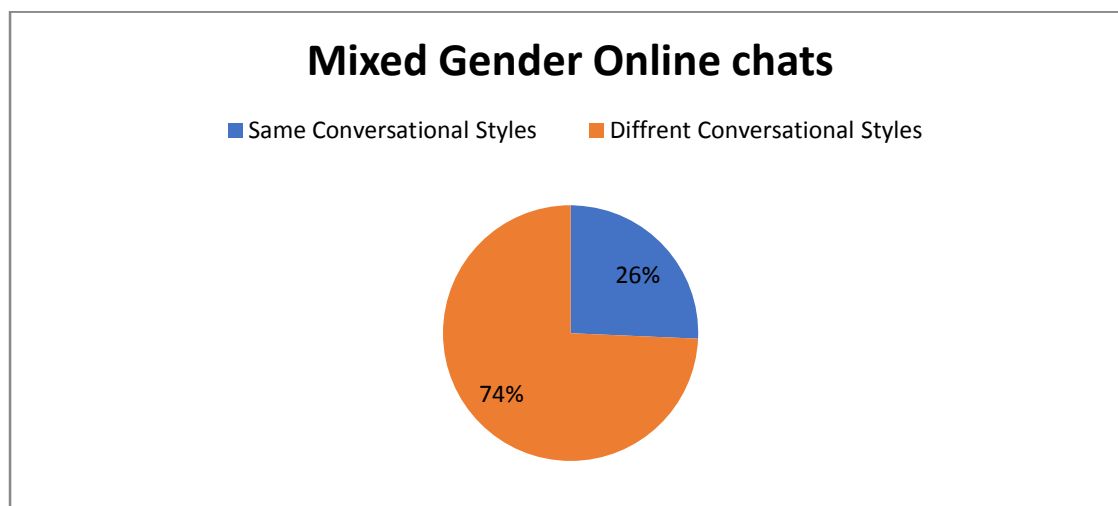


Figure 5: The conversational styles used when chatting with the opposite gender

The sample above shows that (82%) of females use different conversational style when they chat with the other gender than the style they use when they chat with the same gender, and (18%) of them use the same conversational style to communicate with both genders; while for males the

number was split, for (58%) use different conversational style and (48%) use the same style with both genders that is to say (74.3) of students change their conversational style.

Question 6: Do you notice any conversational similarities when it comes to online mixed-gender chats?

Gender	Yes	No
Female	30	20
Male	12	12
Total	42	32
percentage	56.8%	43.2%

Table 6: The conversational similarities noticed when it comes to online mixed-gender chats

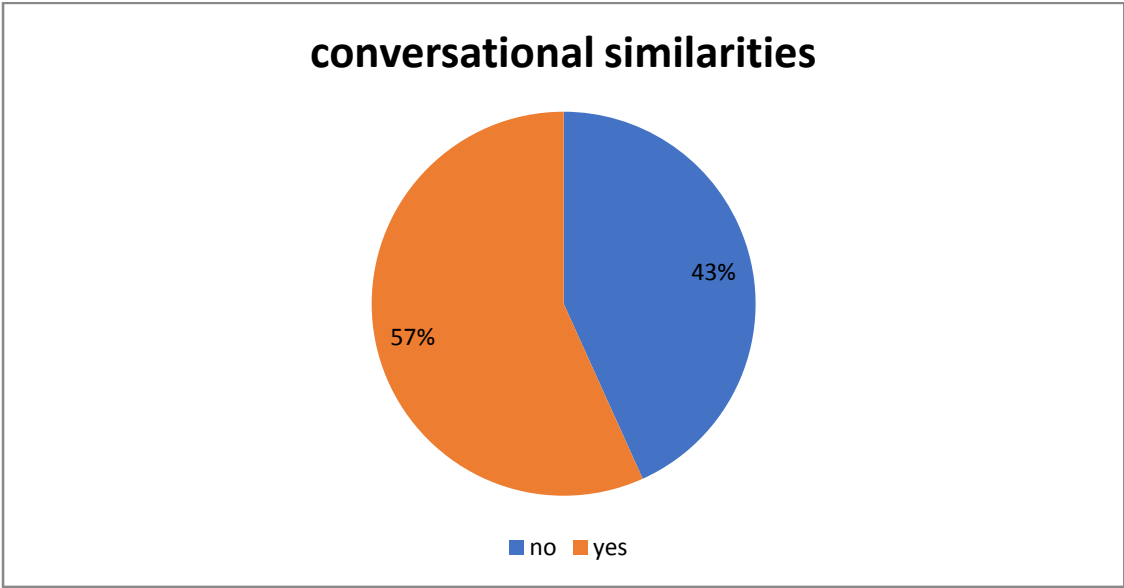


Figure 6: The conversational similarities noticed when it comes to online mixed-gender chats

The data obtained show that (57%) of both genders notice that there are conversational similarities when it comes to online mixed-gender chats while (43%) agreed that there are no similarities.

Question 7: what do you perceive about the following statements?

A. Males and females initiate topics during online mixed-gender chats

Gender	Agree	Disagree	Undecided
Female	21	12	17
Male	12	5	7
Total	33	17	24
Percentage	44.6%	23%	32.4%

