

ABSTRACT

This study was motivated by previous research work done on the difference in language use between males and females particularly in the style of language use. The aim of this study is to investigate the speech style of male learners from Nigeria and China. Although Malaysia is a cosmopolitan country, not many studies have been conducted to examine the speech style difference of Nigerian and Chinese learners studying in Malaysia. To conduct this study, Lakoff's (1973; 1975) ideas concerning linguistic features in gender differences were taken into account. Particular attention is given to the usage of three linguistic features; fillers, intensifiers and affirmatives. The speaking rate of the learners was also looked at. A questionnaire was used to obtain data from 20 learners: 10 from Nigeria and 10 from China. Their speech on 'My Family' was recorded, transcribed and analyzed. Data were then divided into four categories; 1) fillers 2) intensifiers 3) affirmatives and 4) speaking rate. The results showed that Chinese learners use fillers at a higher rate compared to Nigerian learners, suggesting that the Chinese learners may not be as comfortable when using English. Both the Nigerian and Chinese learners used the same amount of intensifiers which shows that they do not feel passionate when talking about this topic. Nigerian learners tended to use the affirmative 'ya' in their speech while the Chinese learners tended to use the word 'okay'. As for the speaking rate, it can be said that majority of the foreign learners tended to have a slower speaking rate compared to native English speakers. Consequently, the speaking rate of the Nigerians fall under the category of slow, whereas for the Chinese, the speaking rate was under the category of very slow. The findings of this research will benefit researchers working on the speech styles of foreign learners and local educators developing courses for international students coming to Malaysia.

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini didorong oleh kerja-kerja penyelidikan sebelumnya yang dilakukan ke atas perbezaan dalam penggunaan bahasa antara lelaki dan perempuan terutamanya dalam gaya penggunaan bahasa. Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk menyiasat gaya ucapan pelajar lelaki dari Nigeria dan China. Walaupun Malaysia adalah sebuah negara kosmopolitan, tidak banyak kajian telah dijalankan untuk mengkaji perbezaan gaya ucapan pelajar Nigeria dan Cina yang sedang belajar di Malaysia. Untuk menjalankan kajian ini, idea Lakoff (1973; 1975) mengenai ciri-ciri linguistik dalam perbezaan gender telah diambil kira. Perhatian khusus diberikan kepada penggunaan tiga ciri linguistik; kata pengisi, kata penguat dan kata pembenar. Kadar bercakap pelajar juga diambil kira. Soal selidik telah digunakan untuk mendapatkan data daripada 20 pelajar: 10 dari Nigeria dan 10 dari China. Ucapan mereka bertajuk 'Keluarga saya' telah dirakamkan, ditranskripsi dan dianalisis. Data kemudiannya dibahagikan kepada empat kategori: 1) kata pengisi 2) kata penguat 3) kata pembenar dan 4) kadar bercakap. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa pelajar Cina menggunakan kata pengisi pada kadar yang lebih tinggi berbanding dengan pelajar Nigeria. Ini menunjukkan bahawa pelajar Cina mungkin tidak selesa apabila menggunakan Bahasa Inggeris. Kedua-dua pelajar Nigeria dan Cina yang menggunakan jumlah kata penguat yang sama banyak menunjukkan bahawa mereka tidak merasa bersemangat apabila bercakap mengenai topik ini. Pelajar Nigeria cenderung untuk menggunakan kata pembenar 'ya' dalam ucapan mereka manakala pelajar Cina cenderung untuk menggunakan perkataan 'ok'. Bagi kadar bercakap, ia boleh dikatakan bahawa majoriti pelajar asing mempunyai kadar berbahasa perlahan berbanding dengan penutur asli bahasa Inggeris. Oleh yang demikian, kadar bercakap Nigeria jatuh di bawah kategori perlahan, manakala bagi kaum Cina, kadar berbahasa adalah dalam kategori sangat perlahan. Hasil kajian ini akan memberi

manfaat kepada penyelidik yang hendak atau sedang menjalankan penyelidikan ke atas gaya ucapan pelajar asing dan juga kepada pendidik tempatan yang ingin membangunkan kursus-kursus untuk pelajar antarabangsa yang bakal datang ke Malaysia.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EFL	English as a Foreign Language
WPM	Words Per Minute
L1	Native Language
L2	Second Language