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Language and Gender at Workplace: Differences in Male and Female Speech among Teachers of the English Department in Tlemcen University

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Dedication

To My Family…My Source of Inspiration, Motivation and Love…

<u>Acknowledgment</u>

Our first and foremost thanks to Allah (SWT), the Lord of the world, to Whom everyone owes everything, and Who guide and help us to reach this success.

For his guidance, and his continued encouragement and helpful suggestions, I acknowledge with gratitude my supervisor Dr. Negadi.

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Abstract

In the last decades, research on language and gender in workplace has been always presented an area of interest for many sociolinguists since the difference between men and women in terms of language use influence more or less the workplace communication. The present research is meant to investigatehow male and female teachers at the English Department of Tlemcen University interact at work, and whether they face problems of communication caused by gender differences. This study also aims to explore the use of speech accommodation among male and female teachers. Following a triangular methodology based on a questionnaire and an interview, this work unveiled that misunderstanding sometimes occurs between male and female teachers in the place of work due to a number of biological, and socio-cultural factors that affect the use of the language. However, both genders are aware about these differences and they respect them as social norms. The findings of this research also showed that male teachers exhibit more accommodation speech behaviours in comparison with women as a way to reconcile differences and facilitate workplace communication.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

General Introduction

One of the main concerns of sociolinguistic studies is to understand the way people speak in different social contexts and how these linguistic variations are influenced by a whole range of social factors such as social class, age, status, and gender etc. As far as these sociolinguistic variables are concerned, studying men and women speech has been the concern of sociolinguistic research since the mid-1970s. A considerable part of these studies, mainly those of the essentialists as Lakoff (1975), focus their attention on the way both males and females construct their language. They argue that women language is inferior and incomplete they therefore should follow male's language as it represents the norm. In contrast, some other works such as the ones of Tannen (1990, 1994a, 1994b) Cameron (1990) and Labov (1972), refer gender differences to men's and women's social positions in the society they live in. In their common view, males and females live in different worlds which make them having different cultures. Additionally, the gender stereotypes, that each society has developed, also affect men's and women's status, and systematically they also affect their language use and perception as well as their attitudes. The attitudes that are directly related to these stereotypes became parts of the society's norms and as they always direct its members' views. As a result, these gender differences and stereotypes constantly shape the communication between men and women in different social context, not least in workplace.

Various studies on language and gender in workplaces have been fast growing in recent years. In fact, investigating workplace communication is regarded as an essential research area in sociolinguistics. When exploring the interaction between men and women in workplace, men have historically outnumbered women in different professions at work; it is not surprising that workplace norms are predominantly masculine norms (Kendall & Tannen, 1997; Sinclair, 1998). Therefore, men speech styles were always taken for granted as the normative ways of speaking in the workplace, and have been institutionalized as 'unmarked' ways of enacting power and authority in the workplace. However, over the last decades, with women's increasing participation and presence in different occupations,

feminine speech styles have effected considerable changes in modern-day workplace communication.

For the purpose of the current study, workplace communication is considered as a particularly important avenue for research on language and gender. Having appreciated previous scholarly works about the gendered use of language, special attention to men and women speech led to a personal curiosity that misunderstanding might be a consequence of these speech differences in men-women conversation at the workplace. The primary consideration behind this work was to investigate whether male and female teachers in the English Department of Tlemcen University (Algeria) are aware about these existing differences which may cause some problems of communication in the workplace, and whether these teachers try to modify their speech when engaging in mixed-sex conversations in order to avoid any misunderstanding. Accordingly, three questions were formulated around which this research is guided:

1. To what extent male and female teachers are aware about gender language differences in mixed-sex conversations, and how they categorize them?

2. Do males and females understand these differences and react to them positively, or may they lead to misunderstanding?

3. Who tends more to use speech accommodation in mixed-sex conversations in order to reconcile differences and overcome any communication barriers?

Taking the teachers of the Department of English as a sample population for this study, the researcher suggests the following hypotheses in order to answer the previous inquiries:

1. Both male and female teachers feel gender differences in speech styles and they relate them to biological, cultural, social, and educational factors.

2. Sometimes, teachers do not consider well the differences existing between male and female speech which lead to misunderstanding with each gender misinterpreting the other's intentions.

3. Women exhibit more convergent accommodation speech behaviours than men.

Hence, this research work is organised in three chapters. The first chapter is a review of the literature about language and gender studies from the last decades to nowadays. This part attempts to clarify the different speech features of men and women in cross-sex conversations. It also tries to shed light on Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT), its types and its use in workplace.

The second chapter is meant to explain the research design and procedure. It presents the fieldwork and identifies the necessary methodology to obtain reliable data concerning male and female teachers' speech and their awareness about gender differences in terms of language use. It also describes the different instruments of data collection.

In an effort to answer the axis research questions around which the whole study moves, the researcher concluded this work with a third chapter which presents the data analysis and discusses the obtained results quantitatively and qualitatively. The analysis of the collected data was very crucial in verifying and proving the hypotheses suggested.

CHAPTER 1

LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 Introduction

The present chapter is an attempt to provide an overall explanation of gender differences in language use, as the latter became one of the crucial topics that have attracted many sociolinguists' attention. It tries to explain the fact that males and females have different speech features and use different styles while speaking. It also exposes the different theories that have approached these speech variances and whether they lead to miscommunication in workplace. Finally, it clarifies how each gender tries to adjust its speech behaviours to facilitate social interaction at the work. Consequently, the current chapter sheds light on the important literature on language and gender, from the last decades to nowadays, including the work of sociolinguists in Anglo-Saxon countries such as Lakoff (1975), Tannen (1990), and Cameron (1990). As to the Arabic-speaking world, few works have been done on language and gender studies like in Morocco (Sadiqi 2007) and in Algeria (Abdelhay 2008).

1.2 Language in Speech Community

Before attempting to tackle gender differences, it is crucial to provide an account of the language as the soul of any speech community. In most sociolinguistic and anthropological-linguistic research, the speech community has always been the focus. It is one of the main problems and the major objective of study in the ethnography of communication. the term speech community was first defined by Bloomfield (1933: 29) as "a group of people who use the same set of speech signals", i.e., a group of people who live in the same area or neighbourhood or city, sharing a language, and interact by means of the same system of speech signals.

Interestingly, modern sociolinguists as Lyons (1970: 326) claim that all people are actually part of many communities. He suggests that a speech community is used when "…all people who use a given language (or dialects)". For

Hockett (1958: 08) "each language defines a speech community: the whole set of people who communicate with each other". He explains his view by adding the key condition of 'communication' to Lyons' definition, because if there were two communities who share the same language but do not interact with each other, they would be considered as two distinct speech communities. Similarly, Trudgill (1992) affirms that speech community is formed out of members who share the same linguistic norms of social interaction. He defines a speech community as (1992: 96):

> A community of speakers who share the same verbal repertoire, and who also share the same norms for linguistic behavior, including both general norms for language use of the type studied in the ethnography of speaking, and more detailed norms for activities such as style shifting.

Accordingly, Labov (1972: 120) describes speech community as follows:

> […] Participation in a set of shared norms; these norms may be observed in overt types of evaluative behavior, and by the uniformity of abstract patterns of variation which are invariant in respect to particular levels of usage.

He maintains that a speech community is formed of members who share the same norms. In fact, his definition of speech community and his perspective was most influential in that it emphasized on linguistic production, social perception and evaluation. It gave an insight to the essence of this term and has been followed many subsequent scholars. Although the concept 'speech community' has been defined differently, there is a large agreement among scholars that language is its basic ingredient. Therefore, each individual plays an important role in building his/her speech community since he/she interacts and shares knowledge by means of language.

1.3 Sex or Gender

The terms *sex* and *gender* reflect two complex concepts; attempts to define and differentiate between the two have received much attention recently. In the early works about both language and gender, and variationist studies of male and female speech during the 1960's and 1970's, sex was taken as its basic social variable. However, by the 1980's, the situation was greatly altered by the shift in terminology from sex to gender, and studies on 'sex' and language were replaced by studies of 'gender' and language: this shift was inspired by feminists theorizing that distinguished between sex as a biological phenomenon and gender as a social phenomenon. In this vein, Sadiqi (2003: 02) states that:

> Feminist theories of the 1960s and 1970s used the term ' gender' to refer to the construction of the categories 'masculine' and ' feminine' in society. This construction was related to biological sex in contested ways.

Likewise, in the present work, it is very crucial to differentiate between the two key terms. According to Butler (1990), while sex is biologically given to humans and puts them into the category of either a man or a woman based on anatomical and physiological differences (XX chromosomes for female, and XY for males), gender is socially and culturally constructed. It is the related socially-determined qualities and expected behaviours of males and/or females in a given culture. In the same vein, Butler (1990: 173) describes "the gendered body [as] performative" and it can be attributed with either male or female characteristics. This can be easily summed up into the statement that sex is what we are, while gender is what we do, and this shows that the term 'gender' is the more appropriate term to use for the category than 'sex'. While many scholars have continued to use the early term 'sex', other sociolinguists make use of the aforementioned distinction in their works. The latter fact is mentioned by many scholars like Coates, who states (2007: 36) that:

Speakers are born male or female but it is the social and cultural influences which surround us which determine how we speak. Consequently, sociolinguists now distinguish between sex-a biological term- and gender, the term used to describe socially constructed categories based on sex.

However, it is crucial to point that in many recent studies, not least the present one, slipping from one term to the other could not to be avoided. It is difficult to keep the two concepts apart, especially when discussing studies that were designed with a gross categorization of individuals by their sex but that are then interpreted in terms of the social interaction of women and men – which means, of course, that the focus has shifted to gender. This means that the dichotomy between sex and gender cannot be maintained, seeing the body and biological processes as part of social and cultural histories.

1.4 A Brief History of Language and Gender Studies

Until 1944, no specific piece of writing on gender differences in language was published. As stated by Grey (1998), it was in the 1970's that comparison between males' and females' linguistic behaviour began to be noticed. However, popular understandings of language and gender had existed for centuries before language and gender were considered worthy to study by the second wave of Women's Liberation Movement, which began in the late 1960's and early 1970's. Due to women's role and efforts in WWII, opinions of women began to change politically, culturally and socially. This led to the re-examination of women's language and to the discussion of the inequality in views and power relationships, mainly when speaking at work.

The first extensive study on speech differences between men and women were conducted in the mid-1970's in the University of California by Robin Lakoff. Her work was crucially important as she paved the path of the Feminist Linguistic Theory. She returns this difference in speech to the existence of sexism in society.

In her notorious book (1975) *Language and Women Place*, she sets a number of basic assumptions of what marks out the speech of women, such as the following:

1. Lexical hedges or fillers; e.g. *you know, well, you see …*
2. Tag questions; e.g. *he's here, isn't he?*
3. Rising intonation on declaratives; e.g. *it's really important.*
4. Empty adjectives; e.g. *adorable, charming, lovely.*
5. Precise colour terms; e.g. *magenta*, *aquamarine.*
6. Intensifiers such as *just* and *so; e.g. I admire it so much.*
7. Hypercorrect grammar; e.g. *consistent use of standard verb forms.*
8. Super-polite forms; e.g. *would you mind…, I'd appreciated it if…*
9. Avoidance of strong swears words; e.g. *fudge*, *my goodness.*
10. Emphatic stress; like: *it was a BRILLIANT performance.*
11. Use direct quotation, while men paraphrase more often.
12. Use *wh*-imperatives; e.g. *Why don't you open the door?*

According to Lakoff's arguments (1975), for instance, using tag questions made the assumption that women are less powerful than men as the former are interpreted as a device showing uncertainty, submission or tentativeness. In fact, tag questions serve many functions (Cameron *et al*, 1998; Holmes, 1995). They can be used to express uncertainty, to soften the force of a speech act, to encourage participation, to express solidarity and politeness. Lakoff (1975) asserts that saying: *It is a nice day, isn't it (+Tag)* is less assertive than just saying: *it is a nice day (-Tag)*, it would follow then, based on Lakoff's theory, that women's language is inconsistent. However, from the point of view of many other scholars, the major drawback in Lakoff's work is its lack of any empirical basis as her claims are based on her own intuitions and observation of her peers' language use. From another angle, Fishman's data analysis (1983) of the interaction between couples in their homes suggests that questions, tag questions and hedges present reward for men's failure to collaborate in conversations. Likewise, Mulac (1999) and others, have rendered more concrete insights into gendered language by identifying a list of

features used by both men and women with clear differences in the frequency of usage between the genders.

In addition, Maltz and Borker (1982) have established, through analysing the interactions between children when playing together, that girls learn to create and maintain relationships of closeness and equality and to criticize others in acceptable ways, while boys learn to assert their position of dominance to maintain an audience.

Generally speaking, scholars' views differ as to the extent to which these differences between male and female exist in their speech; while, the interpretations of why these differences exist are relied on different approaches.

1.5 Language and Gender Approaches

1.5.1 The Biological Approach

During the 1960's, language research was based on the biological approach. Many scholars have pointed out that gender was seen as a biological sex. This movement was called the essentialist movement. In this sense, Sadiqi (2003: 03) states that:

> Gender within the essentialist view was defined by three major clusters of characteristics: innateness, strict binarism, and bipolarization. Gender was qualified as innate because biological endowments were innate; it was binary given the strict binary opposition between men and women as two undifferentiated groups; and it was bipolar because human beings pertain to one of the two bipolar categories: male or female.

In addition, observations of the differences between the way males and females speak were restricted to phonological, morphological, and lexical features. This approach was drawn on the idea of gender developed from the individual biological sex view. It suggests that there is no distinction between sex and gender.

Thus, biological sex creates gendered behaviour, and gender is determined by two biological factors: hormones and chromosomes. For example, because of the Testosterone sex hormones which cause aggression in behaviour, which is more present in males than females, men use stronger expletives such as 'shit' and 'damn' whereas women use softer profanity such as 'oh dear' or 'goodness'.Also, women have a high-pitched voice while men have a deep voice because of anatomical differences. The biological view of gender is supported by those cross-cultural studies that have found universal features of gender. For instance, like in all cultures studied, men in Algerian society are found to be more aggressive than women a fact that suggests the existence of an innate biological difference.

1.5.2 The Deficit Approach

Moving from an essentialist paradigm where speakers were categorised in terms of their biological sex to the deficit approach. The deficit approach is somehow old-dated since it was the first to deal with male/female speech largely. It suggests that "women's ways of speaking are, either by nature or nurture, deficient in comparison to men's" (Cameron, 1990: 14).

This approach was initiated by Jespersen (1925) who is considered to be the earliest linguist to work on language and gender. His view is based on the idea that language is a source of men's power, whereas women are descended from men. Thus, males' language is the norm, as it is correct and complete, and implicitly better than the females' one (Jespersen, 1922). Following his view, women have to follow men's language since their speech is deficient, imperfect and incomplete.

