

## **Gender and Language Use: A Study of *Iya Ruwa* Hausa Political Programme at Radio Kano**

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### ***Abstract***

*This paper analyzes gender differences with regard to radio interview in a political programme discourse. The aims of the paper is, on the one hand, to solely discuss how men and women interviewers differ in terms of employing techniques for conducting an interview; and on other hand to examine males and females interviewees' attitudes towards the use of language. The data were being extracted out of the observed and recorded interview session of the interlocutors. The study employed the use of Uchida's (1992) 'Difference Theory.' The analysis of the study divulged the sharp differences that exist in among men and women during such a verbal interaction. In the final analysis, the resultant gender differences of this investigation is somehow in favour of Lakoff's (1975) investigation which opined that women are not confident when it comes to the use of language. However, the only difference between Lakoff and the present study is that the former observed language of women in relation to 'casual' conversation discourse while the latter studied a particular political discourse which is established in the form of a 'premeditated' interview.*

**Key words:** Gender, Language use, *Iya Ruwa*, Political programme, Discourse

### **Introduction**

Gender studies, in linguistics, is becoming an area of research interest especially under sociolinguistics and anthropological linguistics. Though gender and sex may be interchangeably used for such tradition of dichotomizing between men and women, yet both are two different notions. Where the latter stands to mean a biological condition, i.e.

defined as a set of physical characteristics, however, the former is seen as a social construction (within the fields of socio-cultural milieu). The maintenance of the gender order through ideology is often viewed as a moral imperative either for a divine origin or for an embedment in convention and sustainability of the power position (Uchida 1992). From childhood males and females are different in many ways: such as physiological, socio-cultural and psychological perspectives. It was in the 1970s that comparison between female cooperativeness and male competitiveness in linguistic behaviour began to be noticed. Gender ideologies differ with respect to the nature of male and female in terms of justice, naturalness and origins. The necessity of various aspects of the gender order is on whether difference is fundamental or it should be maintained without inequality (see Lakoff 1975; Leet-Peregrini 1980; Tannen 1990; Mulac *et al.* 2000, 2001; Eckert & McConnell-Ginet 2003; and Nemati & Bayer 2007 among others). Following the arguments put forth by the previous studies, this paper attempts to empirically examine the patterns of language use among men and women in one particular Hausa radio programme concerning politics. The data analysis was based on some insights from some of the studies which stated that speech variation emerged between men and women at every given social context. Therefore, the study has the intention of observing and examining linguistic forms that seemed to be a premeditated, interpersonal interview from *Iya Ruwa*<sup>1</sup> political discourse.

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<sup>1</sup>Is a political programme aims at airing public opinions concerning government's commitment during its present stay in the office. The programme makes room for all and sundry to come and voice their views as to whether or not the present administration is fully committed to fulfilling the promises it solemnized during its campaign rally and the swear-in; such may include the provision of social amenities and/or infrastructures, boosting economy, education, agriculture, technology, industries, and commerce among others. In the course of voicing such opinions, people—males and females—get around to either commending the efforts or criticizing the lapses of the government respectively.

### **Gender-trait Stereotypes: An overview**

Traditionally, gender discourse intended to focus on the differences between male domination on the one hand and gender separation and differences on the other (Campbell 1999). The dichotomy also continued to revolve around overt and covert aspects of gendered speech variation. As a result, the following gender foregrounding scenarios based on various foci emerge. The apparent dichotomization perceived from the scenarios however draws attention to challenges emerging from the perspectives, scopes and pragmatic implications of the gender discourse (Holmes 1993). Embodied in each categorization, such differences resulted into much heated debate as regard stereotypical gender bias (Shitemi 2009:2). There are, for example, foci to be considered. They are as follows:

Focus on gender appearance,  
Focus on gender role,  
Focus on gendered social status,  
Focus on gendered voice markedness,  
Focus on gendered speech variation etc.

Inasmuch as various scenarios based on these foci seem negative and pessimistic, they irritate any effort that gender discourse and/or dialogue remain significant, as well as the pillars contributing towards the scope and levels of gender mapping (Shitemi 2009; Yule 2010). This is done by observing what causes the clear-cut dichotomies during male/female conversation and how both use language in terms of seeking request, asking question, giving emphasis, forming negation, reasoning, suggesting or helping with opinion, grammaticalness etc; hence a focus on gendered speech variation. Convention and gender assumptions include such fallacies as those that drive various gender ideologies in given societies (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003). Some of these fallacies postulated include stereotypes such as:

Men are strong while women are weak  
Men are brave while women are timid  
Men are aggressive while women are passive

Men are sex driven while women are relationship-driven  
Men are rational while women are irrational  
Men are direct while women are indirect  
Men are competitive while women are cooperative  
Men are practical while women are nurturing  
Men are rough while women are gentle  
Men don't cry [...]