Table 7: Initiating topics during online mixed chats

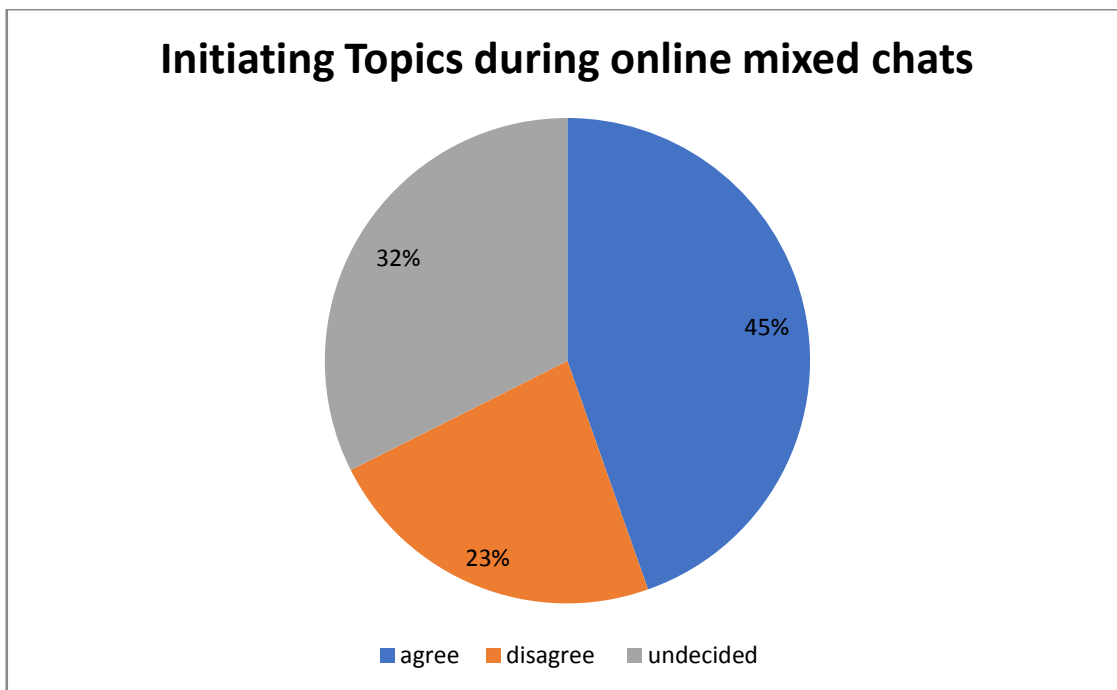


Figure 7: Initiating topics during online mixed chats

From the statistics we have, it appears that the majority of students agree that both males and females initiate topics during the chats.

B. Both males and females may use interruption during online mixed-gender chats

Gender	Agree	Disagree	Undecided
Female	27	15	8
Male	16	2	6
Total	43	17	14
Percentage	58%	23%	19%

Table 8: Using interruption during the conversation.

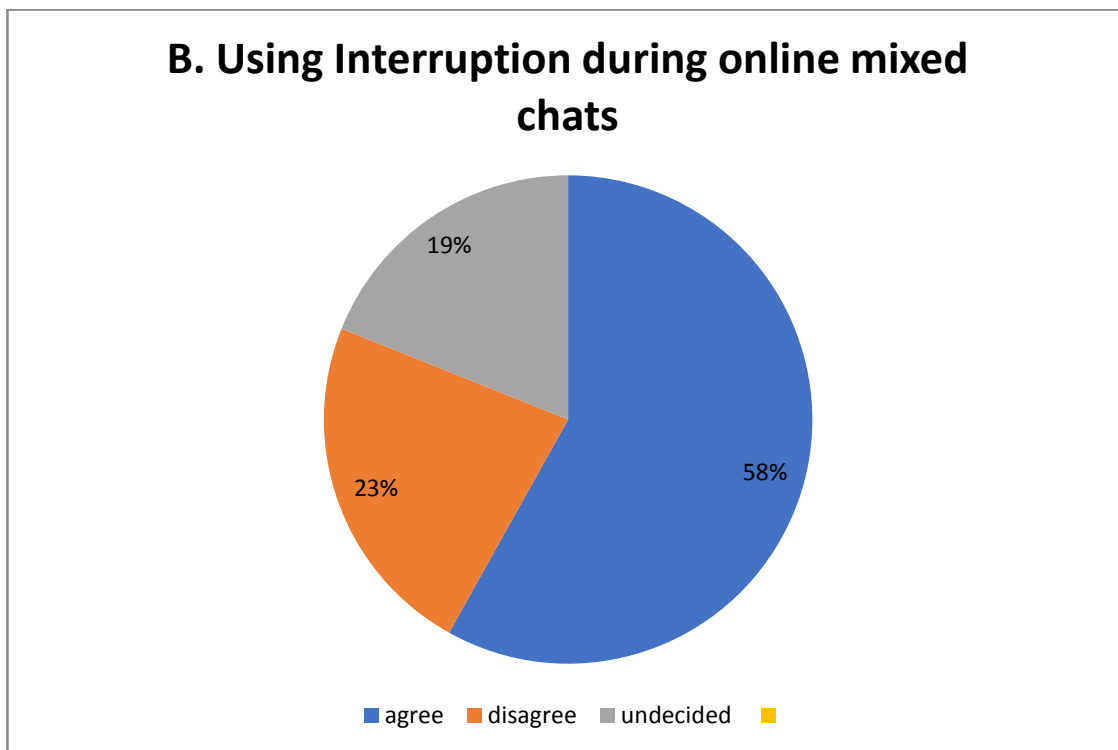


Figure 8: Using interruption during the conversation.

The findings displayed in figure 8 reveal that the majority (58%) agree that interruption might exist from both sides.

C. Both males and females may repair online conversation after silence (pauses)

Gender	Agree	Disagree	Undecided
Female	27	10	13
Male	16	3	5
Total	43	13	18
Percentage	58%	18%	24%