Jespersen (1922) claims that women have narrow vocabulary, so well they are more fluent in speaking and less hesitant than men who always search for the precise words in their speech. This view clearly illustrates how women were seen as being linguistically inferior and abnormal in comparison to men before the Women's Liberation Movement in the 1960's.

Some decades later, things changed. Lakoff (1975), in her seminal paper, though it was based only on observations, has presented a set of gender characteristics. Her assumptions were based on the fact that women's language in some societies is considered as stereotyped language behaviour. She discussed the differences between males and females, seeing them as differences not abnormalities. It is also necessary to mention that within the deficit framework, women are viewed as disadvantages language users deviating from an implicit male norm (Talbot, 1998).

1.5.3 The Dominance Approach

In the early 1980's, research in language and gender took a turn into the dominance perspective though the dominance approach provided the same preconceived idea that men's speech is perfect as opposed to that of women which is considered as incomplete due to their low position in society. In fact, Lakoff was considered as the mother of 'the dominance theory'. She suggests that inequality of power between men and women is considered as the main difference between them. In this light, Wardhaugh (1986: 327) writes that: "Men use what power they have to dominate each other". He adds that "Lakoff (1975) adopts the position that men are dominant and women lack power". In this light, Deuchar (1988) suggests that the powerless members of society must also be more polite. Thus, in communities where women are the powerless members, their speech would contain more elements of linguistic politeness.

Similarly, several scholars like Spender (1984), Zimmerman & West (1975), and Coates (1986) have also highlighted the power and dominance approach. They claim that women in a patriarchal system have a low social status and position; therefore, the employment of standard language use aims to raise their self-esteem. This approach allows for interpretations of communication problems between men

and women because of the unequal hierarchical statuses and gender roles held in society.

As to some Arabic speaking societies like that of Algeria, it seems that the place men and women hold in the society is central and very important. The prevalent idea that women are inferior to men led to the emergence of gender inequality, considering women as having less power and less opportunity to affirm their position in the society. Thus, women tend to use prestigious forms of the language.

In its general sense, the dominance framework assumes that women use language in a way which reflects their subordinate position in society, while men use it in a way which reflects their power (Cameron, 1990). Zimmerman and West (1983) in their work on analysing speech interruptions between males and females state that 99% of interruptions are made by males. They concluded that men's greater degree of social power leads to their domination of interactions, and their dominance in conversation via interruption mirrors their dominance in contemporary western culture. Men typically enjoy greater status and power than women in most societies, and they are more likely to assume they are entitled to take over the conversation than women.

1.5.4 The Difference Approach

The difference theory has been developed primarily as a reaction to Lakoff's (1975) theories. It is based on the assumption of the cross-culture model (Maltz & Borker, 1982; Henley & Kramarae, 1988, 1991; Tannen, 1990) viewing men and women as belonging to two equally valid but different sub-cultures due to the fact that they are socialised differently from childhood. In this regard Tannen (1986:60) has pointed out that:

> Male-female conversation is always cross-cultural communication. Culture is simply a network of habits and patterns gleaned from past experience, and women and men have different past experiences. From the time they're born, they're treated differently, talked to differently, and talk

differently as a result. Boys and girls grow up in different worlds, even if they grow up in the same house. And as adults they travel in different worlds, reinforcing patterns established in childhood.

According to Tannan boys and girls between ages of five and fifteen grow up differently, they establish different relations with society and hence "men and women are essentially different" (Behm, 2009:22). In fact, this approach does not label women as insufficient or incapable, but regards men and women as equal but different.

Moreover, Maltz and Borker (1982) compared gender differences to culture differences, and in those two cultures, men and women display different but complementary speech styles. While girls learn to be more collaboration-oriented in conversation, boys learn to be more competition-oriented. Thus, if 'communication failures' are a result of culture cross-blindness, no one is to blame.

Generally, this theory explains men and women speak differently because they live in different cultural worlds where different rules govern the behaviour of two subcultures. This social and physical separation from childhood leads to different languages and beliefs between males and females. In this regard, Wardhaugh (2006) argues that women spend most of their time talking about home and families, whereas men are more attracted towards sports, political issues, business and taxes.

1.5.5 The Social Constructionist Approach

Most recently, the study of language and gender began gradually to move towards understanding gender as a constitutive factor in building social identities. It has been conducted within the social constructionist framework based on Butler's (1990) notion of performativity. Butler (1990) perceives gender as a process or a performative social construct where men and women 'do' or 'perform' by displaying language and behaviour. Many sociolinguists like Sunderland (2004),

Litosseliti (2006) and Wodak and Benke (1997) adopt Bultur's view as it allows for some degree of speaker's agency.

This theory comes as a response to many scholarly researches that have received much criticism which leads scholars to rethink on a new theory where women are no longer considered as victims trapped by societal norms, but they can conform to or resist their subject positioning.

1.6 Gender as a Sociolinguistic Variable in Speech Community

Despite the different points of view, there is a general agreement that the concept of speech community is crucial to the study of language and gender, as the latter variable is one of the factors of paramount importance to language variation within a speech community. Within this perspective, Labov (1990) finds that the clearest and most consistent results of more than thirty years of sociolinguistic research in the speech community concern the linguistic differentiation of women and men. He summarises these results in the principles below (1990: 210, 213, 215):

Principle I: In stable sociolinguistic stratification, men use a higher frequency of nonstandard forms than women who tend to use a higher proportion of the standard variants than men in the same social class.

Principle I.a: In change from above, women favour the incoming prestige forms more than men, i.e., women simultaneously prefer more overtly prestigious forms.

Principle II: In change from below, women are most often the innovators, i.e., women can create and adopt new forms more quickly.

While Principle I.a and Principle II are related to language change, many scholars have widely given much interest to Labov's Principle I as it represents a more stable state. Fasold (1990) suggests that women use a higher proportion of standard variants than men, because this allows them to sound less local and to have a voice

with which to protest against the traditional norms that place them in an inferior social position to men.

In the same line of thoughts, Deuchar (1988) develops an interpretation based on politeness theory, in which women's higher use of standard forms can be seen as a strategy for maintaining face in interactions where women are powerless. Furthermore, Trudgill's (1972) explanation has been the most influential one: based on evidence from subjective evaluation tests, he argues that women have to acquire social status vicariously, whereas men can acquire it through their occupational status and earning power. Women are more likely, therefore, to secure and signal their social status through their use of the overtly prestigious standard variants. The higher proportion of nonstandard variants used by men can then be explained as an orientation not to the overt norms of the community but to the covert prestige of working class forms, which symbolize the roughness and toughness that is associated both with working class life and with masculinity. Besides, Gruyter & Brouwer (1989: 10) show that males who use standard forms perceived as:

> Having more social competence (e.g. intelligence, ambition, self-
> confidence), while male speakers of a nonstandard variety often
> score higher on the scale of social attractiveness.

In fact, this language behaviour is not particular only to English. In studies of speech patterns in Arabic, Al-Harahsheh (2014) noted that women are more conservative than men in their language choice. They tend to use the urbanized pronunciations of some letters to show politeness and to distinguish themselves that they are urbanized, prestigious and educated. Likewise, in Tlemcen speech community, Dendane (1993, 2007) observed that the occurrence of the prestigious forms of Dialectal Arabic is higher among women than men.

1.7 Gender Inequality

The issue of gender inequality is not new as it has a substantially long history. During the pre-Islamic era, women were considered as incomplete human being as opposed to men. This view appeared first in the western world by the men

of church and religion who considered the woman as a leap from animal to human being, and she should be ashamed from being woman. At the time when the rest of the world -from Greece and Rome to India and China- considered women as no better than animals and slaves, Islam has acknowledged women's equality with men in a great respect as Quran (4: 01) states: "... Mankind, keep your duty to your Lord who created you from a single soul and from it created its mate (of same kind) and from them twain has spread a multitude of men and women..." However, up till today, women still treated as inferior to men having less power and opportunity to affirm their position in society, and since women do not have equal status with men either at home or outside it, the comparison between men and women will always be false (Eckert, 1989). According to Jespersen (1990[1925]), women represent the inferior gender in many domains; namely, economic, political, social; and cultural.

Hundreds of empirical studies over the past several years have documented the existence of gender inequalities in language use. Sometimes women use particular linguistic features much more than men, and sometimes men use them more than women. While many researchers interpret these linguistic features as signs of powerlessness, uncertainty, and lack of self-confident, especially if they are features of women's speech; they consider them as signs of power and dominance when they are features of men's speech. This returns to the existence of sexism in society.

1.8 Sexist Language

According to Mills (1995:83), a statement is sexist when "its use constitutes, promotes or exploits an unfair or irrelevant or impertinent distinction between the sexes". She argues that language can be sexist when it presents male-oriented experience as the norm in society. In the same vein, Henley (1987, qtd. in Weatherall 2002:13) suggests that sexist language is, "…language that ignores women, language that defines women narrowly, and language that depreciates women". Consequently, this differentiation between men and women at the level of speech may have negative attitudes towards women and effect on their expectations,

and that because of the stereotypes which are widely and socially common between individuals, and which entail women's exclusion and inferiority.

Language use can be sexist because of the social and cultural circumstances of any society which are instilled in the mind and the beliefs of its individuals. According to Lakoff's view (1975, qtd. in Mills 1995:86), "sexism in language simply reflects sexism within society, and is a symptom rather than a cause". That is to say, sexism in language is not the cause of women's discrimination or trivialization since words are not strong enough to make women invisible. However, Weatherall (2002) argues that sexist language is not just about words used to describe women, but also how they are used to and to what ends.

As far As the Algerian society is concerned, it is common that many lexical items which are male terms are used to refer both sexes, to males in particular and human beings in general. Such forms show men as the unmarked and women as the marked human category.

1.9 Men and Women's Conversational Style Behaviour in Workplace

According to Kendall & Tannen (1992), research on language and gender in workplace falls primary on two categories, based on the work roles of, and the relationships among speakers. The first category includes the studies that deal with how women and men interact with each other at work. On the other hand, the second categories of studies focus on how women and men enact authority in professional positions. As to the present work, the first concern is the effect of women's and men's language use on the workplace interaction. In fact, the linguistic choice of both men and women in workplace is influenced by socio-cultural norms. These norms draw how women and men are expected to speak and interact with each other (ibid).

Conversation as social interaction among men and women is a necessary in workplace communication. The language used in mixed-sex conversations is not only a kind of embodiment of their thoughts but also it reflects one's identity as a member of a particular social group. In this vein, Fasold (1990: 01) states:

> [...] when people use language, they do more than just try to get
> another person to understand (their) thoughts and feelings. At the
> same time, both people are using language in subtle ways to define
> their relationship to each other, to identify themselves as part of
> social group".

In other words, investigating interpersonal communication which is based on the basic elements of a conversation allows sociolinguists to discover conversational behaviours. Gumperz and Tannen (1979) claim that individual speakers tend to use specific patterns of structural elements, and these characteristic patterns make up a person's conversational 'strategy' or 'style'. It means that individuals use particular speech styles during conversation that consist of habitual patterns of speech rhythm, pausing, tone, and turn taking. Interestingly, Tannen (1984, 1986, 1994) has written extensively on the different ways in which gender affects conversational style in workplace. She claims that men and women have different ways of communicating and derive different meanings from language: While women characteristically use language to seek confirmation, make connections and reinforce intimacies, men are more likely to use it to protect their independence and negotiate status.

The following are examples of stereotypical gender contrasts taken from Tannen's work. They can best be understood not as descriptions of how individual men and women behave, but as characteristic male/female dichotomies:

1. *Status* versus *support*: Conversation for men is often a contest, either to achieve the upper hand or to prevent other people from pushing them around; but for women, the goal in social interaction is often cooperation and expressing mutual support.

2. *Independence* versus *intimacy*: Women often use conversation to preserve intimacy, whereas men use it to assert their independence.

3. *Advice* versus *understanding*: Women want someone to listen to their problems with understanding, while men are inclined to give advice and look for solutions.

4. *Orders* versus *proposals*: When a woman says 'Let's park over there' a man can hear it as an order. 'Do you want to clean up now, before lunch?' can come across as an attempt to manipulate.

5. *Conflict* versus *compromise*: Generally, a man is more comfortable with verbal conflict; a woman tends not to ask for what they want directly. While she sees him as being confrontational, he sees her as being manipulative.

One of the classic studies set the stage for investigations of how women and men tend to interact with each other in groups in the workplace. Eakins (1976) analysed seven university faculty meetings, and found that men speak more often and for longer than women, and they interrupt women in the faculty meetings more often than women do. From other angle, Holmes (1995) claims that: compared to men, women are described as more polite speakers, both in terms of negative politeness, which recognizes the autonomy of others and avoids intrusion, and in terms of positive politeness, which emphasizes connectedness and appreciation (Brown & Levinson, 1977). Women are generally more socio-emotional in orientation and more facilitating of conversational interaction. Likewise, Mulac (1999) states that women's style of conversation contains indirect orders rather than imperatives, and shows more cooperative style of conversational interactions including some reactions to demonstrate interest as using 'yes' or 'mhm'. On the other hand, men are characterized as less cooperative contributors to the conversation of others, and they are eager to hold the floor and control the topic of conversation. They tend to use more directives and behave more competitively in conversations such as interrupting and talking more often than females in mix-sex conversations.

1.10 Men and Women's Speech Features

It is worth mentioning that in addition to the gender differences that have been stated in the previous sub-sections in the present work, Lakoff (1975) adds that in appropriate women's speech, strong expression of feeling is avoided, expression

of uncertainty is favoured, and means of expression in regard to subject-matter deemed 'trivial' to the 'real' world are elaborated. In this light, Jespersen (1992: 251) maintains that women have their own vocabulary including adjectives and adverbs. He states the following:

> Women have smaller vocabularies, show extensive use of certain adjectives and adverbs, more often than men break off without finishing their sentences, because they start talking without having thought out what they are going to say and produce less complex sentences.

In fact, when speaking about the differences in vocabulary, it is crucial to note that women, in addition to adverbs and adjectives, they also like to use diminutives in their speech. For instance, women prefer using words like *bookie, kitten,* and *panties*. They also like to use words that show affections, such as *dearie, sweetie*. If a man often uses these words, people will think that he may have psychological problem or he is not manly. Similar Gray (1992) suggests that women use superlatives, metaphors, and generalizations in their speech while men are more direct and straightforward in their speech. However, his book is often viewed as sexist by many feminists. Moreover, Glass (1992) states that men use the technique of loudness to emphasize points, while women use pitch and inflection for emphasis, and men tended to interrupt more often than women do; make direct accusations and statements; and ask fewer questions.

