

## **Gender Influence in Language Usage**

This paper explores two linked variables, sex of the speaker and sex of the addressee, which are more influential in determining appropriate pronouns in Hindi. Women are more restrained in their possible choices of pronouns. Pronouns give not only information about her or his political views and social class but also information about a person's attitude towards members of the opposite sex.

Significant differences in the speech habits of men and women have often been emphasized in sociolinguistic literature (Hass, 1944, Driver, 1963; Laver, 1968, Lakoff, 1973). Martin (1966), studying the factors in standard Japanese, Okinawan, and Korean which influence a speaker's choice of reference and address form, found sex differences among the four factors which determine the choice.

So it is reasonable to look for evidence of differences in the type of pronouns used being affected by the fact whether the speaker is a male or a female and whether the possible choices vary significantly according to the sex of the addressee. Sex related differences in the pronominal usage in Hindi are complex and the findings of the above mentioned researches have only partial relevance and do not provide satisfactory and convincing explanation to many of the observed facts. Hence the specific study of the sex and pronominal usage in Hindi is done.

The data for the present study were collected through questionnaire - interview method. The source of data were 200 subjects (144 men and 56 women), representing different sections of society, from Khandwa, Madhya Pradesh, India.

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The patterns of pronominal usage for various dyadic relationships are summarized in Table-1

Indian society is essentially male-dominated and the social structure is mostly patriarchal. The position of husband is regarded as far superior to that of wife. As Table 2 shows; 75% wives use *aap* and 22.5% use *tum* for their husband in normal situations. Husbands normally use *tum* (84.5%) for their wives and the switch to *aap* conveys either sarcasm or irritation. In order to test psychology of unmarried young men and women, 10 young men and 16 young women were interviewed and the following data were collected.

Change, renewal and adjustment are most frequent phenomena in the H-W relationship, which are signaled by frequent switching in the use of pronominal. This switching is more common in the cases of H and W living on equal terms in regard to status, relationship, solidarity etc., than in the case of a H and W living on a superior-inferior scale term. H and W go on changing, renewing and adjusting their relationships as demanded by varying situations in life. But when they are on a clear-cut and defined high-low status term, the cases of switching are less frequent as the status and relationship of the participants in the speech event remain static. This static relationship is observed more in the older generation than in the younger generation. Modern younger generation is more liberated than were women of the previous generations.

Infatuation, attachment, anger, affection, understanding, cooperation, common interest in children, social status-all these contribute towards shaping the relationship and choice of pronouns between a H and a W.

3.2 In the case of school going boys and girls, sex does not influence the behaviour, as they do not seem to be sex conscious and we do not find much difference in their behaviour towards the friends of the same sex and those of the opposite sex. One more reason for this kind of behaviour is that they are taught (both in school and at home) to use the reverential pronoun *aap* or *tum* and never to use *tu* for their friends.

3.3 When these College friends of same sex grow up into adult friends, there relations gradually become informal and the percentage of the reciprocal *tum* increases.

3.4 Thus responses to the questions in the present study indicate that in most of the given situations, sex has a considerable effect on the selection of pronouns, although in most cases sex overlaps with other core factors like age and occupational status to determine a particular choice. In other words, when occupational status, age and formality are held constant, the variation of sex of the addressee or the addresser does not often change the address used.

Thus our investigation reveals that besides other factors (like family bond, age, ceremonial ties, difference of generation, place of origin, relative power) sex also play important role in the choice of pronoun. It is likely that women who are generally inferior in power in society, are more likely to give to men higher pronouns and forms of address than those they are likely to receive. The influence of sex is found in selecting pronoun for the speakers of the age-group of 10 to 60.

In the traditional India social structure, the behaviour patterns of both male and female are elaborately defined and differentiated. The relationship of the members with the head of the family is more or less static. There is no switching on the part of sons and daughters in addressing their father. Pronoun *tu* may be used for the mother but never for the father. With friends of the same sex where social distance is zero, the reciprocal *tum* is the rule. In the case of friends of the opposite sex, however, the use of the reciprocal *aap* predominates. The reciprocal *aap* is again used between colleagues of the opposite sex.

It is likely that women, who are generally inferior in power in society, are more likely to give to men higher pronouns and forms of address than those they are likely to receive. Sex differences, on the whole, account for far less of the sociolinguistic variance on all measures than age, status and social class.

## **Second Person Pronouns and Gender Influence**

### **1. Introduction:**

Pronouns have a great social relevance. They are linguistic reflections of human relationships. As Hymes (1970:291) remarks. "There cannot be any relation between

language and culture nor can there be a total correlation". Linguistic behaviour in a social context is fully regulated by certain socially accepted norms. Palakornkul's (1975) study of the Thai pronominal system reveals that "A choice of a pronominal variant is not made arbitrarily. On the contrary, there are systematic variant rules to guide and govern the speaker's choice" Paul Friedrich's (1966) work on Russian pronouns also points to the same fact. These norms or rules have a social sanctity and normally determine the appropriateness of verbal behaviour in different contexts. An inappropriate selection may create unpleasantness between the dyads and sometimes may even lead to undesirable consequences.

The rules determining the use of pronouns and the social meaning carried by the contextual use of the pronouns have been studied by a number of anthropologists and sociolinguists in an attempt to find the variables which determine the pronominal form which will be given and received in a particular situation. Brown and Gilman (1960), Friedrich (1972) and Lambert (1967) have illustrated the use of *tu* and *vous* and their corresponding forms in other languages. Pronouns of 'power' and 'solidarity' as Brown and Gilman call them can give us a good deal of information about the speaker's political views and social status and about the culture's social structure.