Table 9: Repair conversation after silence

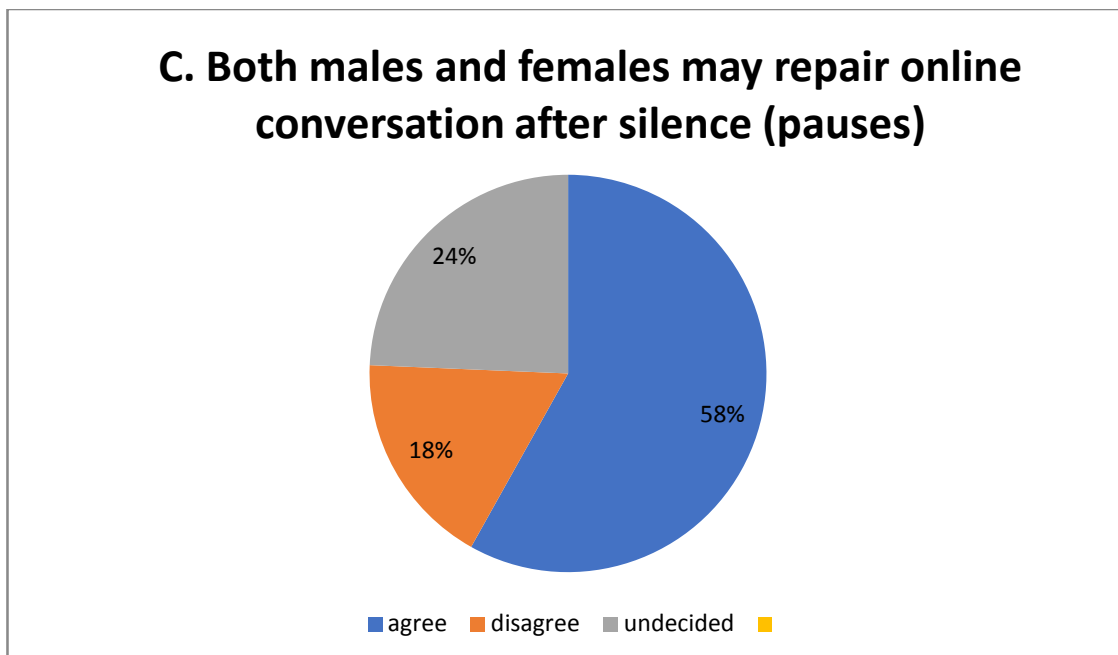


Figure 9: Repair conversation after silence

The data collected show that the majority of students with a percentage of (58%) agreed that both males and females may repair a conversation after silence .

D. Both males and females may use aggressive language (swear words) during online mixed-gender chat

Gender	Agree	Disagree	Undecided
Female	28	17	5
Male	15	8	1
Total	43	25	6
percentage	58%	34%	8%

Table 10: Using aggressive language (swear words) during online mixed-gender chats

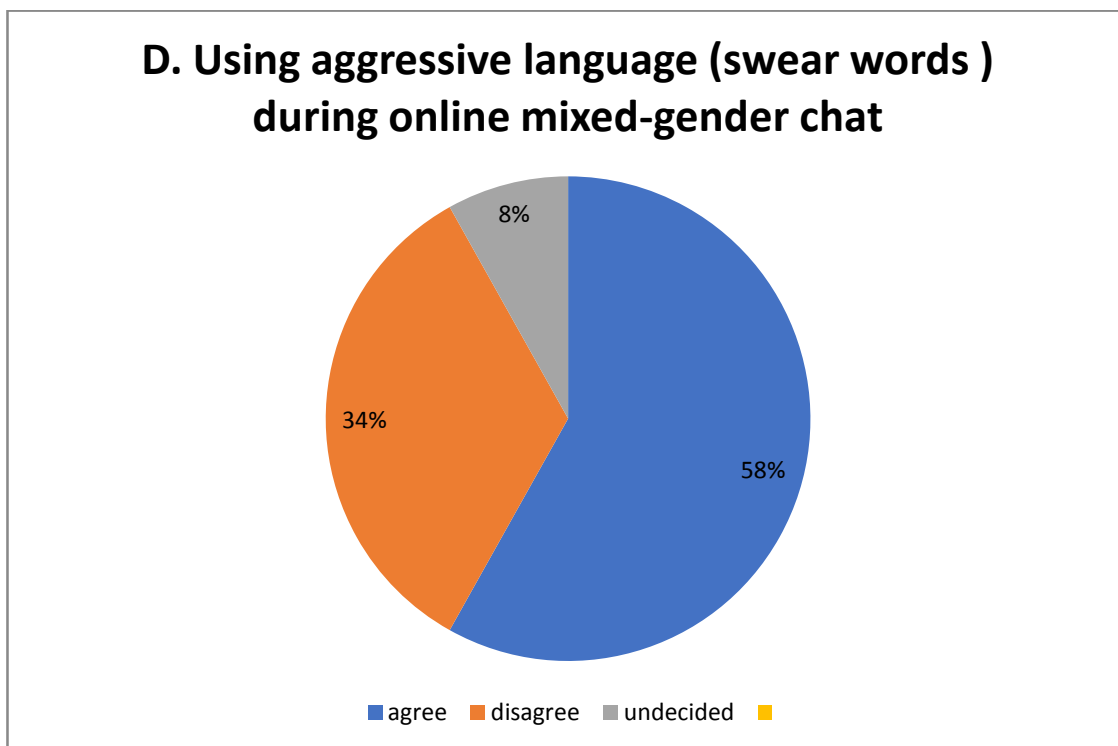


Figure10: Using aggressive language (swear word) during online mixed-gender chats

It can be noticed that there is an agreement, presented by (58%) of the students of both genders, indicating that both males and males may use an aggressive language and swear word during online chats .

E. Both males and females can control the so-called males' topics (talking about sport, cars ...)

Gender	Agree	Disagree	Undecided
Female	32	12	6
Male	8	12	4
Total	40	24	10
Percentage	54%	32%	14%