Lakoff (1975) had put forward ten elements (i.e. lexical hedges or fillers, tag questions, rising intonation on declaratives, empty adjectives, precise colour terms, intensifiers, hypercorrect grammar, super-polite forms, avoidance of strong swear words and emphatic stress) showing lack of confidence and tentativeness in the speech of women. Some of these items were related to the domain of phonetics such as rising and falling intonation. To Holmes (1995) collecting data concerning pitch and intonation as well as a discussion of hypercorrect grammar and super-polite forms were not only difficult to handle but also of little significance. Eisenmen (1997) claims that women, in comparison to men, have better memories, whereas men are quite accurate in maintaining a sense of direction but women are not. This is consistent with the claim that men tend to do better than women on visual-spatial tests and in mathematics. Mulac, *et al.* (2001) concentrated on the term 'gender as culture' and ran an empirical study on linguistic differences between men and women. They also found that men *swear* more, use longer words, use more articles, and use more references to location than women do. Swallowe (2003) examined differences between men and women in the use of media for interpersonal communication where he found that women always maintain relationship rather than dragging.

According to Newman *et al.* (2008) "emotion words appear to be another area of conflicting findings, despite the existence of a fairly clear stereotype. Several studies have reported that women refer to emotion more often than men do." But in Mulac's *et al.* (2000) study of managers they provide criticisms in a role-play and found precisely the reverse. However, Mehl and Pennebaker (2003) offered a potential reconciliation that women used more references to positive emotion, but men referred

more to anger – a finding that is perfectly consistent with gender stereotypes. Climate (1997) believes that females generally use speech to develop and maintain relationships. In other words, women tend to use the standard language more than men do. They also use language to achieve intimacy. Michaelson & Margil (2001) discovered that the messages (e-mails) produced by women are short and their participation is driven by their desire to keep the communication going rather than the desire to achieve consensus. Tannen (1990) finds that women speak and hear a language of connection and intimacy, while men speak and hear a language of status and independence.

The practices in which language constructs and effects social order and organization however contribute in establishing the link between language and social function. It is through such linkages that language contributes in the construction and articulation of gender. Linguistic anthropology and sociolinguistics locate the organization of language or linguistic practice in social communicative milieus. Hence the creation of a speech community establishes roles for the conduct and interpretation of speech and roles of at least one linguistic variety (Leet-Peregrini 1980). The knowledge of a language/linguistic variety is embedded in the knowledge of how to engage in communication practice (Holmes 1995). The two, linguistic competence and communication, are inseparable in practice. Different speakers participate in different communicative systems in a manner that facilitates sharing norms for the use of a given language in interaction and service (Nemati & Bayer 2007). Through abstract linguistic conventions of interaction users establish relevant norms of internalized usage. This in turn leads to the experience of social behaviour at a group/peer/personal level on the daily basis; thus making a sense of distinction on the established social and gendered order in which a perceived and/or practiced gender difference is to be discussed below.

## **Methodology and Framework**

### **Method of Data Collection**

The data used in this study are collected from recorded interviews conducted in a given political programme known as *Iya Ruwa* at Kano State Radio Corporation, Gidan Bello Dandago. The recorded interviews are sampled from twenty populations and have been transcribed in accordance with the way in which they are conducted.<sup>2</sup> These political discourses were sampled randomly and put into four distinct specimens. The interlocutors were unconsciously observed and recorded during the interview sessions so as to objectively find out whether there are such sharp differences between males and females in terms of language use.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The study adopted “Difference Theory” as its theoretical framework. The theory posited that men and women, even those within the same group, experience different or separate cultural worlds and, as a result, they uphold different modes of communication (Uchida 1992). This theory is sometimes called “*two-culture theory*.” In simple terms, although men and women live in the same surroundings, yet both develop different relations in accordance with their worldviews as if each belonged to a different environment or culture. The result of which is consequently reflected in the language of both genders as in other aspects of their lives (Nemati & Bayer 2007).

So in this framework, the heterogeneous-gender (cross-gender) interaction is to be taken as cross-cultural or bi-cultural discourse. This is the one in which two genders involved in the interaction during an

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<sup>2</sup>At the session of conducting an interview, the interviewer—an officer who is fully aware of matters relating to politics will sit one-on-one with the interviewee—a person being interviewed based on issues pertaining to politics for two minutes or so. Under this circumstance, on the one hand, the former manipulatively engages the latter, so as to source information. But on the other hand, the latter cunningly plays with language to avoid being trapped. An interesting thing with the interview is that whenever the latter comes to commend or criticize the government; the former takes the opposing side, which is to say that both of them are to be on a discursal confrontation.

interview session (see specimen (1) and (2) below). The assumption here states that over the use of language men are not the same with women on the use of linguistic forms. Unlike the homogeneous-gender (same-gender) interview two men or two women during an interactive session are hypothesized to be on the same status over the use of language (see specimen (3) and (4) below).

## **Data Presentation and Discussion**

### **Data Presentation**

Here, the notion of gender differences has been analyzed through critical observation of questions and responses. However, for the purpose this study, the discourses observed are divided into two categories, viz: (a) heterogeneous-gender interview; (b) homogeneous-gender interview.