These features are not particular to any language or society. Algerian society for instance, presents similarities with what has been reported above by scholars. For example, women are good at using color words that were borrowed from French to describe things, such as *mauve, lavender aquamarine, azure and magenta*, etc, but most men do not use them.

1.11 Gender Stereotypes

In fact, one's views and attitudes are the result of their culture; however, certain norms of this culture lead to the creation of certain stereotypes that restrict our language use. These norms are learnt by different generation and reflected in linguistic forms. In this respect, Flay (1997: 57) describes stereotypes as:

> Generalized representations made of a priori without empirical or rational foundation, bringing to judge individuals according to their categorical appearances and resistant to supply the information, stereotypes will serve as the basis for social stigmatization processes, in other words the value judgments.[1]

Many scholars have agreed on the following stereotypes as they are the most common in many societies, not least in Arab-Speaking ones:

- Women talk more than men, and ask more questions.
- Women are gossips.
- Men are more assertive and direct.
- Women are more verbally skilled than men.
- Men use more swearing and vulgar language.
- Men talk more about things, facts; technology and travel, whereas women talk more about relationships and feelings.

Eddleston, Veiga and Powell (2003) argue that these socially constructed gender stereotypes are learned and engrained in our minds at a very young age. By age four, children have a clear understanding of appropriate attributes of their gender and strive to abide by these existing roles. In addition, these stereotypical gender roles also act as guidelines for workplace conduct as they subconsciously dictate how a person is to communicate and act based on their gender.

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[1] (The original text in French is « représentations généralisantes forgées à priori, sans fondement empirique ou rationnel, amenant à juger les individus en fonction de leur apparences catégorielles, et résistantes à l'apport d'information, ils vont servir de fondement aux processus de stigmatisation sociale, en d'autres termes de jugements de valeur » in S.M. FLAY, (1997), 'La compétence interculturelle dans le domaine de l'intervention éducative et sociale' in Cahier de l'actif . Active. Paris, p.57)

In this respect, Schneider (2005) outlines the common gender stereotypes in Table 1.1 entitled "Common Stereotypes of Women and Men Based on Psychological Research". The stereotypes mentioned below enforce gender discrimination in the workplace and can have a negative impact on female workers.

Table 1.1: Common Stereotypes of Women and Men Based on Psychological Research

Women's Traits	Men's Traits
Affectionate	Dominant
Appreciative	Achievement-oriented
Emotional	Active
Friendly	Ambitious
Sympathetic	Coarse
Mild	Forceful
Pleasant	Aggressive
Sensitive	Self-confident
Sentimental	Rational
Warm	Tough
Whiny	Unemotional

1.12 Gender Miscommunication

It is essential to note that in a world in which men and women are constantly interacting socially and professionally, it is important to consider how they communicate with one another and which obstacles they may face. It is commonly known to all that the gaps in communication arise when the intended message is not transmitted or misunderstood. The resultant miscommunication is mainly due to the different styles of communication amongst people. In this regard, Tannen (1990) states that women speak and hear a language of connection and intimacy, while men speak and hear a language of status and independence; a difference that makes communication between the sexes in workplace problematic. She adds (2001: 04) "communication between men and women can be like cross cultural communication, prey to a clash of conversational styles."

Maltz and Broker (1982) supports Tannen's view when they suggests that women and men's inabilities to communicate are due to their cultural differences as a result of being raised in separate gender-role groups. In this light, they (1982:205)

pointed out that: "inabilities to understand each other are not any one's person fault, but rather the result of wrongly interpreting communication according to one's own sub-cultural rules". According to some scholars such as (Fishman, 1983; West & Zimmerman, 1977, 1975; Maltz & Borker, 1982), another source of miscommunication is based on the different use of the minimal response from both men and women (e.g. "mmm-hmm" "uhh-huh"). Tannen (1986) claims that women insert these minimal phrase during the other person's turn at talk to mean 'I understand'; while men interpret these phrases as 'I agree'. Thus, when gender differences are measured in mixed-sex dyads, speakers should not only adapt their speech to the situation, but should also be affected by the specific speech behaviour of their partner to reconcile differences and facilitate communication in mixed-gender groups.

1.13 Communication Accommodation Theory

Communication Accommodation Theory is a social cognitive approach coined by Giles in 1973. It explains both the motivations and constraints acting upon speech shifts that occur in human interactions. Street and Giles (1982:205) argue that speech accommodation theory has two main premises: The first states that "communicators are motivated to adjust their speech styles with respect to one another as a means of expressing values, attitudes, and intentions", and the second premise suggests that how we respond to another depends on how we interpret and perceive the individual speech.

According to Street and Hopper (1982) there are two main accommodation processes described by this theory. First, convergence; occurs when "speakers integrate with or show social approval of another by making their speech more similar to that of the other" (1982:01). It is the process by which speakers shift their speech styles to become like those with whom they are communicating in their language, pronunciation; speech rates, pauses, utterance lengths; and vocal intensities to promote smooth communicative exchanges (Giles 1979); for example,

when lower status groups change their language, to more closely resemble the one of higher status groups, in hopes of obtaining their approval and acceptance. Second, divergence, occurs when "speakers dissociate with or show disapproval of others by making their speech diverge from that of other" (Street & Hopper 1982:01). According to Street (1991a), using divergence by speakers means trying to make their speech different from the other's for many reasons such as to distance themselves socially from their partners; establish autonomy and independence, or if the other is in an undesirable group with which the former does not want to be associated. Likewise, Giles *et al* (1987) assume that a person may vary his or her speech in order to enhance the understanding of the communication. For instance, a person comes to slow down his speech when communicating with an extremely fast talker in the hopes of slowing down the talker's rate of speech. Although a person may exhibit total convergence or divergence, she or he may choose partial convergence or divergence as Giles *et al* (1987:14/15) state that:

> A speaker initially exhibiting a rate of 50 words per minute can
> move to match exactly another speaker's rate of 100 per minute
> (total convergence) or can move to a rate of 75 words per minute
> (partial convergence).

1.14 Accommodation in Mix-sex Groups

In communication between two people, both interactants are coordinating their speech in order to accomplish goals, both mutual and individual. Women and men placed in mixed-sex dyads alter their behaviour compared to that in same-sex dyads (Bilous & Krauss, 1988; Mulac *et al*, 1988). Compared to same-sex dyads, women in mixed-sex dyads speak less and increase their use of disclaimers, hedges, and tag questions. One explanation for this situation-dependent behaviour is that in mixed-sex dyads, but not same-sex dyads, gender acts as a diffuse status characteristic. Women have a perceived lower status than men and thus, take on a more tentative and deferential role in conversations with men. But, diffuse status is not the only influence present in this situation. Speakers might also change their

linguistic behaviour in response to the speech style of their conversational partners, and speech style is related to the partner's gender (Holmes, 1995; Tannen, 1990).

Speech accommodation predicts that in mixed-sex groups, men and women accommodate in order to attain social integration. They tend to converge on at least some aspects of their speech in mixed-sex conversations (Bilous & Krauss, 1988; Mulac *et al*, 1988). Both women and men reduce their speech style in mixed-sex dyads, and this change is sometimes greater for women than for men. Additionally, Mulac *et al*, 1988 report that men with more traditional beliefs and a strong masculine sex-role identity are less likely to modify their speech when conversing with women; whereas women's accommodation is unaffected by their traditionalism or their sex-role identity. Coates (1986) notes that women tend to masculinize their speech when talking with males, in contrast; men accommodating to a feminine style occurs less frequently.

While it is still unclear for many scholars why women might accommodate more than men, Coupland & Giles (1991) conclude that women accommodate because they have a greater need for affiliation and social approval, a greater concern with promoting communication effectiveness; and less concern about deviating from a gender stereotype.

1.15 Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, the most important scholarly works in the field of language and gender have been summarized by revealing their different views concerning gender differences in terms of language use. In fact, differences between men and women language and the attitudes they have towards gender stereotypes and myths routinely lead to miscommunication with each gender misinterpreting the other's intentions. Though the idea that men and women live in different plants is a widespread belief, but it is also a myth being a reason to explain failure in workplace communication.

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH DESIGN AND PROCEDURE

2.1 Introduction

The second chapter is devoted to the explanation of the nature of the current research and the illustration of its design. It also explains the procedures followed in data collection and analysis. This chapter follow the design of the present investigation; research instruments that were used to collect data and the subject populations addressed through each research tool. The explanations for the methods used in data analysis are also provided in this chapter. Finally, the advantages and drawbacks of each research instrument and data analysis method are discussed.

2.2 Research Design
2.2.1 Instruments

Generally, there are several procedures of collecting data that are available to the researcher in the field such as questionnaires, interviews, participants' observations, note-taking, recording… These different ways of gathering information can supplement each other and hence boost the validity and dependability of the data since no one of these tools is without drawbacks. This fact constrained the researcher to follow a triangular approach in which she used multiple research instruments to investigate the same issue (a questionnaire and an interview).

2.3.1.1 Questionnaire

Questionnaire is one of the primary sources of obtaining data in research studies. They are a pre-planned set of questions designed by the researcher to yield specific information about the topic. These questions can appear in three types: closed-ended (or structured) questions which require answers with yes or no, open-ended (or unstructured) questions that are to be answered without choices to be limited to but give the respondents free space to provide their own answer, and

multiple choice questions which involve the subjects with a set of alternatives provided to select one or more answer between them.

As a matter of fact, closed-ended questions provide a quantitative or numerical data and open ended questionnaires present qualitative or text information: a point that implies that each type of questionnaire has its own strengths and weaknesses. Seliger and Shohamy (1989) suppose that closed-ended questionnaires are more efficient because of their ease of analysis. Others argue that open-ended questions can lead to a greater level of discovery as they accurately reflect what the respondents want to say though they are difficult to be analysed (Nunan, 1999; Alderson & Scott, 1996). Therefore, it is better if any questionnaire include both closed-ended and open-ended questions to complement each other.

Moreover, questionnaires are one of the time- efficient means of collecting data on a large-scale basis as they can be sent simultaneously to a large population in different locations, which make the results more uniformed. Besides, the respondents' anonymity makes them share sensitive information that cannot be observed easily (introspection). However, questionnaires have some disadvantages which should be kept in mind whenever and wherever they are used: the most critical point here is that when designing a questionnaire, the researcher should ensure that it is "valid, reliable and unambiguous" (Richards & Schmidt, 2002: 438). The validity in questionnaire design is concerned with whether the questions are believable and true and whether they are evaluating what it is supposed or purports to evaluate. Whereas, unambiguity in questionnaires is to avoid unclear questions that might lead to inaccurate and unrelated responses or cause misunderstanding. Following Richard's (2002) suggestions concerning questionnaire design, some points have been taken into account when designing the questionnaire of the present study:

- A brief introduction that elicits the purpose of the questionnaire.
- The necessity of each question and the type of information it provides.

- The choice of words that go hand in hand with the teachers' specialties, gender, social backgrounds (geographical areas).

- The questions in the questionnaire are not biased in one direction at the expense of other (s) like "Do you think that women use of politeness may affect the mixed-gender conversation in a positive way?"

- The questions are objective and not have leading suggestions in which teachers are forced to choose from the desired responses that are alike, for instance "How often do you communicate with your colleagues at the Department? Regularly, constantly, frequently, or always"

- The questions are structured from general to specific and from close to open ended questions.

- The questionnaire is as short as possible, only long enough to get the essential data.

In this present work, the aim of the questionnaire was to know if teachers are aware about the differences existing between males and females speech, and if these differences may cause problems of communication in the domain of work. The questionnaire was written in English since it is addressed to English Department teachers. It was offered to 20 teachers of both sexes; 10 men and 10 women to know how each gender thinks about the opposite gender speech. It was also used to know who is accused when communication failure happens, and to what extent they agree about some gender stereotypes in Algerian society and their attitude towards these clichés. The questionnaire was also used to show who tend to use more speech accommodation during mixed-sex conversation in the English Department. Therefore, the design of the questionnaire was based on both close-ended questions and open-ended ones to yield different and unexpected data. In fact, the questionnaire was composed of eight questions; while five of the questions were close-ended, the three others were open-ended. The first ones were formed to require some personal information about the respondents; then, there was a set of questions that were meant to investigate the speech differences between male and females teachers and their influence on the communication in the Department.

Finally, the last two questions were coined to explore the use of speech accommodation by teachers during mixed-group conversations. (Questionnaire schedule in Appendix A)

2.3.2.2 Interview

The interview is another crucial method for data collection. It is a part of qualitative methods since it helps the researcher to get in a direct contact with the participants. In fact, the researcher cannot observe the informants' feelings and thinking, so that interviewing is a key to understand the respondents' opinions, attitudes and how they perceive and interpret things. In this regard, Kumar (2011: 145) describes the main difference between a questionnaire and an interview as follows:

> [...] it is the interviewer who asks the questions (and if necessary, explains them) and records the respondent's replies on an interview schedule, and in the latter replies are recorded by the respondents themselves.

Burns (1997: 329) adds also that an interview is "a verbal interchange, often face to face, though the telephone may be used, in which an interviewer tries to elicit information, beliefs or opinions from another person." Moreover, Kumar (2011) believes that, in order to gain rich data, the interviewer's task in addition to reading questions to respondents and recording their answers is to take into consideration the importance of the questions' format of the interview. In this sense, Kumar (ibid: 154) writes that:

> When interviewing a respondent, you, as a researcher, have the freedom to decide the format and content of questions, decide the way you want to ask them and choose the order in which they are to be asked.

