The Sociolinguistics Analysis of Teacher-Student Discourse Based on Power and Solidarity Concepts

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Extended abstract

1- Introduction

Nowadays, it does not seem feasible to present a comprehensive description of the language without taking the role of social factors into consideration. Numerous factors in society can impact on languages. Just to name a few are cultural, political, and historical factors that can be influential in making, changing, and using the language (Modaresi, 2012: 33). The aim of the current study is exploring the impacts of these factors on the language.

2- Theoretical framework

As Spencer-Oatey(1996: 3) maintained, only Brown and Levison (1987: 258) and Brown and Gilman (1960: 282-257), among other researchers, clearly expressed their perception about the concept of solidarity. They all agree that similarity and difference, like a key, determines the solidarity. Spencer-Oatey(1996: 7-8) believes that different scholarshave defined solidarityin various ways such as presenting social similarities or differences (Brown & Gilman, 1972), people's familiarity or knowing each other (Holmes, 1990), and the similarity of thought (Brown and Gilman, 1972). Brown and Gilman (1972: 255), Brown and Levinson (1996: 77), and Cansler and Stiles(1981: 459-460) are amongst those scholars who depicted the concept of power well. To Brown and Gilman (1972) and Brown and Levinson (1996), "power" controls other people's behavior, while Cansler and Stiles (1981) consider "power" the focus on the social status.

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Regarding the foregoing issues, the authors decided to adopt the Brown and Gilman's (1972) viewpoint as the basis of this study based on which the pronouns are used as the reflections ofthe concepts of solidarity and power and is more compatible with the culture, attitude, and language of those Iranians who take the advantage of having difference between second person singular and plural pronouns. It is worth noting that Farsi speakers sometimes use the second person pluralto refer to one person. Having adopted three non-linguistic variables of gender, age, and the lesson type, the authors attempted to analyze the linguistic variables of pronouns, imperative speech act, and the role of power and solidarity in the teachers-students' relationship.

3- Methodology
Theapplied methods of the current study were filed as well as analytic-descriptive research. To collect the required data, one of the researchers attended thirty classes of eight schools (girls' and boys'high schools, part one and two) and recorded 45 minutes of 60 teachers' behaviortoward their students in the Arabic, English, literature, math, and P.E. classes. The students were categorized into the two groups of female and male based on their gender and also the two groups of 13-15 and 16-18 years old students based on age factor.

4- Results & Discussion
The results of this study indicate that the teachers do not use *"to"* (you, second person singular) to assert their power, rather, they most often prefer to use "*shoma*" (you, second person plural) which is sometimes mutual. The findings also indicate that the teachers-students relationship in Farsi does not conform to the asymmetrical relationship presented by Brown and Gilman (1960). The Hook's (1984) perspective can be adhered to such relationships with slight differences. The second person plural pronoun "*shoma*", students' names, address terms and titles, occupational and descriptive phrases and expressions were used in the classrooms. The categorization of the expressions adopted are as follows:

More Power ↑
1. Occupational phrases
2. "*shoma*"
3. Titles
4. Students' Names
5. Descriptive phrases
More Solidarity ↓
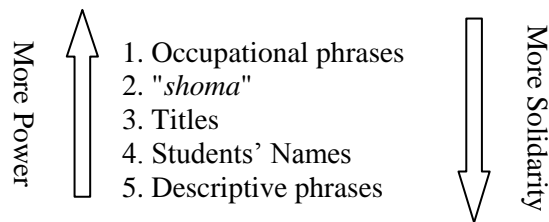
As different names can be categorized in the students' names group, the following categorization presents a more comprehensive one:

More Solidarity ⬆

1. First name + clitics
2. First name
3. Last name
4. First name + last name
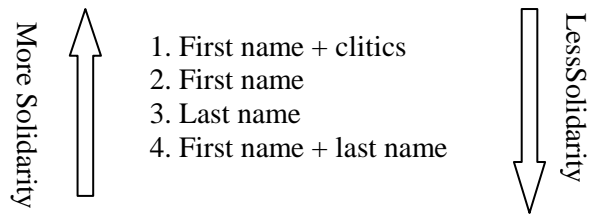
LessSolidarity ⬇

Moreover, the use of indirect imperative sentences by the teachers reveal that the teacher-students relationship tends towardssolidarity. The teachers rarely use direct imperative sentences.

The authors assumethe teachers-students relationship as an asymmetrical politeness-based one. To put it differently, politeness is more important than the power, and since the second person singular pronoun "*to*" is considered impolite, the teachers avoid expressing itto address their students and prefer touse "shoma" and other similar expressions instead.

5- Conclusions & Suggestions

Our data analysis indicates that power and solidarity parameters are not restricted to personal pronouns only, and different expressions can reflect the power or solidarity in Farsi. Imperative sentences are the mere speech acts that reflect the teachers'power. Moreover, the analysis reveals that the field of study and the subjectwas an influential factor in utilizingpower. In other words, teachers of different subjects adopted indirect imperative sentences, address terms, and markers of more solidarity differently. This difference can be shown as follows:

Literature > P.E. > Math > English > Arabic

Our study show that ,on the one hand, part one high school teachers use more correlated expressions, and on the other hand, exercise both solidarity and power in the classrooms through using imperative sentences that indicate less solidarity. The more address terms used, the less solidarity in part two high school classes were observed. Furthermore, direct imperative uses also reduces. Hence, both power and solidarity are employed. To put it differently, the teachers do not invariably adopt power or solidarity markers during the class time, but they combine them by takingdifferent situations into account. Therefore, it can be stated that using power markers has no significant relationship with the students' age. In comparison, male teachers used more power markers. It is somehow

confirmed by male teachers' using imperative sentences as well as the students' last names. Female teachers' relationships aremore of solidarity type.

Key words: Power, solidarity, address terms, speech act

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