Table 11: Controlling the so-called males' topics

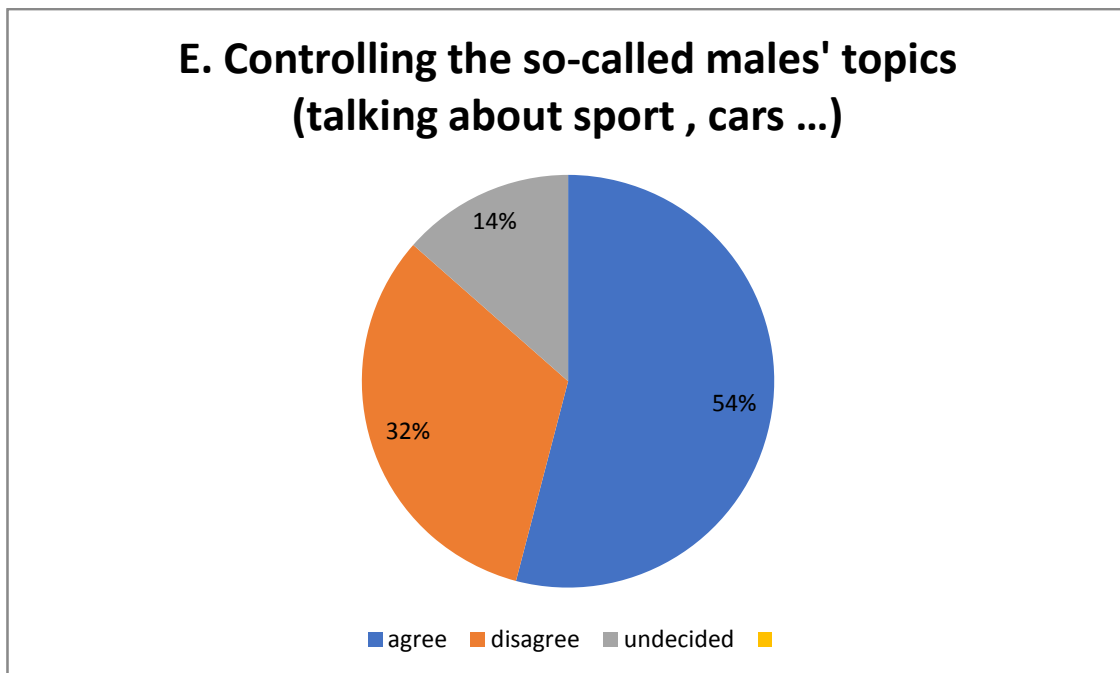


Figure 11: Controlling the so called males' topics

Having a look at figure 11, one can say that (54%) of both males and females said that both males and females are able to control male topics whereas 32% of the same sample disagreed. It is of importance also to mention that 14% of the participants are undecided

F. Both males and females may have the same amount and length of turn taking in mixed gender online chats

Gender	Agree	Disagree	Undecided
Female	12	21	17
Male	10	8	6
Total	22	29	23
Percentage	30%	39%	31%

Table 12: length of turn taking in mixed gender online chats

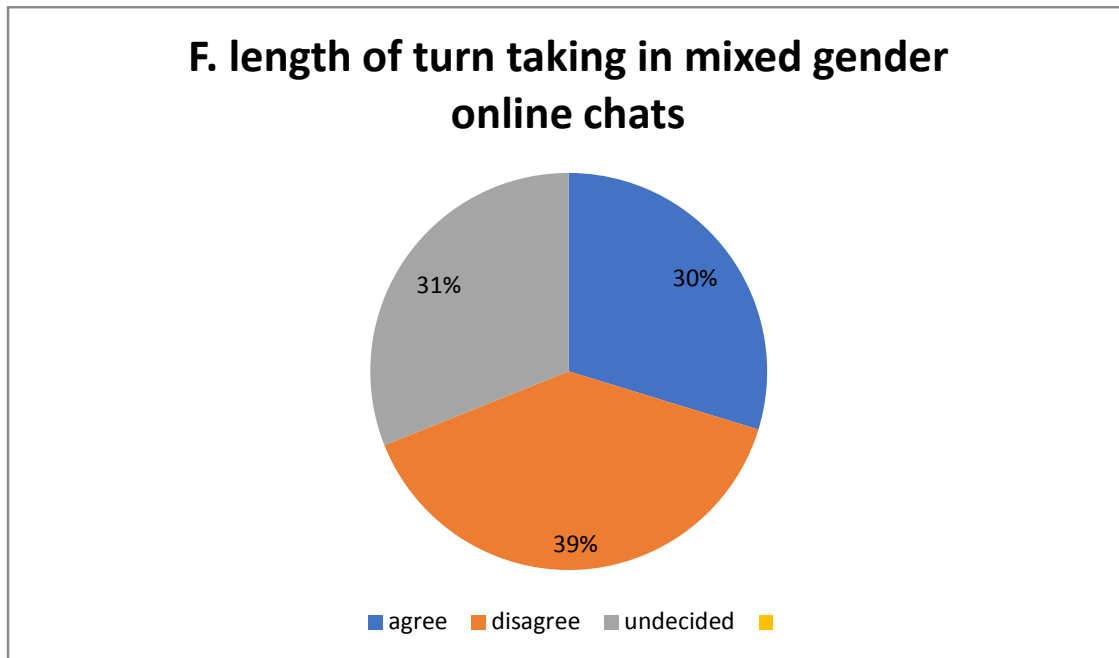


Figure 12: length of turn taking in mixed gender online chats

Figure 12 shows a split of decision. (39%) of the informants disagreed with statement that says (bothmales and females have the same amount of turn talking), (30%) agreed and (31%) of the student couldn't decide.

G. Both males and females may use the same hedges (y’know...), tag questions, and polite forms in mixed gender online chats

Gender	Agree	Disagree	Undecided
Female	33	10	7
Male	14	8	2
Total	47	18	9
Percentage	64%	24%	12%

Table 13:Using hedges (y’know...) ,tag questions ,and polite forms in mixed gender online chats

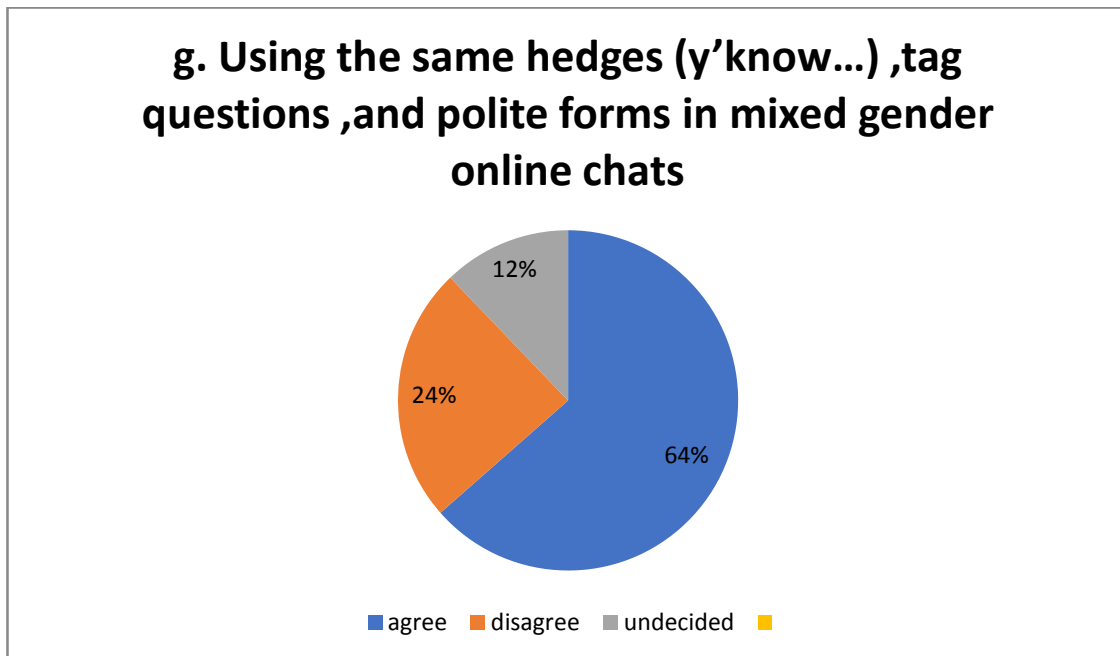


Figure 13:Using hedges (y’know...) ,tag questions ,and polite forms in mixed gender online chats.