As far as the form of interview is concerned, the characteristics of the three main types of interviews have been taking into consideration, as the following figure shows:
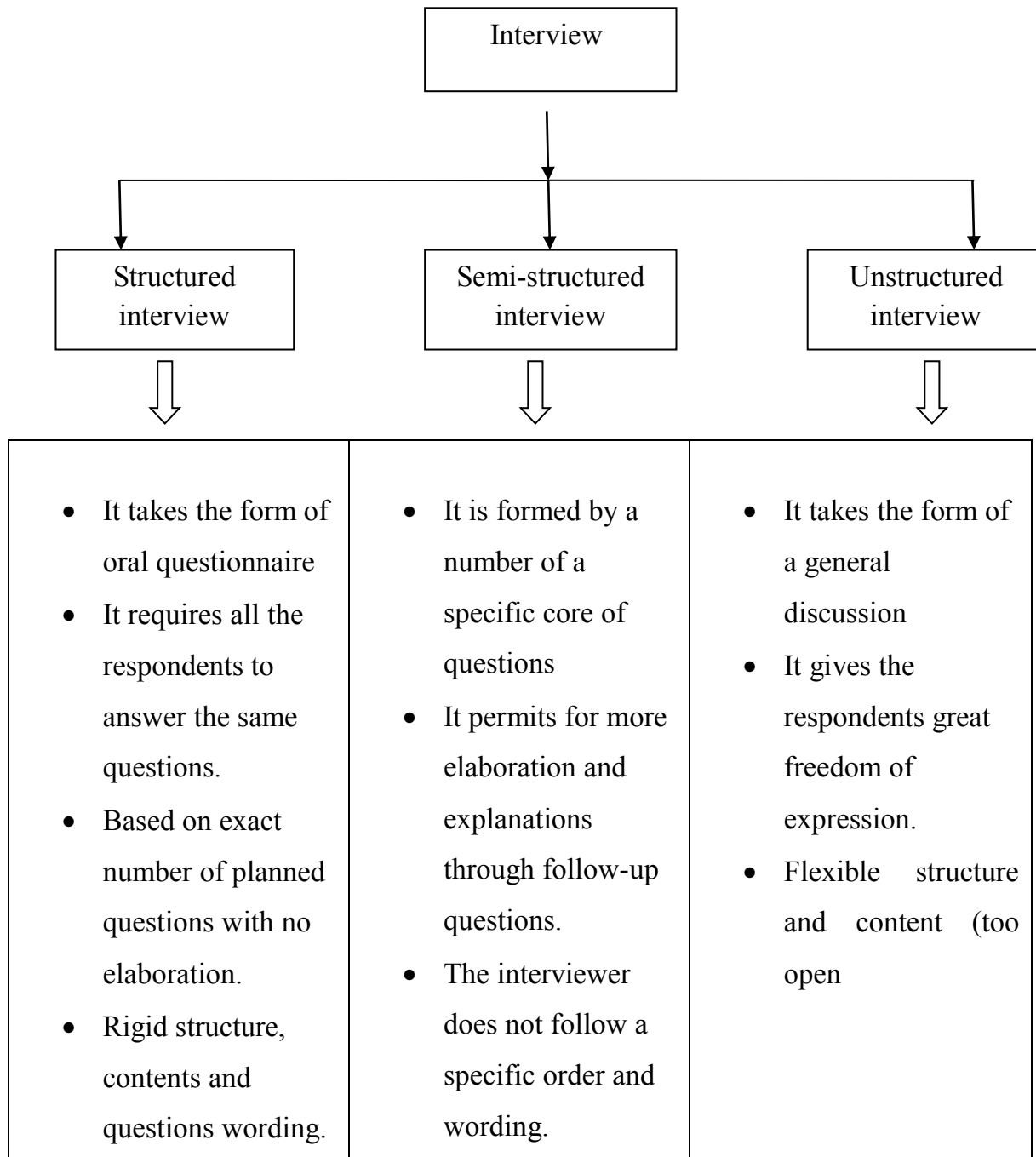
Figure 2.1 Types of Interview

Therefore, the interview designed in this study was based on semi-structured interview for measuring men and women's attitudes and opinions towards each other. Moreover, this type of interview not only allows to elaborate and explain the questions to the teachers, but also provides the desired information about the topic through the use of 'follow-up questions' as well.

In fact, the subject of language and gender in workplace is a sensitive and complex issue. Thus, the questions of this semi-structured interview were designed to cover four main areas:

First, to measure the attitudes of male teachers towards female teaches' speech style and vice versa. Next, to see the teachers' opinions concerning gender stereotypes adopted in Algerian society. Then, to identify the communication problems that teachers face in workplace because of gender differences. Finally, to recognize the speech modifications appear while teachers interact with the opposite gender colleagues at the Department. (Interview schedule in Appendix B)

2.2.2 Subjects

Selecting a subject population is the first and the most difficult step in data collection since it identifies research boundaries. In this sense, Hartas (2010: 67) defines the sample population as follows:

> A population is a group of individuals or organizations that share
> the same characteristic [...] what defines a population is not its size
> (it may be small or large) but the presence of a specific
> characteristic (sample).

An appropriate sample should include three main characteristics: representativeness, generalizability, and homogeneity. Representativeness implies the distribution of characteristics among the elements of the sample is the same as the distribution of those characteristics among the total population; generalizability involves that the sample should enable the researcher to generalize the research results to the larger population, and homogeneity means that the sample has to 'look

like' the population from which it was selected in all respects that are potentially relevant to the study. The larger the sampling error (the sample members do not share the same characteristics), the less representative the sample is, and thus the less generalizable are the findings. In this light, Hartas (ibid) highlights the following statement:

> How the sample is selected is very important for the validity of a study. To generalize research findings from the sample to the population, the sample has to be representative of the population from which it was drawn."

2.2.3 The Questionnaire and Interview Population

Regarding the fact that universities are considered as one of the main mixed-gender workplaces in Algeria where teachers may have daily interactions, the population approached in this research is teachers of the English Department, at Abou Bakr Belkaid University of Tlemcen. It is worth mentioning that the number of teachers in this Department is around 50 teachers (males and females). However, the sample population to be addressed through the questionnaire is selected randomly, 20 teachers, 10 men and 10 women from different social backgrounds (geographical places), teaching experiences, age, and who have also diverse dialects and accents...As to the interview, 3 respondents: 2 male teachers and one female have also been selected randomly.

2.3.3 Procedure

After designing the two research instruments to be used in collecting data, the next step was to approach the subject populations concerned with each tool in this triangular approach.

2.3.3.1 Questionnaire Administration

There was only an English version of the questionnaire for the teachers to investigate the attitude of teachers towards each other's speech, their degree of agreement with some gender stereotypes, and if gender differences may lead to misunderstanding as mentioned before. The administration of the questionnaire was planned to take place where the participants interact daily (the English Department of Tlemcen University), addressing 20 teachers that represent 40% of the total population. In fact, the procedure took in all about one week as not all teachers were present daily. They were asked kindly to fill in the questionnaire regarding their experience as a team member at the Department. Fortunately, all the teachers have completed and returned the questionnaire.

2.3.3.2 Interview Procedure

The interviews were conducted by getting prior permission from the interviewees for audio recording and by adjusting time and location for the interviews. It was made clear to the interviewees that anonymity and confidentiality would be maintained. The purpose of the interviews and objectives of the research were discussed to make the respondents familiar with the significance of the research. Having the interview schedule in hand, the interviewer asked the questions and the interviewee freely answered and talked about the issues under discussion. It is important to mention here that the total number of the interviews was three, and the recording of each interview took about ten to twenty minutes. After finishing the interviews, the recordings were transcribed orthographically (See appendix C).

2.3.4 Data Analysis

The most crucial area the researcher should deal with, when moving to data analysis, is to know first what is meant by qualitative data and quantitative data, their analysis, and what is the difference between the two.

In sociolinguistic studies, like any other field of linguistics, the selection of the appropriate methods is very significant and crucial in a research. In this regard, Duff

(2002:14) mentions that the problems related to the choice of the methods of research and asserts this fact in the following words:

> The approach or method is crucially linked to the research question or problem under investigation, the purpose of the study (e.g., exploratory, interpretive, descriptive, explanatory, confirmatory, predictive) and the type of data and population one is working with.

The actual selection of a method usually comes after determining the research questions. The researcher has to make a choice from qualitative and quantitative methods. Conventionally, these two methods are defined in opposition to each other. The following examples are taken from the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English edited by Bullon et.al. (2003:1340-1341) which define qualitative and quantitative paradigms in the following words: Qualitative, "relating to the quality or standard of something rather than the quantity". Quantitative: "relating to amounts rather than the quality or standard of something". In these definitions, both paradigms are defined as opposites. However, Duff (1994) asserts that researchers should view the two approaches to be complementary rather than incompatible. She further claims that the two methods can and should be combined since relying on one method is not sufficient.

From the beginning of the present study, the selection of appropriate and relevant research methods is taken into consideration to identify the research problems. For that purpose, the methods used in this study are selected in accordance with the research questions and resources at hand.

2.3.4.1 Qualitative analysis

According to Seliger and Shohamy (1989), qualitative data are based on unstructured or semi-structured research instruments which are methodologically flexible procedures such as interviews, group discussions, observations... In fact, qualitative data are mainly collected through language records usually in the form

of words in oral or written modes the feature that makes their analysis a difficult task since such analysis should be described in sufficient detailed. Moreover, they (ibid) explain the importance of assessing the reliability of qualitative data in the research process. Although the term 'Reliability' is a concept used for testing or evaluating quantitative data, the idea is most often used in all kinds of data. In the main, a good quality research can be achieved when reliability is a concept to evaluate quality with a purpose of "generating understanding", i.e. it deals with the consistency, dependability and replicability of the results obtained from a piece of research.

As a result, Seliger and Shahamy (1989) suggest some common features of qualitative data that should be taken into consideration when dealing with such method of data analysis. They consider qualitative analysis as a systematic and orderly process which requires discipline and organised mind. Comparison is the fundamental tool of qualitative analysis. It is based on a search of similarities and differences among data. In order to make comparison easier in this study, data should be summarized or condensed. In other words, data collected during procedures should be converted to a number of categories as it will be dealt with in the next chapter. Analysis of qualitative data is not to be undergone as a final phase. In fact, it is beneficial to accompany qualitative research by a "reflective activity": For instance, in the current study, notes have been taken about anything which happened during the data collection process. Finally, no one can claim that there is just one way to analyse qualitative data: there are plenty of possible ways to analyse data of the same issue.

2.3.4.2 Quantitative Analysis

Following Aliaga and Gunderson (2002), quantitative research focuses on collecting numerical data which are analysed by the use of statistical methods in order to give a general description of the issue. Unlike qualitative data, quantitative data are based on structured research instruments such as questionnaires, surveys, tests... Therefore, it can be subject to statistical techniques manipulation.

Quantitative research is the only way to study *numerical change*, like the study of falling or rising of a phenomenon, or going up or down... In this light, Wildemuth (1993: 451) states the following:

> […] the positivist approach [quantitative approach], with its goal of discerning the statistical regularities of behaviour, is oriented toward counting the occurrences and measuring the extent of the behaviours being studied.

The main strengths of quantitative data collection are that it provides numeric estimates, opportunity for relatively uncomplicated data analysis, data which are verifiable. Quantitative data also gives information which are comparable between different communities within different locations, as well as data which do not require analytical judgement beyond consideration of how information will be presented in the dissemination process. As to the present study, it is both quantitative and qualitative. The data collected by means of questionnaire and interview are analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively as the following figure shows:

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS	teachers' Questionnaires (10 men & 10 women)	teachers' Interviews (2 men & 1 women)
DATA	**Answers of:** *5 close-ended questions *3 open-ended question	**Answers of:** *07 questions *follow-up questions
DATA ANALYSIS	Quantitative & Qualitative	Quantitative & Qualitative
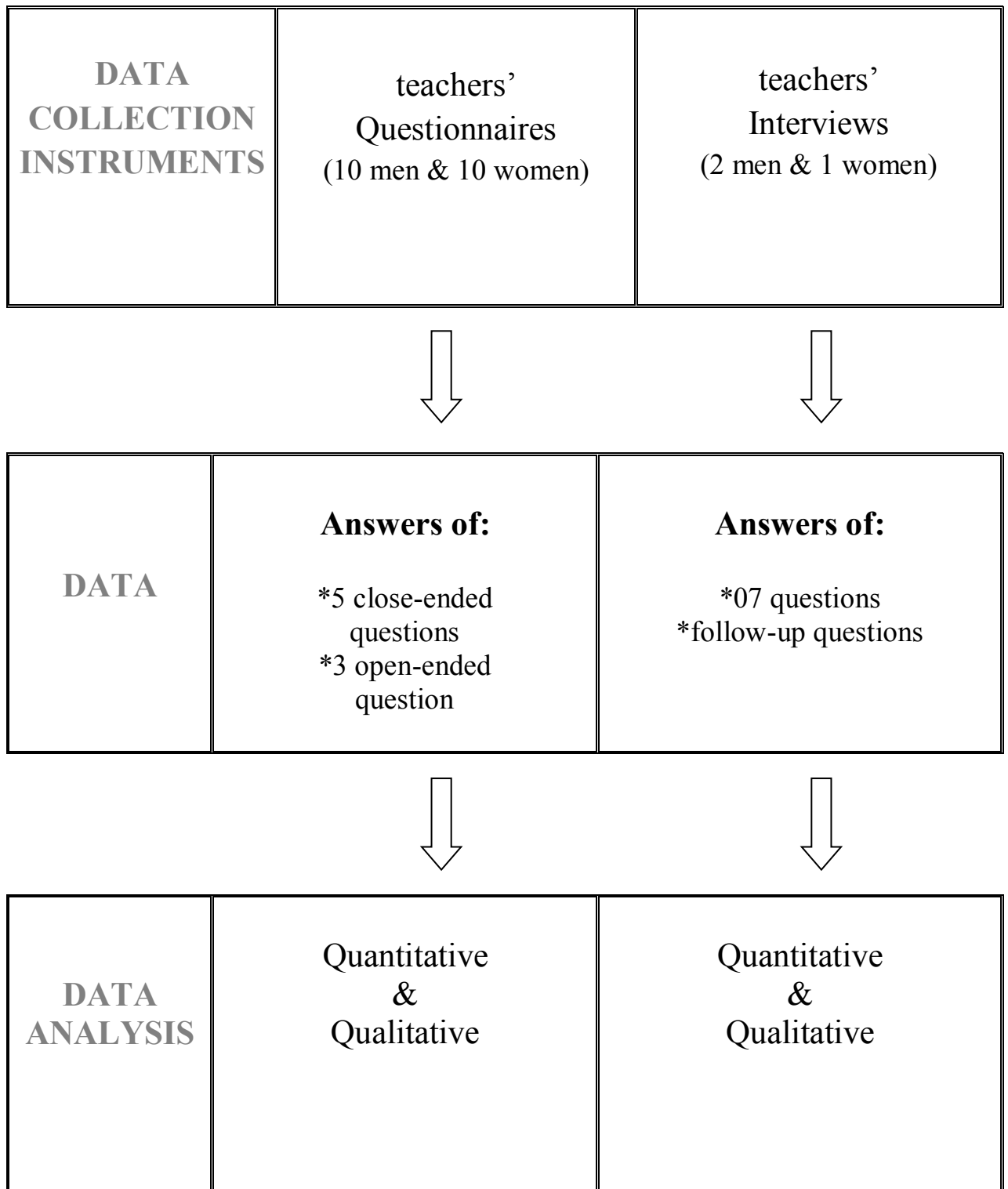
Figure 2.2 Research Design

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter sheds light on the research methodology that has been dealt with. In fact, the researcher has described the research instruments used in the present study as well as the purpose behind using each procedure, and under which measures and conditions the sample population has been selected. Additionally, in this chapter, the research methodology was discussed along with the rationale for the selection of research tools adopted in a triangular approach (questionnaire and interview). Then, the qualitative and quantitative methods used in this study were selected according to the purpose and nature of the study, which was an attempt to draw a picture about teachers' views and attitudes about each other's speech in mixed-gender conversation. Finally, these methods were blended to achieve more authentic and valid results. As any other field work, the present study has encountered some difficulties:

- First, though there are many extensive studies on language and gender in Western society, only few works have been done in the Algerian context. This fact can be considered as a limitation in gathering information for the literature review.
- Secondly, it was impossible to make the interview with all teachers. On the contrary, it was very hard to find teachers off to make interviews with a huge number of Master students as they were busy with lectures and preparing the exams.