Ervin - Tripp (1971, 1972) builds a flow-chart in which she schematizes a series of binary decisions on the type of address system the speaker makes probably unconsciously. Although her model does not include the sex of the speaker, in one of her two articles on terms of address she does mention that men and women use address words in different ways (1971:74).

This paper explores two linked variables, sex of the speaker and sex of the addressee, which are more influential in determining appropriate pronouns in Hindi. Women are more restrained in their possible choices of pronouns. Pronouns give not only information about her or his political views and social class but also information about a person's attitude towards members of the opposite sex. These rule of pronominal usage reveal information about the relationship of the sexes in a society, especially the maintaining of distinctions.

Significant differences in the speech habits of men and women have often been emphasized in sociolinguistic literature (Hass. 1944, Driver, 1963; Laver, 1968, Lakoff, 1973). Conklin (1962) has suggested that sex is an important determinant of the selection by male speakers of synonyms for bodily functions. Several studies indicate that there are such differences in other cultures too. Martin (1966), studying the factors in standard Japanese, Okinawan, and Korean which influence a speaker's choice of reference and address form,

found sex differences among the four factors (others being age differences social position and outgroupness) which determine the choice. He (1966 : 410-11) concludes his study of nonstandard dialect Japanese with the remark that "one's sex is the most important social factor determining one's honorific usage".

Thus every society sets up societal norms for men and women, which go beyond what would be required by the biological differences of the sexes. So it is reasonable to look for evidence of differences in the type of pronouns used being affected by the fact whether the speaker is a male or a female and whether the possible choices vary significantly according to the sex of the addressee. Sex related differences in the pronominal usage in Hindi are complex and the findings of the above mentioned researches have only partial relevance and do not provide satisfactory and convincing explanation to many of the observed facts. Hence the specific study of the sex and pronominal usage in Hindi was needed.

## 2. Methodology

The data for the present study were collected through questionnaire - interview method. The source of data were 200 subjects (144 men and 56 women), representing different sections of society, from Sagar and Damoh districts of Madhya Pradesh, India.

The patterns of pronominal usage for various dyadic relationships are summarized in Table-1

**TABLE – 1**  
**Pronominal Usage in Various Dyadic Relationships ( % )**

Sl.No.	Dyadic Situation	Speaker gives to			Speaker Receives From		
		A	T	t	A	T	t
1.	Mother	64.6	33.3	2.1	3.0	85.5	11.5
2.	Father	88.5	11.5	--	2.5	88.5	9.0
3.	Y B	1.5	87.5	11.0	74.5	23.5	2.0
4.	E B	79.5	20.0	0.5	--	94.5	5.5
5.	E B W	88.0	11.5	0.5	63.0	36.0	1.0
6.	m EZ	77.5	20.5	2.0	4.0	84.0	12.0
7.	u EZ	52.0	46.0	2.0	1.0	92.5	6.5
8.	Y Z	1.0	84.5	14.5	69.0	27.0	4.0
9.	H	75.0	22.5	2.5	19.6	78.6	1.8
10.	W	12.0	84.5	3.5	87.0	12.3	0.7
11.	H F	100.0	--	--	19.0	79.0	2.0
12.	W F	98.6	1.4	--	78.0	22.0	--
13.	H M	100.0	--	--	21.0	79.0	1.8
14.	W M	96.0	4.0	--	74.0	26.0	--

15.	S W	21.4	76.8	1.8	89.0	2.0	--
16.	D H	82.6	17.4	--	97.5	2.5	--
17.	H E B	100.0	--	--	50.0	50.0	--
18.	W E B	79.0	20.0	1.0	90.0	10.0	--
19.	W Y B	19.4	79.2	1.4	98.6	1.4	--
20.	H Y B	68.0	28.6	3.6	89.3	9.0	1.8
21.	H Z	82.0	18.0	--	80.0	20.0	--
22.	W Z	33.6	65.0	1.4	94.0	6.0	--
23.	Women to male friends	71.2	27.0	1.8	73.2	25.0	1.8
24.	Women to female friends	40.0	54.6	5.4	30.3	64.3	5.4
25.	Men to male friends	27.0	63.0	10.0	27.0	63.0	10.0
26.	Men to female friends	56.0	44.0	--	62.5	37.5	--
27.	Colleague of the same age	60.5	37.5	2.0	64.5	34.0	1.5
28.	Colleague of older age	97.5	2.5	--	63.0	37.0	--
29.	Boss to younger subordinate	75.0	25.0	--	99.5	0.5	--
30.	Boss to an older subordinate	94.5	5.5	--	97.5	2.5	--
31.	Teacher at School	100.0	--	--	36.0	62.5	1.5
32.	Professor at College/University	100.0	--	--	64.0	36.0	--
33.	Doctor	99.5	0.5	--	84.5	15.5	0.5
34.	Stranger	93.0	7.0	--	92.0	8.0	--

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Abbreviations :	B = brother,	Ch =children,	D = daughter,	E=elder,
	F = father,	H = husband,	M = mother,	m =
				married,
	P = parents,	S = son,	u = unmarried,	W = wife
	Y = younger,	Z = sister.		

3.1 An analysis of Table-1 shows that the influence of the opposite sex is quite distinct in the family. The son is often found drawn towards the mother and the daughter(s) towards the father. The son uses the pronoun *aap* (64.6%) or *tum* (33.3%) for the mother. Only rarely does he use the pronoun *tu* (2.1%) for her and when he does so it is to express his support and solidarity.

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