The data displayed in figure 13 show that the majority of student with a percentage of (64%) agreed that both males and females use the same hedges, tag questions, and a polite forms in mixed-gender online chats.

Question 8: Do you think that convergence exists among participants, i.e.: males and females adapt each communicative behaviors/styles in mixed gender online chats?

Gender	Yes	No
Female	37	13
Male	17	7
Total	54	20
Percentage	73%	27%

Table 14: The existence of linguistic convergence (adapting each communicative behaviors/styles) in mixed gender online chats?

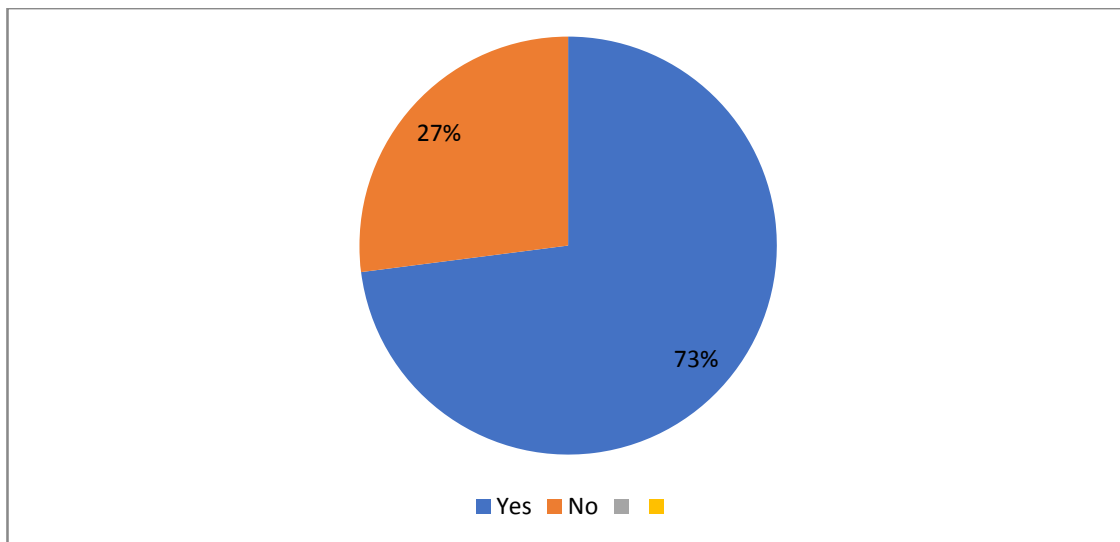


Figure 14: The existence of linguistic convergence (adapting each communicative behaviors/styles) in mixed gender online chats?

It can be easily noticed that, according to figure 14, the majority of students (73%) ticked the option 'yes' which confirms on the existence of convergence among participants while only 27% of the total sample expresses the contrary by selecting the option 'No'.

Question 9: Do you think there are factors affecting linguistic convergence in mixed gender online chats (conversational and lexical levels)?

Gender	Yes	No
Female	37	13
Male	17	7
Total	54	20
Percentage	73%	27%

Table 15: The presence of factors affecting linguistic convergence in mixed gender online chats (conversational and lexical levels)

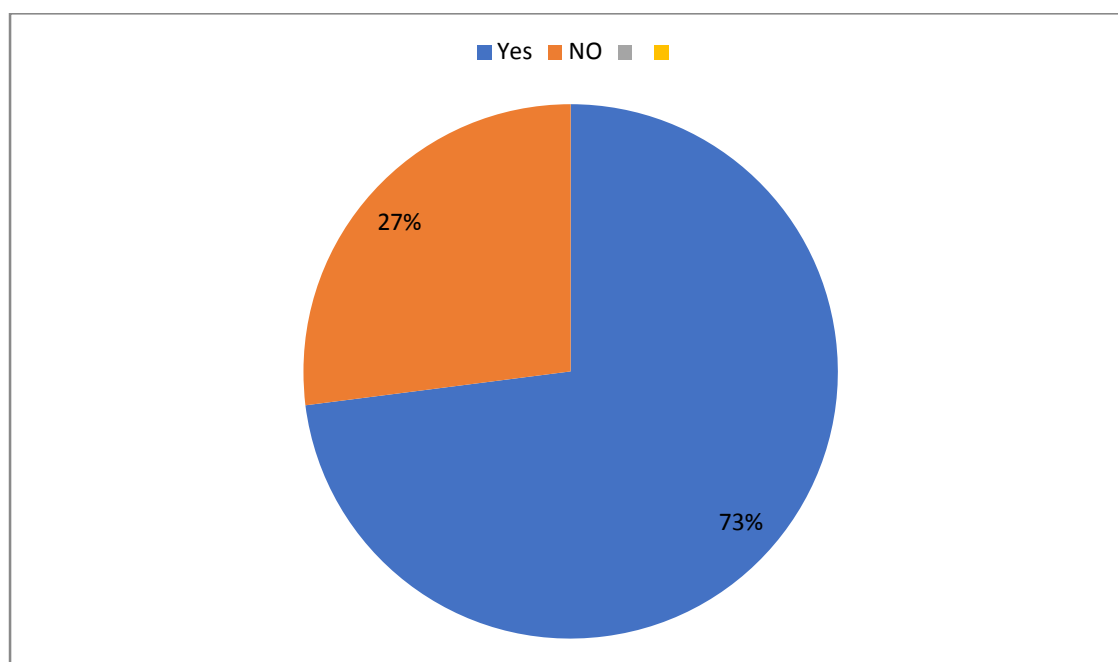


Figure 15: The presence of factors affecting linguistic convergence in mixed gender online chats (conversational and lexical levels)

9.1. If yes, please specify?

- The issue of inequality
- Gender roles and gender stereotypes
- The nature of the topic
- The context of (what, when, where...) the online chat takes place
- Others?.....