However, these limitations were insignificant in comparison with the facilities offered by the other respondents since:

- The teachers did not show any refusal neither to be recorded during the interview, nor to answer the questionnaire. In fact, the return rate of the questionnaire was very high which helps to collect sufficient data in order to undergo the present study.

The following chapter will deal with data analyses in addition to the results' discussion.

CHAPTER 3

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALSIS

3.1 Introduction

After discussingthe research methodology and describing the procedures usedin collecting data, the next step wasto analyse and discuss the results.This chapter will be devoted first to set forth the findings obtained from each research instrument implemented in the current study (the questionnaire and the interview). After being analysed and illustrated with tables and graphs, the results of the two research tools are discussed and crossed-checked with each other.

3.2 Analysis of Teacher's Questionnaire

The aim of the questionnaire in the present work was to collect data in order to answer the research questions as well as to prove or reject the suggested hypotheses. The questionnairewas meantto explore the influence of gender speech differences on communication in mixed-sex workplaces.In this study, the questionnaire was addressed to the teachers of the English Department,at the University of Tlemcen, to seek whether theyare aware of these differences and how they react to them.

The purpose behind using a questionnaire as a basic research instrument was to obtain both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data were used to know how much teachers of opposite gender interact successfully in the place of work though they have alternate speech styles. On the other hand, qualitative data were adopted to describe the problems of communication that teachers faceand caused mainly by gender differences.Therefore, the questionnaire were distributed to 20 teachers: 10 men and 10 women. The administration of the questionnaire took place till April.

3.2.1 The Results

This sub-section is devoted to set forth the results obtained from teachers' questionnaire whichis composed of 8 questions.Indeed, 20 teachers have answered the questions regarding their experiences as team members at the Department. It has been dealt with the outcome of each question separately:

Demographic Data: Respondents' Work Experience

The following table providesa classification of the sample population regarding their teaching experience at the Department of English.

Table3.1 Teachers' Teaching Experience at the Department

Teaching Experience (years)	Teachers (males & females)	
	AF	*RF*
1-5	6	30%
6-10	8	40%
11-15	4	20%
Above 15	2	10%
Total	20	100%

*Note:**AF**= Absolute Frequency (out of 20);* ***RF**= Relative Frequency (%)*

This table shows that the highest percentage (40%) of the teachers' answers about their teaching experience were around 6 to 10 years, while 30% of them are teaching at the English Department from one to five years. However, only 10% of the sample population have experienced more than 15 years in teaching English.

Question 1: How often do you communicate with your colleagues at the Department?

The first question of the questionnaire instrument, after demographic inquiries,was aboutthe frequency of the interaction with colleagues at the Department in general.The results of this question are illustrated in the following table (3.2) and in figure 3.1.

Table 3.2 Frequency ofMale and Female Teachers' Interaction with their Colleagues

		Never	Sometimes	Always
Male Teachers	*AF*	0	2	8
	RF	0%	20%	80%
Female Teachers	*AF*	0	2	8
	RF	0%	20%	80%

*Note:**AF**= Absolute Frequency (out of 20); **RF**= Relative Frequency (%)*
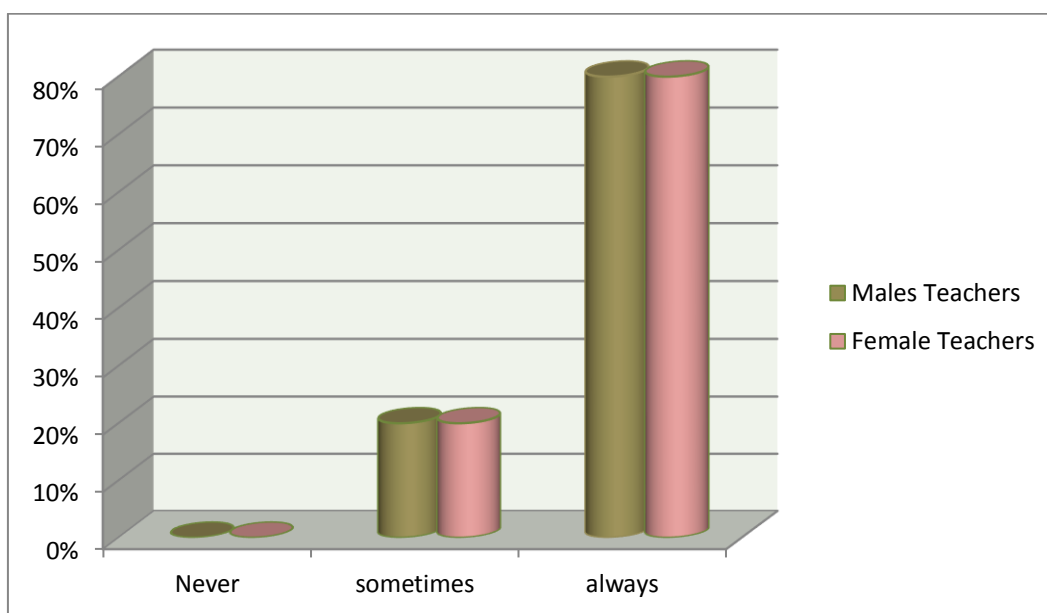
Figure3.1 Frequency of Male and Female teachers' interaction with their colleagues

The findings displayed above show that all teachers admit communicating with their colleagues in the Department. The graph, in figure 3.1, indicated that answers' percentages among men and women teachers were almost the same: 80% of men and 80% of women declared that they 'always' interact with their colleagues, while only 20% of men, as well as 20% of women, communicate sometimes with each other at place of work. Actually, no one of the respondents

among men and women teachers reported that they 'never' interact with the other team members at the Department.

Question 2: Do you prefer communication with the same gender teachers, or you have no problem with mixed-gender conversation?(If there is a problem, please state why?)

The followinginquiry of the questionnaire was divided into two parts. The first part was about whether the teachers interact with the opposite gender colleagues, or they prefer the same gender to engage in conversation with. In this part, the respondents were given three options to choose one among (male, female, or both). The second part was devoted to state any problems the teachers have with mixed-gender interaction. Unanimous answer was expected and indeed all the teachers (100%), males and females,claimed that they encounter no problem with mixed-sex interaction in workplace. According to all respondents, since they all work together as colleaguesin the same institutionand share the same object, they should communicate with each other regardless their gender.

Question 3: During mixed-gender conversations, do you feel that there are differences between male and female teachers' speech? (Yes or no)

Then, If yes, how?

The fourth question was one of the basic pillars of the current research study. It focused on the speech differences that both genders notice when speaking with each other. The first part of this question aimed to discover if they are aware of these differences. This part yielded the results shown in the following table and figure:
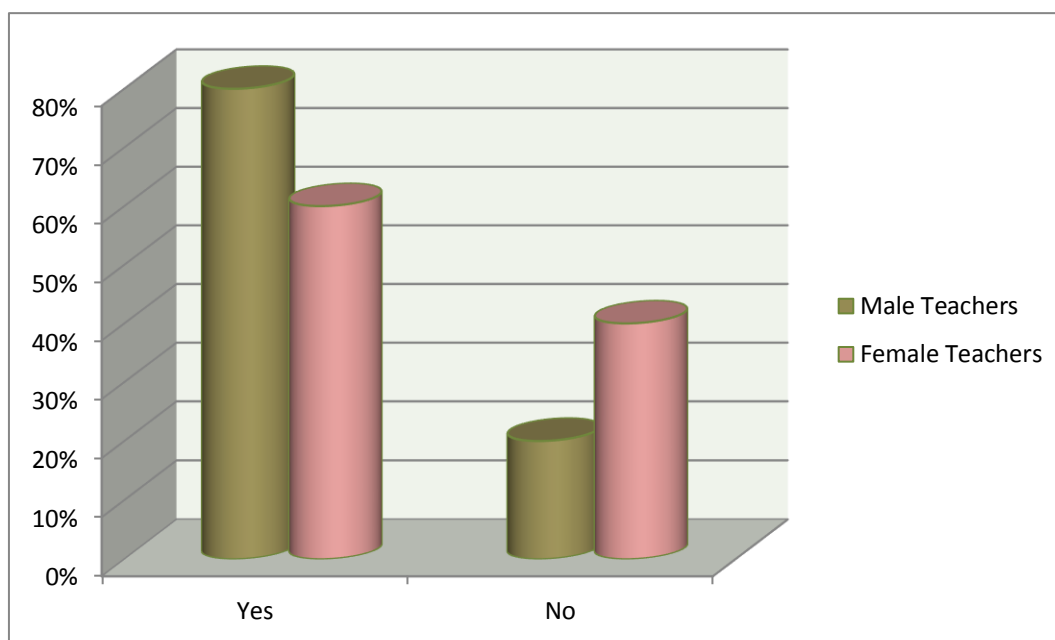
Figure 3.2 Teacher's Awareness about Gender Differences in Language Use

At first glance, the results revealed that both male and female teachers are aware about gender differences in terms of speech. The graph shows that male teachers exhibit greater tendency to believe that there is a particular disparity between their linguistic behaviours and that of females. In fact, 80% among male teachers claimed that they feel the difference between their speech styles and females' ones during conversation. Concerning female teachers, 60% of them are aware about gender differences and they feel the diversity in males and females speech styles, while the remaining 40% do not really feel any alteration in language use during mixed-gender conversation.

The second part of the same question (If yes, how?) was directed to those who have chosen 'yes' as an answer. Teachers were given free space to mention the kind of differences they notice in the speech of male and female teachers resulted to a number of gender differences in language use which were categorized regarding their nature:

A. Phonological: Some of the respondents maintained that men and women may share the same dialect but they differ in its phonological features such as the use of the variable /q/ which is realised as [?] mainly by female speakers in Tlemcen,

whereas men tend to avoid using [?] as it is socially stigmatized feature (Here, it is a case of Arabic). Additionally, some other teachers added that men and women have different voices due to the rapid growth of the larynx (voice mutation) which resulted in different pitches, tone, pace...

B. Grammatical: Many of the questionnaire respondents stated that men and women have different choice of words depending on their cultural background, status, and/or social and physical separation from childhood. Therefore, men use more strong and direct expression, while women use softer words. Besides, some teachers said that women give more details when speaking while a man can express his idea in concise words.

C. Levels of formality: a considerable number of teachers claimed that women are more conservative in their language as they stick to the formal register with others more than men.

D. Choice of Topics: Some teachers speak about the differences in terms of the diverse topics that attract each of men and women out of teaching conversations.

Question 4: To what extent do you agree with the following gender stereotypes and clichés in society concerning speech characteristics?

As to question 4, it was meant to measure the teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards some of the most common gender stereotypes that are overgeneralized by society members as they pertain to either men or women.

Table 3.3: Male Teachers' Attitudes towards Gender Stereotypes in Speech

	Gender Stereotypes	Agree		Do not agree	
		AF	*RF*	*AF*	*RF*
1	Men are more dominate in conversation	6	60%	4	40%
2	Women talk more than men	9	90%	1	10%
3	Men are more assertive and direct in their speech	6	60%	4	40%
4	Women are more polite than men	5	50%	5	50%
5	Men interrupt women more than women do	4	40%	6	60%
6	Women are more verbally skilled than men	5	50%	5	50%

*Note:**AF**= Absolute Frequency (out of 20); **RF**= Relative Frequency (%)*
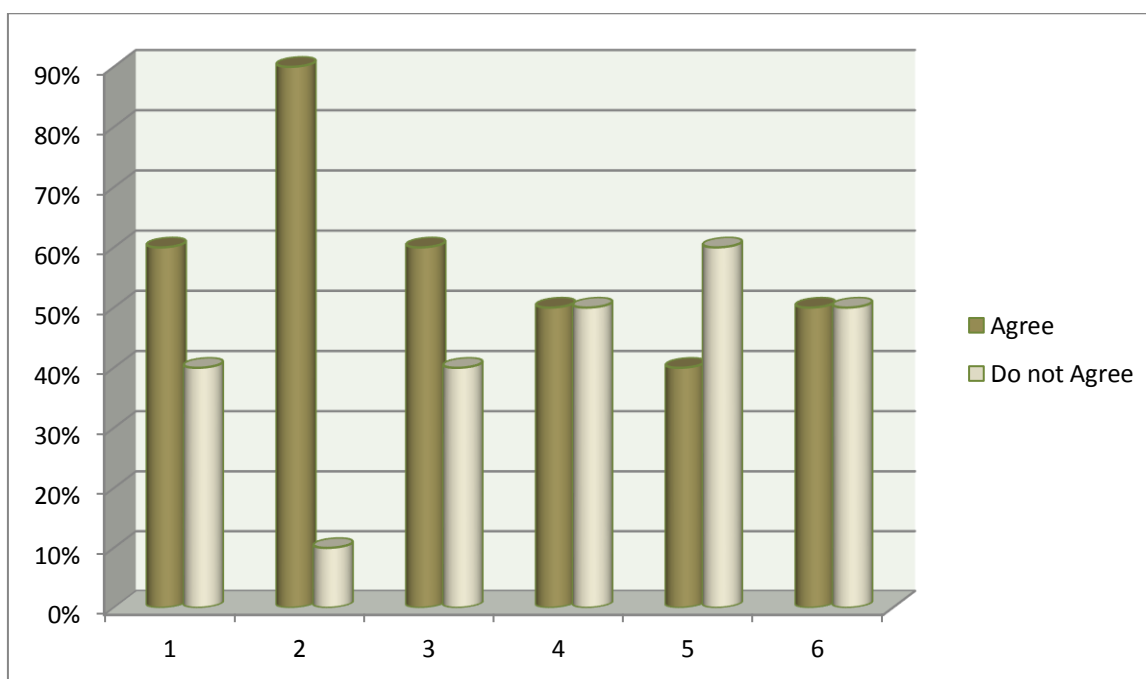
Figure 3.3:Male Teachers' Attitudes towards Gender Stereotypes in Speech

On the whole, the majority of male teachers do agree with the presented gender stereotypes concerning speech. However, after the assessment of the above results, 60% of males show negative attitudes towards the point that men interrupt women more than women do; whereas, they were divided into two groups: 50% supporting and 50% opposing some stereotypes such as 'women are more polite

than men in their speech' and 'they are more verbally skilled'. The second part of the analysis of this question reflects female teachers' attitudes towards speech stereotypes related to gender. These findings are summarized in the following table and figure.