Gender	A	B	C	D	E
Female	1	11	6	3	0
Male	1	7	3	0	0
Total	2	18	9	3	0
Percentage	6%	56%	28%	10%	0%

Table 16: The factors affecting linguistic convergence in mixed gender online chats (conversational and lexical levels)

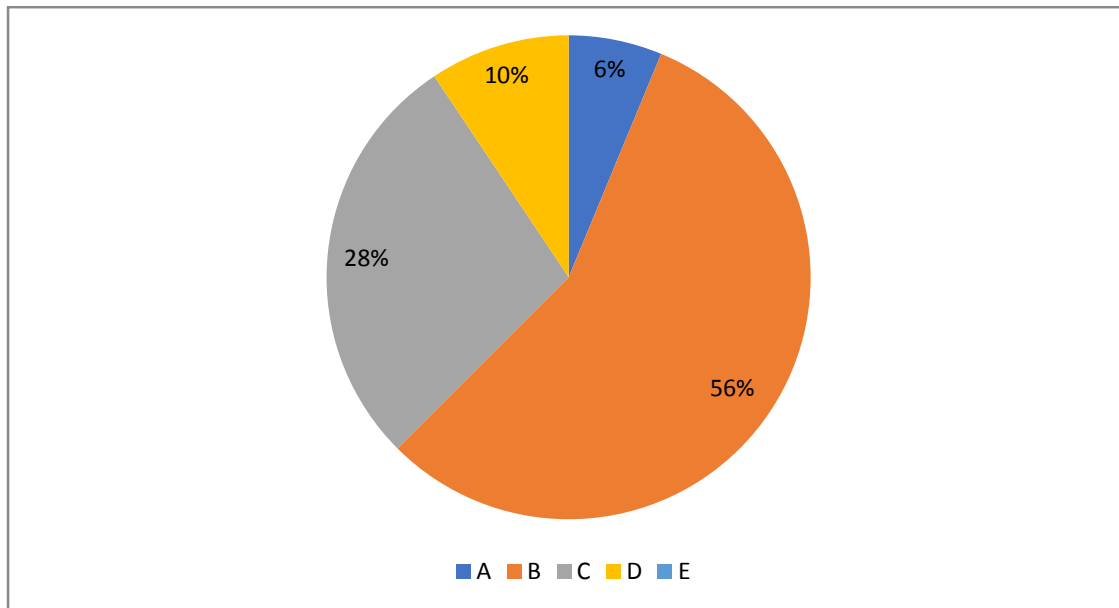
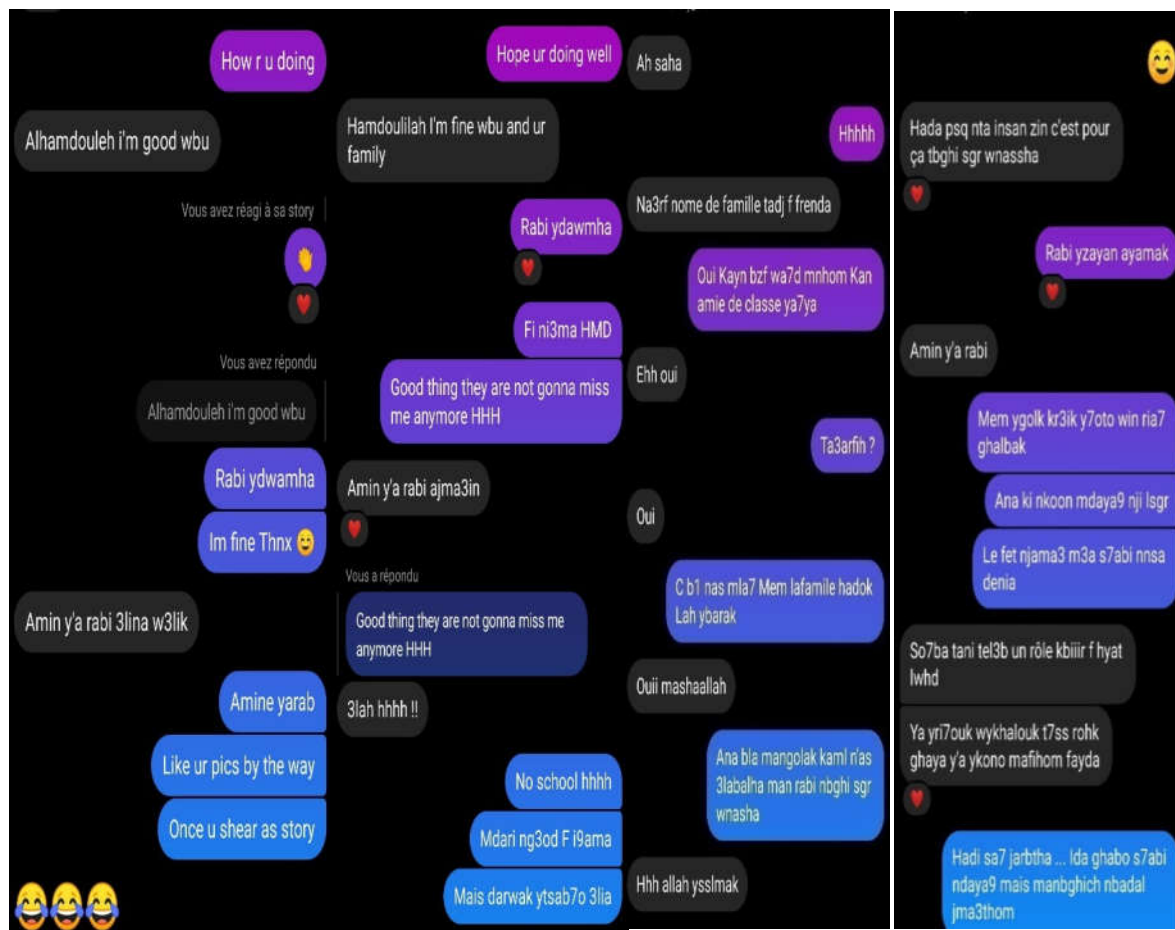


Figure 16: The factors affecting linguistic convergence in mixed gender online chats (conversational and lexical levels)

Figure 16 demonstrates that the majority of students (with 56% and 28% respectively) suggests that the major factors effecting the linguistic convergence can be ‘gender rules and gender stereotypes’ and ‘the nature of topic’. It is also worth noticing that 10% of the whole sample reports that the context in which the online chat takes place may affect, while 6% of them choose the issue of inequality as a key factor.