Table 3.4: Female Teachers' Attitude towards Gender Stereotypes in Speech

	Gender Stereotypes	Agree		Do not Agree	
		AF	*RF*	*AF*	*RF*
1	Men are more dominate in conversation	4	40%	6	60%
2	Women talk more than men	6	60%	4	40%
3	Men are more assertive and direct in their speech	7	70%	3	30%
4	Women are more polite than men	8	80%	2	20%
5	Men interrupt women more than women do	2	20%	8	80%
6	Women are more verbally skilled than men	8	80%	2	20%

*Note:**AF**= Absolute Frequency (out of 20); **RF**= Relative Frequency (%)*
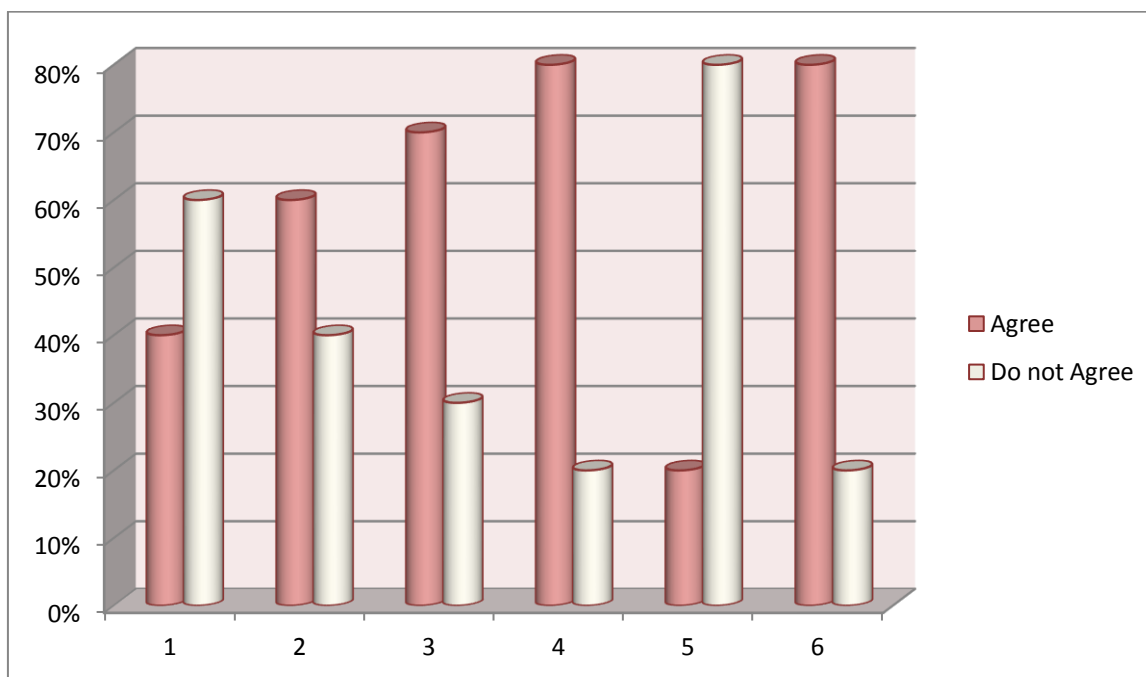
Figure 3.4: Female Teachers' Attitude towards Gender Stereotypes in Speech

Table 3.4 and the corresponding figure clearly demonstrate that female teachers also agree with gender stereotypes that are extremely common in our society. The main findings were that 80% of female respondents refute the point that 'men interrupt women more than women do' and 60% of them also disagree with idea that 'men are more dominant in conversation'.

Question 5: Do you think that these differences lead to misunderstandings between male and female teachers at workplace? (Yes or no?)

(If yes, please mention any examples of misunderstanding)

Table 3.5: Teachers' Views about the Effect of Speech Differences on Communication

		Yes	No
Male Teachers	*AF*	4	6
	RF	20%	30%
Female Teachers	*AF*	2	8
	RF	10%	40%
Total	*AF*	6	14
	RF	30%	70%

*Note:**AF**= Absolute Frequency (out of 20); **RF**= Relative Frequency (%)*

In fact, the results obtained imply that both men and women believe that the gender differences in terms of speech do not cause any kind of misunderstanding or communication problems. The findings revealed that 70% of teachers, regardless their gender, said that the variances existing in speech styles do not affect the process of interaction with the opposite sex;while, only 30% of respondents think that these differences cause communication failure in workplace.

The second part of the question (if yes, please mention any examples of misunderstanding) was devoted to the explanation of the main problems of communication that teachers face in mixed-sex interaction. The 30% of teachers

whodeclared the existence of some misunderstanding in speech between teachers, in the first part of the question, added many claims about the topic which reveal the following:

Many teachers stated that some behaviour is sometimes misinterpreted by the opposite gender teachers in terms of each one's roles such as: male teachers may misinterpret women colleagues' kindness in speech as they are trying to attract their attention. Others argued that when men use some strong words to emphasise something, women may think that they are blaming them or imposing their opinion. Some others said that men and women tend to see the other gender as the same gender and expect them to be as such. Nevertheless, only few teachers have considered 'women talkativeness' as a communication barrier.

Question 6: Do you use the same speech style when speaking to males or females?

Table 3.6: Teachers' Use of the same Speech Styles with the Opposite Sex Colleagues

		Yes	No
Male Teachers	*AF*	0	10
	RF	0%	100%
Female Teachers	*AF*	4	6
	RF	40%	60%

*Note:**AF**= Absolute Frequency (out of 20); **RF**= Relative Frequency (%)*

Table3.5 reveals that the majority of teachers, all males and 60% of females, support the second proposition 'No', whereas about 40% of females claim that they use the same speech style with all colleagues regardless their gender.

Question 7: Do you accommodate (choose specific forms of expressions thatare similar with those of the other) during mixed-sex conversation? (Please, answer regarding your gender)

The next question was coined to investigate whether the teachers of the Department change some features in their speech style when speaking to the

opposite sex. The 20 teachers' answers were accumulated; and then, the responses of each gender were analysed separately. The male respondents' answers are presented in the following table and figure:

Table 3.7: Male Teachers' Speech Accommodation

		Yes		No	
		AF	*RF*	*AF*	*RF*
a	Using standard or prestigious language with female colleagues	6	60%	4	40%
b	Using polite and formal forms of language	10	100%	0	0%

*Note:**AF**= Absolute Frequency (out of 20); **RF**= Relative Frequency (%)*
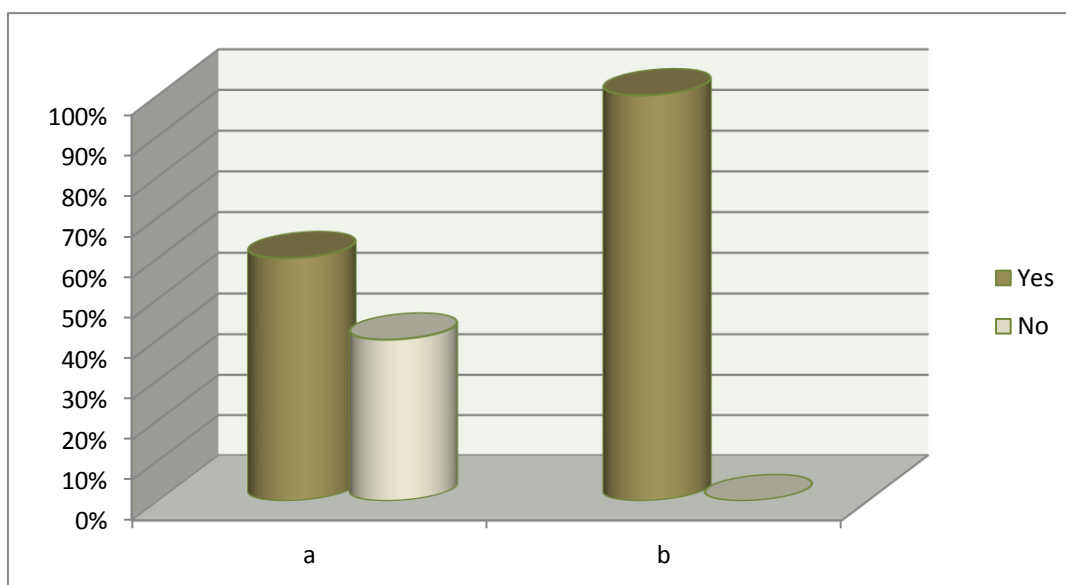
Figure 3.5: Male Teachers' Speech Accommodation

The frequencies obtained after the analysis of question 7unveiledthe fact that male teachers accommodate their speech while communicating with their female colleagues. While all male teachers declared they shift to the use of more polite and formal forms of language with women in place of work, 60% of them stated they use prestigious and standard language as well. As to female answers, they are illustrated in table 3.7 and figure 3.6 as well:

Table 3.8: Female Teachers' Speech Accommodation

		Yes		No	
		AF	*RF*	*AF*	*RF*
a	Using loudness, directives and interruption	3	30%	7	70%
b	Using strong expressions	6	60%	4	40%

*Note:**AF**= Absolute Frequency (out of 20); **RF**= Relative Frequency (%)*
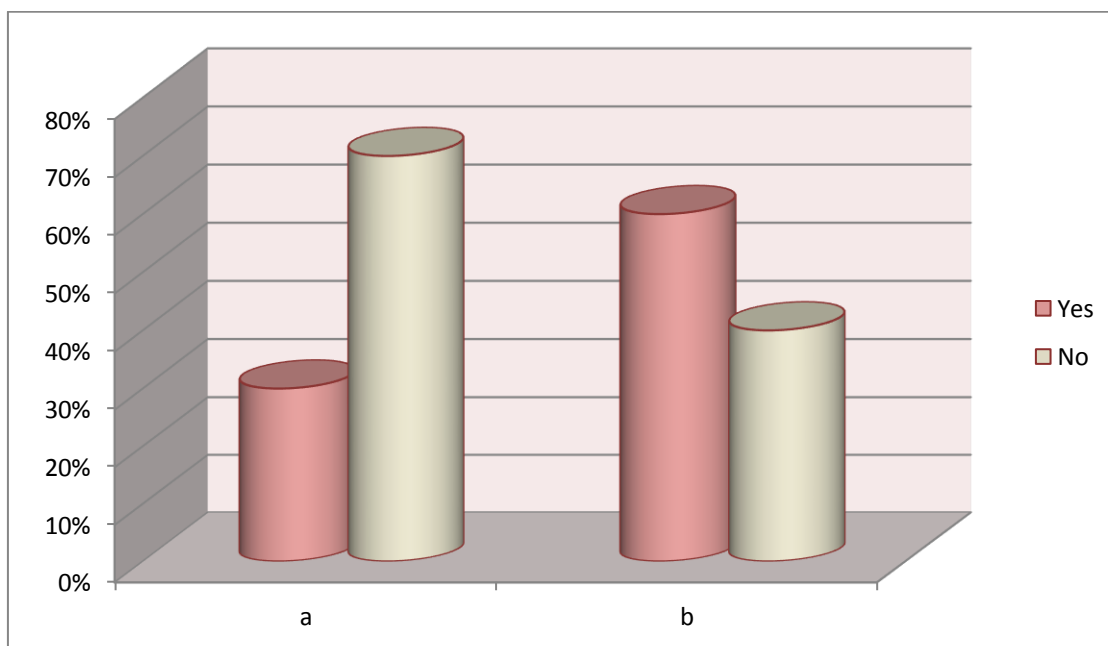
Figure 3.6: Female Teachers' Speech Accommodation

In fact, the results indicate that female teachers seem to show less style-shifting comparing with males. Only 30% female teachers declare that they tend to use loudness, directives and interruption with male colleagues, while 60% admit using strong expressions when the context requires.

Question 8: Do you use accommodation as: (you may choose more than one option)?

      The last part of the questionnaire was devoted to explore the reasons behind using speech accommodation in the place of work. The teachers were given multiple options, while they had the opportunity to choose more than one. The answers of this inquiry were translated in frequencies and demonstrated as follows:

Table 3.9: Reasons of Speech Accommodation Use (Male and Female Teachers)

		Male Teachers		Female Teachers	
		AF	*RF*	*AF*	*RF*
a	a natural desire to facilitate communication and help better understand the message	10	100%	9	90%
b	a way to overcome communication barriers	8	80%	8	80%
c	a way to be attracted to the other gender by being similar to them	1	10%	1	10%
d	a desire to appear more congruent with the person with whom you are interacting	3	30%	2	20%

*Note: **AF**= Absolute Frequency (out of 20); **RF**= Relative Frequency (%)*
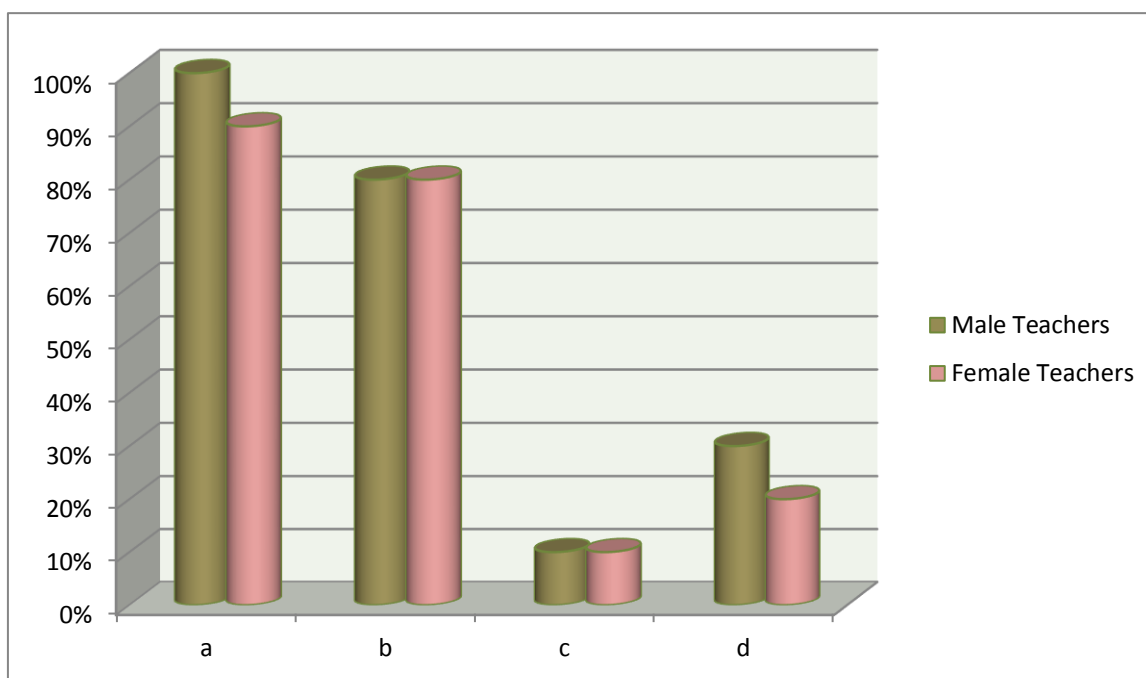
Figure 3.7: Reasons of Speech Accommodation Use (Male and Female Teachers)

As it was expected, the majority of teachers have chosen more than one answer. The results make plain that the most important reasons that lead both males and females to accommodate their speech, either consciously or unconsciously, with the opposite sex are 'to facilitate communication as much possible' and 'to help better understand the message in addition 'to overcoming communication barriers'. As the graph in figure 3.7 shows, 30% of male and 20% of female respondents have considered 'appearing more congruent' with the person with whom you are interacting is also one of the main reasons behind using speech accommodation. However, only 10% of males and 10% of females wish to attract the other gender by modifying their speech style and being similar to them.