3.6.2. Mixed Gender Online Chats Analysis

1. Adjacency pair



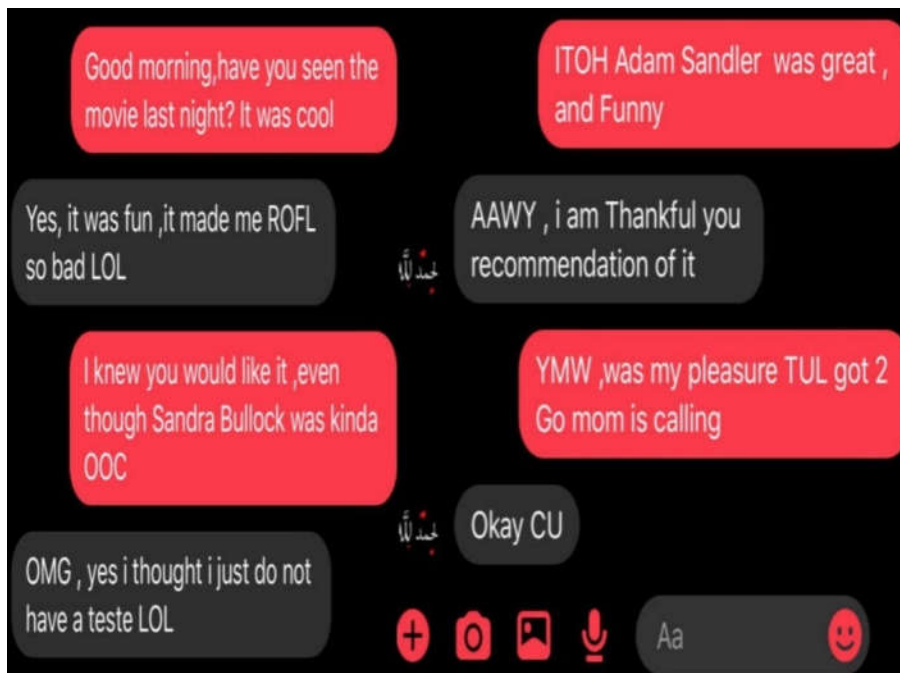
Excerpt 1 shows that there is a response from both the partners joining in the conversation. Both the sender and receiver (Male and Female) started with a salutation then they moved to a (question – answer)

2. Turn taking



In the above mixed gender online chats, both male and female respondents take their turn so orderly and in a good respectful way, we think, in a manner in which orderly conversation normally takes place. The conversation is opened with a question and an answer; this represents the pairs of turn taking. It can be noticed that male is taking the turn orderly while female prefer self-selected and other selected turn taking.

4. Abbreviation



In this particular online chat, male and female participants use abbreviation forms. We may assume that they use abbreviations to make conversation faster and make comments immediate. Worthy of notice is the presence of these abbreviated forms used by both parts of the conversation:

Rofl = rolling on the floor laughing

LOL= laughing out loud

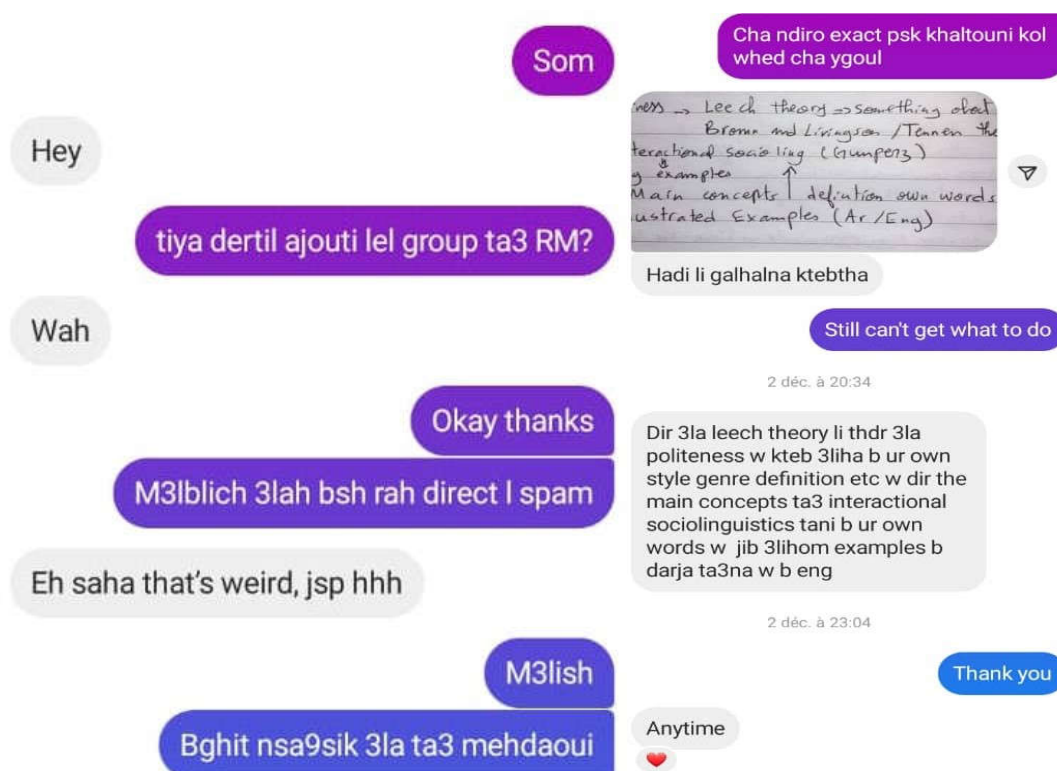
OOC= out of character

OMG= oh my God

ITOH= in the other hand

AAWY= absolutely agree with you

5. Politeness:



This selected online chat is mainly about politeness strategies. It seems to us that both male and female used politeness forms when it is possible. This example (okay thanks) can be a response with positive politeness for establishing a positive conversation .