3.2.2 Discussion of the Results

After the presentation of the questionnaire results, this space is devoted to the discussion of the findings in details. In fact, the questionnaire unveiled crucial information about the interaction between male and female teachers at the English Department of Tlemcen University, and their degree of awareness about gender

differences in terms of language use. Also, the way the questionnaire was formed (the use of close-ended questions) provided the opportunity to quantify the results acquired.

The first of these emerging quantitative data is the high percentage of the teachers who have more than 5 years of teaching experience at the Department, which is a very important detail as it means that they are already adapted with the place of work and indeed they do not face problems of integration or unfamiliarity with their colleagues. Besides, the data obtained from the teachers' questionnaire proved to have no correlation with lack of communication because all teachers, males and females, admitted interacting always with their colleagues at the Department.

As it was expected, all respondents interact with each other regardless their gender and mixed-sex conversations represent no problem for them. In fact, male and female teachers all work together and as they are obliged to share and discuss many issues such as; curriculum and syllabus design, coordination issues, exams planning…They are also free to exchange their thoughts concerning other topics rather than teaching; till now no problem appears. Actually, the problem lies in the fact that some teachers, who represent 40% of women and 20% of men respondents, are not aware about the differences existed between male and female speech. They declared that they do not feel any dissimilarity when interacting with both gender teachers. This point implies one of two possibilities: either the other gender tend to modify his/her speech while interacting with the opposite one so that they do not feel the difference, or these differences are considered as social norms which are not learned but acquired from society.

However, it cannot be denied that the educational level reflects to a high extent the teachers' awareness about the differences between men and women speech styles. The majority of teachers explain their awareness through illustrating several features of speech that male and female teachers differ in, such as: phonological, grammatical, levels of formality and even the choice of topics.

According to the specialists in the field, these differences in speech are attributed to many factors mainly biological and socio-cultural factors:

A. *Biological Factors:* while the difference between male and female brains allows male to score better in mathematical abilities, it enables women to learn faster and accumulate a large vocabulary than men; therefore, it can be said that women communicate more effectively. Yet, the anatomical differences between men and women also create diversity of voice pitch, tone, rate, pace…

B. *Socio-cultural Factors:* The social background certainly affects the language use between both genders. Any individual is the descendant of his/her society because any changes in the speech community, in which they lives and interacts, will affect their identity, thoughts and their choice of language. The Algerian society imposes on women to be conservative in their linguistic behaviour; while, the workplace environment also plays a crucial role in shaping men and women speech. For instance, men who have chosen to be 'fashion designers' have much interaction with females more than males; as a result, they will tend to use some speech features and expressions that are socially attributed to females i.e. they have 'effeminate speech'. On the other hand, the same experience happens with females who joined the customs or the army: their speech spontaneously will become closer to that of their male counterparts because of the regular interaction with them.In this regard, Bem (1993) describes gender norms include a lens of 'gender polarization', the ideology that women's and men's linguistic behaviour is dichotomous. When viewed through this lens, women and men who diverge from gender norms may be perceived as speaking and behaving 'like the other sex'. Furthermore, if women and men do speak in similar ways, they are likely to be evaluated differently (Tannen, 1994a). In this study, teachers at the Department of English are aware of the social norms and they respect them. They pay more attention to their choice of words when interacting with

teachers of the opposite sex, and this fact decreases any possibility of conflict and misunderstanding when communicating.

The next point that should be given a share in this discussion is the impact of gender stereotypes on teachers. As to teachers' attitudes towards the common gender stereotypes concerning speech style, it is clear that the majority of male and female respondents agree on the idea that women talk more than men, but in reality no study has systematically confirmed this overgeneralized view yet. It is the society that imposes female speakers, not least teachers, to choose formal and polite forms of language while communicating. These gender roles identify the behaviour expected of a woman or a man in a particular culture. Moreover, both male and female teachers shared unexpected disagreements with the stereotype that men interrupt women more than women do. In fact, this consequence does not go hand in hand with many researchers' theories concerning who interrupt more, but leads to the conclusion that what is valid in a given speech community may not be valid in another one; the impact can be different even from one individual to another. While some teachers see that women are more verbally skilled than men, others, especially male teachers, believe that in some cases men are more successful than women in verbal communication. Though there are many extensive researches comparing male and female speech style, no study distinguishes one gender communication style more effective than the other.

When teachers were asked if speech differences between male and female colleagues lead to misunderstanding, some teachers believe that this happens sometimes when the opposite gender misinterprets their intentions. However, the majority of respondents, even those who have stated that they do not feel any difference between male and female speech, declare that they do not face any communication problems caused by these dissimilarities. This point reflects that though differences exist, there will be no problem in communication or in worst cases little misunderstanding is to be noticed. Indeed, communication is successful when teachers are aware about such differences, so that when they interact with the opposite sex they pay more attention to the language they use. For example,

women teachers tend to have higher-pitched voices, which may be interpreted as a liability in our societies that associate a deep voice with authority. Both males and females upwardly inflect at the end of question sentences in order to evoke a response, but inflecting several times within a sentence can suggest uncertainty and low assertiveness. Additionally, men may be more prone to talk about things and activities such as cars, sports, jobs and mechanical things …, while women are more used to talk about people, relationships, clothes, feelings and children. These and many other different features which define each gender speech should be taken into account when engaging in mixed groups interactions.

The results obtained from the sixth and the seventh questions can be discussed together. Most of the teachers admitted that they do not use the same speech style when speaking with different gender colleagues and this is the ordinary situation, while some others, especially women, assume that they use the same speech style with both genders. In fact, when it comes to the last question concerning speech accommodation use, all teachers have chosen at least one feature of accommodation. This implies that both male and female teachers do not change or imitate, but modify their speech according to the situation and the person with whom they are speaking. Most of the time, speech accommodation occurs in a sub-conscious way. Some male teachers may shift simultaneously from using their dialect with other male colleagues to using the prestigious form of language, such as French with female colleagues, as a way to facilitate communication and appear more congruent with them.

Finally, it is worth to mention that male teachers exhibited more convergence accommodation speech behaviour than women, because our society expects women to be more conservative in their language choice. Women' using of strong words, directives and loudness with males is considered as a marked behaviour in our Arabic speech communities.

3.3 Analysis of Teachers' Interview

While teachers of English Department gave their opinion concerning speech differences through a questionnaire, the data provided were not sufficient to prove or disapprove the research hypotheses of this sociolinguistic study. This is why, the researcher took the route of asking other teachers not least specialist in the field of this sociolinguistic study. Collecting some points of view from such teachers seemed very useful in having an idea about how teachers of the same speciality (sociolinguistics) as well as teachers of different specialities (TEFL, Civilization and Literature) interpret the present issue.

The choice of the interview as the second research instrument was based on the fact that it is an introspective data collection tool; it focuses on the sample population's insider perspective. Therefore, it is thought to be an ideal complement to the questionnaire (the 1st research instrument). In other words, the general aim behind interviewing other teachers is to see the issue in detail and cross-check the results of the questionnaire. It is of paramount importance to remind that teachers' interview were recorded by means of Digital Voice Recorder and then orthographically transcribed, following Wray and Bloomer model (2006) of audio data transcription (See Appendix C).

3.3.1 Discussion of the results

As stated before, the population concerned with this research instrument is also teachers of the English Department. Only three teachers have been chosen because of time constraints and teachers' busyness. A female teacher in TEFL specialism and two other male teachers of Civilisation/Literature and sociolinguistics have been interviewed at the Department. All the interviewees have more than 6 years of teaching experience.

Question 1 & 2

First, when asked about the frequency of interaction with colleagues, two teachers said that they communicate very frequently with their colleagues at the Department and have no problem with mixed-gender conversation. However, the third interviewee considered his communication with both gender colleagues as not very frequent. In fact, all of them seemed to be satisfied of with the kind of interaction with the opposite gender colleagues.

Question 3

As to the question of whether they feel any differences in terms of speech style when moving from the same gender conversations to the mixed-gendered ones, all of the teachers agreed on the fact that there is a huge difference between male and female speech. At first glance, the first two interviewees from different language specialities rather than sociolinguistics, claimed that the type of discourse used with both genders is not the same they use with males in terms of intonation, pitch, vocabulary... However, the 'sociolinguist' interviewee went deeper in his explanation by adding that as English language teachers, they may communicate either using English or Dialectal Arabic where both men and women pay attention to the grammatical rules of each code. However, the difference in his view lies in their use of grammar, like women tend to use formal forms of commands while men do not use phrases such /allahykhalik/ in formulating commands.

In what concerns their opinions regarding some common sociolinguists' claims about men and women speech features, the first interviewee believes that male teachers try to avoid their use of strong forms, loudness, and directives when they are interacting with female colleagues. The second interviewee showed disagreement with the idea that women use rising intonation and high-pitch voice, arguing that our religion, society, and traditions prevent women from such linguistic behaviours. Whereas the last interviewee referred these differences to women

character and educational background as well. He claimed that generally women use tag question due to their needs to check with others, though the frequency of using these tag-questions is dependent on their position as colleagues; the head of Department for example uses less tag-questions.

Question 4

Different positions and opinions, about some gender stereotypes that are current in Algerian society relating to speech, were explained by the interviewees: while the female interviewee did not fully agree with the point that men are more dominant and interrupt women in conversation. Yet, she strongly agreed with the common stereotype that 'women talk more than men'. One of the remaining interviewees argued that there is a kind of equality in speech: not only men are dominant in conversation; on the contrary, many discourses are nowadays dominated by women as well. He believes that women also interrupt men in the same way men do. Paradoxically, the last interviewee supported the idea that men are more dominant and interrupt not only women but even men themselves when they are familiar with the topic discussed. He added that as there are talkative female members at the Department, there are also some talkative male colleagues too. Concerning politeness, no one of the interviewees deny that woman is the symbol of politeness as most of scholars agree on.

Question 5

The first remark made by the interviewees, when asked about the misunderstanding caused by these speech differences in workplace, was that sometimes these speech dissimilarities may lead to communication failure depending on the person's socio-cultural and educational backgrounds. However, the last interviewee claimed that these differences are social norms that are acquired just as language; therefore, there are no problems when different genders come to interact as long as they respect these differences and care about them. He thinks

thatmixed-sex interaction may be more successful than single-sex one. In mixed-sex conversation both genders pay more attention to the language used in order to not be misinterpreted.

Question 6 & 7

Finally, when asked about the use of speech accommodation in mixed-gender conversation, the female teacher said that she does not use any expressions or speech features that are similar to the opposite gender colleague. Whereas the two other interviewees' opinions were almost the same: the first male teacher asserted that he resorts to speech accommodation only in a foreign environment in order to give a concrete and acceptable example and well representative image of oneself. The second male teacher denied the use of speech accommodation as a technique to 'satisfy' the women he interacts with since it makes him appear as imitating women, but it is used as a way to overcome communication barriers. He affirmed that he does modify his speech while speaking with female colleagues by using standard, prestigious and formal forms of language and avoiding culturally unacceptable words.

3.3.2 Summary of the Interviews' Common Remarks

These are the results that were categorized from the teachers' interviews. Common remarks were gathered about each area of the present study. What was agreed on, by all the interviewees, is that all teachers communicate with each other regardless their gender. They work and collaborate all together to establish an integrated and harmonic team. In fact, there is no doubt that progress has been made towards gender equity in the workplace. As a result, gender nowadays is no more an obstacle in our Department workplace.

As it is was expected that the issue viewed from a specialist point angle is more precise and detailed in comparison with the two others views, not because the

latter's lack of knowledge concerning the topic, but it is due to sociolinguists' sense of observation and way of analysing gender differences. However, it was noticed that all the interviewed teachers did not deny that they notice speech style differences between male and female colleagues either in terms of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, or in their intonation, pitch voice, politeness…In fact, these differences may also vary from one society to another as well as from one individual to another.

Moreover, as aforementioned, the three interviewees reacted differently to gender stereotypes about men and women speech. This fact revealed that gender stereotypes are hard to break; each individual may support or oppose any stereotype imposed by society. However, it is crucial to go beyond stereotypes and recognize the contributions that each teacher, male and female, can make to facilitate communication. Though gender differences in speech may cause some misunderstandings among male and female teachers, if each gender is aware about these dissimilarities as social norms, and they try to respect them, no room is going to be let for misinterpretation of speech.

3.4 Conclusion

The current study was developed as a result of the doubts about gender differences in language use and their influence on communication: whether this diversity between men and women in speech affect the process of interacting in workplace, and who attempts to modify his speech style more, men or women?

Male and female teachers of English Department in Tlemcen were chosen as a case study. Bearing the above questions and the suggested hypotheses in mind to compare between the results of the two instruments, and to limit the overlapping of these results to decide exactly what is proved and what is disapproved in accordance with the literature review. In the general conclusion, the main results are going to be used to test the validity of the hypotheses.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

General Conclusion

There are many claims in Algerian society that men/women conversation in workplace may include some misunderstandings since each gender has different rules and reasons for engaging in conversation. However, the use of speech accommodation in workplace through adjusting the speech patterns have a considerable influence on accomplishing successful communication in mixed-groups. All these facts raised the investigator's interest to shed light on teachers' interaction at English Department of Tlemcen University and to see whether they face any communication problems caused by men and women different use of language. This research also attempted to explore which gender tries more to modify its speech in mixed-sex conversations at workplace in order to minimize the effect of gender differences. Following these questions, three hypotheses were suggested at the outset of this research to be the target of confirmation or disconfirmation.