3.7. Synthesis of the Main Findings (both questionnaire and CA)

scholars have determined that participants in online conversation adapt their linguistic behavior to that of their partners'. With regard to the first research question of this study, the results show that, in general, women accommodate to the general structure of the

online community to a greater extent than men. Thus, females' greater convergence to the general style of the forum may reflect their need to be socially involved in the support community, since adaptation is done mainly to demonstrate that speakers are socially receptive and accommodating because participants need comfort, advice, and solidarity. Men and women are likely to use online support groups differently. These previous studies concluded that while men interact in online support groups to exchange information, women use them to share experiences, give encouragement and receive support, conversation among members of the group are stereotypically established. Initiating a topic is depending on the speaker who is interested on that topic itself and does not matter whether the speaker is a male or a female. Each gender has its own topics of interest. The conclusions of this study demonstrate that the Internet markedly reflects the society in which it is embedded, one in which men and women conform to deeply-rooted cultural patterns. These conclusions are similar to those drawn by Herring and Stoerger (2014) in their study of gender and CMC.

3.8. Recommendations

From the results have been reached after conducting this study persons from both genders should avoid gender stereotypes because the late noted can lead to a further problem which is gender discriminations and by avoiding it that is to say erase the believes that have no sense or logic about the other .

3.9. Suggestions for further Research

Calling for more study on gender language convergence rather solely on differences to better understand relationship between language and gender.

3.10. Limitations

This study is conducted carefully, and to some extent it reaches its objectives, one important limitation must be noted and which is the quarantine our region has been under. It has prevented us from having face to face discussions selected respondents. Second, the hesitation of the respondents to fill the questionnaires in time was also a big constraint.

3.11. Conclusion

In this chapter, the concepts of methodology and the planned research design of the study are discussed. More precisely, a detailed description of the research instruments is provided, the data collection procedures are displayed, and the obtained data analysis with the interpretation are summarised. This chapter, in fact, provides explicit theoretical assumptions and offers the readers deep insights regarding the implementation procedures of the instruments and data analysis methods; however, it must be admitted that no matter how much one analyses and describes a field, something of its essential nature remains unsaid.

Based on gender language differences in intensifiers, hedges, swear words and interjections, as well as social constructionist gender theory and data collected from questionnaires, this paper finds that there is obvious convergence in use of intensifiers and hedges, while little is detected in swear words and interjections between two gender languages. The reasons of such a result comes from factors such as social expectation, family education and gender status. Knowledge on the similarities between male and female languages will generate insights for further study on gender language in syntactical and pragmatic aspects to minimize misunderstandings.

الملخص

اصبحت الانترنت جزءا لا يتجزأ من حياة الانسان حيث باتت بعدا يحاكي الواقع يلجا اليه الاشخاص من مختلف الفئات العمرية ذكورا واناثا على حد سواء للتعبير عن انفسهم واكتشاف العالم بالتعرق على اشخاص جدد يتبادلون معهم الافكار والرءى مما استدعى وجود لغة مفهومة تمكن هذه المجتمعات الالكترونية من التواصل بطرق سهلة وسلسة لذلك فان اي دراسة في مجال اللغة في عصرنا الحالي وجب ان تتطرق الى البحث في مجال المحادثات الالكترونية المستخدمة على مختلف منصات التواصل الاجتماعي.

Résumé

Internet est devenu une partie intégrante de la vie humaine, car il est devenu une dimension qui simule la réalité, à laquelle des personnes de différents groupes d'âge recourent à la fois aux hommes et aux femmes pour s'exprimer et découvrir le monde en identifiant de nouvelles personnes qui échangent des idées et des visions avec elles, ce qui nécessitait l'existence d'un langage compréhensible qui permet à ces sociétés électroniques de communiquer de manière lisse et compréhensible. par conséquent toute les études dans le domaine de la langue de notre époque devier discuter de la langue des conversations électronique utiliser sur déverse plateforme du media sociaux.

Summary

The internet has become an integral part of human life, as it has become a dimension that simulates reality, to which people of different age groups resort to both male and female to express themselves and discover the world by new people who exchange ideas and visions, which necessitated the existence of an understandable language to communicate in a smooth way. Therefore, any study in the field of language in our time should discuss the language of the electronic conversations used on various social media platforms.

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2.Thesis and Dissertations

- Mr. Lazhari AOUIDAT and Ms. Zineb ANTOURI. (2019). *Gender Differences in Conversational Styles: A Conversational Analysis of Mixed Gender Online Chat*. Unpublished MA dissertation. Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret

Zhu, Y., & Ruan, H. (2019). On Convergence in Gender Languages— An Empirical Study. International Journal of Arts and Commerce, 8(2), 1-13.

Questionnaire

Dears,

You are kindly requested to fill in the following questionnaire that serves as a data collection tool for an academic research titled ‘**Investigating Gender and Linguistic Convergence: A Conversational analysis of Mixed- Gender Online Chats**’.Your contribution will be anonymous and confidential.

Section One: Personal Information

1. **Gender** :Female Male
2. **Age** : Less than 18 More than 18

Section Two: Mixed Gender Online Chats

3. Do you chat online to communicate with people?
Yes No
4. Do you prefer to be involved in:
 Same-gender online chats
 Mixed- gender online chats?

5. Do you use **the same conversational styles** when chatting online with male and/or female partners?

Yes No

Say why, please?.....

6. Do you notice any **conversational similarities** when it comes to online mixed-gender chats?

Yes No

Section Three: Conversational Styles used when Chatting Online

7. **What do you perceive about the following statements:**

a. Males and females initiate topics during online mixed-gender chats

Undecided disagree agree

b. Both males and females may use interruption during online mixed-gender chats

Undecided disagree agree

c. Both males and females may repair online conversation after silence (pauses)

Undecided disagree agree

d. Both males and females may use aggressive language (swear words) during online mixed-gender chat

Undecided disagree agree

e. Both males and females can control the so-called males topics (talking about sport, cars...)

Undecided disagree agree

f. Both males and females may have the same amount and length of turn taking in mixed gender online chats

Undecided disagree agree

g. Both males and females may use the same hedges (y'know..), tag questions, and polite forms in mixed gender online chats

Undecided disagree agree

Section Four: Linguistic Convergence and Suggested Factors

8. Do you think that convergence exists among participants, i.e.: males and females adapt each communicative behaviors/styles in mixed gender online chats?

Yes No

9. Do you think there are factors affecting linguistic convergence in mixed gender online chats (conversational and lexical levels)

Yes No

If yes, please specify?

- The issue of inequality
- Gender roles and gender stereotypes
- The nature of the topic
- The context of (what, when, where...) the online chat takes place
- Others?.....