This work began by a theoretical framework to establish a general background about language and gender in workplace. In addition, it was crucial to provide an explanation of gender miscommunication and the great impact of gender stereotypes on workplace communication. This review of literature was followed by a second chapter devoted to the explication of the research instruments used in collecting data. Indeed, data were collected through the use of a semi-structured questionnaire as well as a semi-structured interview. Consequently, both questionnaire and interview's results were analysed quantitatively and qualitatively.The third chapter was a space to expose and then to discuss the results of present study, trying each time to answer the questions raised in the beginning of this research. The overall findings of this research work revealed three main facts:

First, male and female teachers in English Department of Tlemcen have mostly the same educational level, but they come from different socio-cultural backgrounds:a fact that permits them to feel the difference existing between both gender colleagues. Then, these differences as the findings showed lie in pronunciation, vocabulary, syntax, conversational patterns and politeness strategies.Also, the analyses

displayed the different mechanism both gender use, and therefore the different interpretationseach gender have. Indeed, many researchers like Coates (1989), Tannen (1984), and Maltz and Borker (1982) came across almost the same findings and explained these gendered language differences by some notable theories.

The second main result of this piece of work was that though teachers are really aware about gender difference in terms of speech, the strict rules that the society prescribes for men and women and the artificial behavioural stereotypes that come with gender conditioning may cause some misunderstandings between males and females in work place. For instance, while many scholars agree on women politeness, male teachers still believe that 'women are more polite' is a stereotype. But when it comes to the general condition both genders respect these differences and consider them as social norms.

The last striking findings of this work disagree with the many researchers' views presented in the literature review. In fact, the results revealed that male teachers exhibit more speech accommodation than females do. They tend to modify their speech when engaging in mixed-sex conversation in workplace through the use of polite and formal forms as well as shifting to the standard or prestigious form of language. The sociolinguists Bilous & Krauss (1988) Mulac (1989) Tannen (1990) claim that it is women in mixed-group who change their linguistic behaviour in response to the speech style of their conversational partners. This may be valid in the American culture, while it seems the reverse in Arab societies, mainly in Algeria, where women are expected to be more conservative in their language choice. Nevertheless, in the Algerian modern society, nowadays, where more and more people receive high education, it became observable that men began to behave themselves when they talk with women. They seem patient enough to wait others to finish their talks rather than interrupting them. They use less rigid impressive sentences and hardly hear them using swear words or taboos. They became polite and gentlemen-like. The interesting thing is that they also began to use tag questions, especially within foreign environments.

In the present work, the Department of English at Tlemcen University has been taken as a field work and its teachers as sample population. It will be interesting if another study will follow with other mixed-workplaces in Tlemcen to see the possibility of generalizing the study to a bigger sample population.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A: Teachers' Questionnaire

This Questionnaire is a part of a Master to study the difference between female teachers' and male teachers' speech at the Department of English and whether these differences lead to misunderstanding at the place of work. Teachers are highly appreciated to answer the following questions regarding their experience as a team member at the Department.

Questions

Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

Experience: ………………………….

1. How often do you communicate with your colleagues at the Department?

   Never ☐   Sometimes ☐   Always ☐

2. Do you prefer communication with the same gender teachers, or you have no problem with mixed-gender conversation? (if there is a problem, please state why?)

   Male ☐   Female ☐   Both ☐

Explain, please

………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………

3. During mixed-gender conversations, do you feel that there are differences between male and female teachers' speech?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

If yes, how?..
....
……………………………………………………………………………………….……
…………………………………………………………………………………………......

4. To what extent do you agree with the following gender stereotypes and clichés in society concerning speech characteristics:

	Agree	Do not agree
Men are more dominate in conversation	☐	☐
Women talk more than men	☐	☐
Men are more assertive and direct in their speech	☐	☐
Women are more polite than men	☐	☐
Men interrupt women more than women do	☐	☐
Women are more verbally skilled than men.	☐	☐

5. Do you think that these differences lead to misunderstanding between male and female teachers in the place of work?

Yes ☐   No ☐

If yes, please mention any examples of misunderstanding:

……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………....................

6. Do you use the same speech style when speaking to male or female colleagues?

Yes ☐   No ☐

7. Do you accommodate (choose specific forms of expressions that are similar with those of the other) during mixed-sex conversation? *(Please, answer regarding your gender)*

For male teachers:

Using standard or prestigious language with female colleagues: yes ☐   no ☐

Using polite and formal forms of language: yes ☐   no ☐

For female teachers:

Using loudness, directives and interruption: yes ☐　　no ☐

Using strong expressions: yes ☐　no ☐

8. Do you use accommodation as: *(you may choose more than one option)*

- a natural desire to facilitate communication and to help to better understand the message　☐

- a way to overcome communication barriers　☐

- a technique to be attracted to the other gender by being similar to them　☐

- a desire to appear more congruent with the person with whom you are interacting　☐

Thank you for your collaboration!

Appendix B: Teachers' Interview

This interview is a part of a study dealing with the differences between male and female teachers' speech at the department of English and whether these differences lead to misunderstanding, and how each gender tries to avoid any barrier in communication.

1- Do you frequently communicate with your colleagues at the department, and how often?

2- Do you prefer interacting with the same gender, or you have no problem to engage in mixed-gender conversations?

3- While communicating with the opposite gender, do feel any difference in terms of speech style? (Like what?)

In addition to what you have said, what do you think about the following differences suggested by some sociolinguists:

A. ***For male teachers:***
- Rising intonation and high pitch for emphasize
- Tag questions
- Super polite forms

B. ***For female teachers*:**
- Deep and loud voice for emphasis
- Assertive, direct and straightforward
- Strong forms

4. Do you agree with the following gender stereotypes about speech that are current in our society?
- Men are more dominant in conversation
- Men interrupt women more than women do

- Women talk more than men

- Women are more polite than men in speech

- Women are more verbally skilled than men

5. During conversation, is there any kind of misunderstanding between male and female teachers caused by these differences? (Can you provide any examples of misunderstanding)

6. Do you accommodate your speech; that is, you adjust your speech style with respect to the opposite gender during conversation?

7. Why do you use accommodation?

Appendix C: Teachers' Interviews Transcription

Key to Interview Orthographic Transcription:

Symbol   **Meaning**

?   Question

(.)   Normal stop in speech

(1.0), (2.0)... Number of seconds, in long stop in speech

=   To be continued

R   Researcher (interviewer)

T   Teacher (interviewee)

Remarks   Gestures and body language

Interview #1 (Female)

Speaker	**Text**	*Remarks*
R	This interview is a part of a study dealing with the differences between male and female teachers' speech at the department of English (.) and whether these differences lead to misunderstanding (.) and how each gender tries to avoid any barrier in communication. First (.) do you frequently communicate with your colleagues, and how often?	
T 1	Yes sure (.) I frequently communicate (.) because we have to communicate (.)	*nodding*
R	Do you prefer interacting with the same gender, or you have no problem to engage in mixed-gender conversations?	
T 1	Absolutely no problem	
R	While communicating with the opposite gender, do feel any difference in terms of speech style?	
T 1	Yes (.) sometimes yes	
R	Like what?	
T 1	Emm (5.0)	
R	For example (.) many sociolinguists suggest that males use deep and loud voice for emphasis, they use more strong forms, they are more assertive, direct and straightforward	

T 1	I mean generally when they speak with us (.) If mean when males try to communicate with us (.) generally I think they try to be less harsh (.) though if they have to communicate between them =	
	= yes sometimes we can see the big difference between us as women and men (.) but when males colleagues are discussing with us (.) no (.) they try to be sweet and nice and thinks like that	
R	Do you agree with the following gender stereotypes about speech that are current in our society? Men are more dominant in conversation	
T 1	No	
R	Men interrupt women more than women do	
T 1	No	*smiling*
R	Women talk more than men	
T 1	Certainly	*laughing*
R	Women are more polite than men in speech	
T 1	emm (.) the same thing (.) if they are between them (.) yes I can say that they are less polite (.) because they may use some expressions that we do not use as women (.) but if they are communicating with women I think	

they really pay more attention to what they are saying to us (.) so no they are also polite

R   Women are more verbally skilled than men

T 1   Yes

R   During conversation (.) is there any kind of misunderstanding between male and female teachers caused by these differences?

T 1   Yes sometimes

R   Can you provide any examples of misunderstanding

T 1   For me it is not because gender differences (.) but because of the different educational level and the social background

R   Do you accommodate your speech (.) that is you adjust your speech style with respect to the opposite gender during conversation?

T 1   No

R   Do you mean that you do not use some strong forms, directives, interruption with males?

Teacher 1   No (.) no (.) at all

Interview #2 (Male)

Speaker	Text	*Remarks*
R	This interview is a part of a study dealing with the differences between male and female teachers' speech at the department of English (.) and whether these differences lead to misunderstanding, and how each gender tries to avoid any barrier in communication. First (.) do you frequently communicate with your colleagues at the department, and how often?	
T 2	Yes (.) very frequently	
R	Do you prefer interacting with the same gender, or you have no problem to engage in mixed-gender conversations?	
T 2	No I have no problem (.) with both genders	
R	While communicating with the opposite gender, do feel any difference in terms of speech style?	
T 2	Of course (.) yes	
R	Like what?	
T 2	You know (.) the type of discourse I use with male colleagues is not going to be the same with female colleagues (.) even in terms of intonation (.) my pitch (.) It is not going to be the same = = I feel more at ease when i am talking with male colleague rather than a female colleague (.)	

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R	In addition to what you have said, what do you think about the following differences suggested by some sociolinguists Women use rising intonation and high pitch for emphasize
T 2	Women use rising intonation and high pitch?? emm (.) in accordance with our religion and our tradition (.) I do not it happens to much
R	They use tag questions as they are less assertive
T 2	Yes (.) yes
R	They use super polite forms
T 2	Yes (.) yes
R	Do you agree with the following gender stereotypes about speech that are current in our society? Men are more dominant in conversation
T 2	Yes it is inherited (.) but nowadays i don't think so (.) there is a kind of equality in speaking (.) we can see that many conversations are predominantly by women (.) you know the head of the department is a woman (.) she gives instructions and so on (.) yes (.) *shoulder shrugging*
R	Men interrupt women more than women do

T 2	I don't agree (.) I don't fully agree with this because *nodding* sometimes in accordance to what I see in meetings okay (.) among teachers (.) I could notice that women interrupt women themselves not only men yes (.)
R	Women talk more than men
T 2	Emm (.) in our society: (.) it is said (.) it is said that women are talkative but men are talkative too
R	Do you mean that it depends?
T 2	Yes (.) it depends
R	Women are more polite than men in speech
T 2	A stereotype it happens yes but more frequently talk (.) let's say in a peaceful way
R	Women are more verbally skilled than men
T 2	I don't agree (.) I don't strongly agree with this (.) while there are orator women who are very skilled in speech there also men who are skilled in speech as well
R	During conversation (.) is there any kind of misunderstanding between male and female teachers caused by these differences?
T 2	Yes (.) sometimes yes (.) and I think it is according to the background of the person (.) sometimes people that

are coming from different socio-cultural backgrounds (.) communication might break down

R   Can you provide any examples of misunderstanding

T 2   well (.) here at the department in terms of word pronunciation (.) accent (.) sometimes I come across with some misunderstanding (.) because women colleagues from Tlemcen when they pronounce some words (.) men of outside Tlemcen may interpret it as something else

R   Do you accommodate your speech; that is, you adjust your speech style with respect to the opposite gender during conversation?

T 2   Well (.) in a friendly environment (.) I don't take this mission to choose particular words (.) no (.) because I'm in familiar with them (.) but outside in a strange or foreign environment I do yes (.) I do care about this topic (.)

R   Why do you use accommodation?

T 2   Because of your strangeness your foreignness to the people you are talking to (.) and you want to give a very concrete and acceptable example (.) and very representative image of yourself (.) you refer to accommodation (.)

Interview #3

Speaker	Text	*Remarks*

R   This interview is a part of a study dealing with the differences between male and female teachers' speech at the department of English (.) and whether these differences lead to misunderstanding, and how each gender tries to avoid any barrier in communication.
Do you frequently communicate with your colleagues at the department, and how often?

T 3   It is not very frequently (.) I communicate with both genders

R   While communicating with the opposite gender, do feel any difference in terms of speech style?

T 3   Sure (.) you will feel the difference when you say the choice of words (.) I'll give one example (.) generally when we communicate between colleagues (.) we either use English and it is a standard language (.) and here it does not mean the woman will respect grammar and the man won't (.) no (.) otherwise we will use Dialectal Arabic (.) and when we use Dialectal Arabic (.) we both follow the same grammatical rules of dialectal Arabic=

= when you say the choice of words and so on (.) I believe that logically (.) there are huge differences (.) commands (.) I would prefer direct commands (.) I won't say [allahykhelik] a lot (.) but women use it (.) so this is your question if there is any difference (.) sure there is a difference

R	In addition to what you have said, what do you think about the following differences suggested by some sociolinguists: Women use rising intonation and high pitch for emphasize	
T 3	It depends on the women (.) honestly (.) some women I don't know I find it something even in the character (.) a well educated woman won't raise her speech okay (.) I see it like that (.) it depends on the woman (.) for example Mrs Berber (.) it is impossible to raise her voice when she speaks (.) her choice of words (.) intonation the rhythm of speech and so on	*smiling*
R	What's about using tag questions as they are not assertive and certain in their speech	
T 3	Yes I do agree (.) many times they need to check with others (.) many times but not always (.) it depends on her position as a colleague (.) probably as head of department Mrs Moro won't check a lot with us (.) though generally when she speaks she checks with other teachers (.) so i think they use tag questions more	
R	Super polite forms	
T 3	Sure for a woman not for a man	
R	Do you agree with the following gender stereotypes about speech that are current in our society? Men are more dominant in conversation	

T 3	Yes I agree	*nodding*

R   Men interrupt women more than women do

T 3	Probably yes (.) but it depends on the topic discussed (.) probably I don't know the topic (.) she is smarter than me in that topic (.) I won't interrupt a lot (.) I have to listen (.) but generally we do interrupt even men not only women	*smiling*

R   Women talk more than men

T 3 Here it depends (.)

R   Women are more polite than men in speech

T 3 I will say it depends (.) probably the woman is more polite but (.) i will give an example (.) Mr Zeghoudi is a very polite man with the young and with the old with the woman and with the man

R   During conversation (.) is there any kind of misunderstanding between male and female teachers caused by these differences?

T 3 No I believe these are social norms that are acquired just like language (.) so I believe there are no problems when they come to interact although there some differences

R	Do you accommodate your speech; that is, you adjust your speech style with respect to the opposite gender during conversation?
T 3	No I don't (.) I use my male speech if I accommodate *smiling* my speech to meet the needs of the woman it means I will imitate her
R	So you don't use standard or prestigious language with female colleagues
T 3	No sure I may modify (.) some words that are culturally not acceptable with women (.) I may use them with male colleagues (.) I should avoid such words with female colleagues it is called euphemism function (.) culturally acceptable or unacceptable words.