### **Heterogeneous-gender interview**

This category of interview has to do with cross-gender interaction which observes the patterns of language use at the time of the interview session. It is of two forms, viz:

**Male-to-female interaction:** Let us consider the patterns of language use at the interview of male-to-female interaction during the programme of Iya Ruwa below:

### **Programme (1a) with participant (1a):**

**Interviewer (henceforth I): Me ke tafe da ke? (What do you want to say?)<sup>3</sup>**

**Participant 1a** (henceforth P1a) *So nake Bello Idris Dambazau ya fito takarar gwamnan Kano in Allah ya yarda da taimakon al'umar Ubangiji. Allah ya taimake shi i wannan... kujerad da zai samu Allah ya taimake*

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<sup>3</sup> It is the usual literary convention in the print media, especially magazine and newspaper, to put interviewer's questions in bold while the interviewee's responses appear in normal characters.

*shi, ya xora shi a kai. Saboda abubuwan da yake mana na alheri; iya kula da talakawansa [tun kafin] ya hau gwamna, bare zai hau ma insha Allah yai taimako. Muna fatan alheri da abin da zai... da abin da zai sake yi mana.*

I want call on Bello Idris Dambazau to contest for the gubernatorial position in Kano; by the grace of God people will rally around their support for him. May Allah assist him to achieve this... i.e. to attain the position. The fact is that he has been doing good things; taking care of his subjects before even clinging on to the position. So, we wish him the best for what he'll do... and for additional things he'll do to us.

**I:** *[Suna]<sup>4</sup> wace irin nagarta gare shi har kika zo kina faxin ya fito takarag gwamna in aka yi duba da qalubalen da ke tattare da wannan kujera?*

**[Name]** how eligible he is for you to come and ask him to contest for the office of the governor considering the challenges mounting the seat?

**P1a:** *Eh... abin da ya sa na fito na ce ya tsaya takarag gwamna, saboda mutun ne mai alheri da taimakon talakawa. Ba shi da gwamna ma ya ba wa asibitutuwa magani iri-iri... i kai i kawo aikin da ike kenan. Saboda haka shi isa nai sha'awar... na ce mu ma ga namu a gida ma bar shi i fita waje, wani i zo i karva ya yi! Ai gara mu ma namu ya hau kujeran nan ta gwamnan Kano. Ubangiji ya Allah ya taimaki Bello Idris Dambazau.*

Well... the reason why I said he should run for a gubernatorial position is due to the fact that he is a philanthropist. He is not up to the position of a governor; nevertheless he has been donating drugs to different hospitals and has been committed to assisting the less privilege ones all the time. That is why I enthused... that the seat is deserved to be contested by an

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<sup>4</sup> It should be noted that where this convention '[suna]' it means that in the course of the interview session a 'name' of either the interviewer or the interviewee is mentioned which the study does not want to identify. Similarly, where square bracket is placed it is used to give a correction of somehow an ungrammatical word(s).



insider not outsider. It is much better for a man of our kindred to attain the position of a governor in Kano. May God help Bello Idris Dambazau.

### **Participant (1b) with participant (1b):**

**I:** *[Suna] ga ki a filin Iya Ruwa da wacce kika zo?*

**You are here for Iya Ruwa programme, what do you want to say?**

**P1b:** *PDP ta mutu, mutuwa muris kam... Saboda haka, da ke da mai turo ki... da ke da Xan...Xanvukur yake ko Xan ina ne da yake sa ki, kike zuwa kike tava Musa Ilyasu... ki ci gaba da tava Musa Ilyasu zan zo in yi miki binciken [abin da] kika yi Sani Lawan Qofam Mata ya kore ki daga gidanshi.*

(PDP is no more, it is completely drowned. Therefore, you and the person you are backing... who do you call him...Xanvukur; that you often come to condemn Musa Ilyasu... keep attacking him while I come to talk of why Sani Lawan Qofam Mata chase you out of his team.)

**I:** *Wace ce wannan? Wataqila mai saurare yanzu ya sani, bai ji wancen recording xin naki ba, wace ce wannan?*

**Who is she? What if the listener did not listen to your previous recording, perhaps the listener came to know this just at the moment. Who is she?**

**P1b:** *Na gaya maka uwar gulma, uwar kitimirmira, wadda ba ta nan ba ta can. Ba ta da jam'iyya, ba ta da alqibila. Mu kuma da muke yi... mu mun shigo APC... ba mun shigo da niyar cin mutunci ba ne, mun shigo ne mu dafa ma Ganduje, mu taimake shi. Kuma Ganduje ya san amfanin Musa Ilyasu. Saboda haka, mun zarta cin mutunci, mun zarta siyasar wahala. Kuma ofis da yardar Allah masu cewa za ai mana kitimirmira a kan ofis... bil-lahil lazi kamar Musa Ilyasu ya shiga ofis ya yi aiki da qafar dama da yarda Allah.*

I told you the leader of gossiping, the leader of trickery who does not quite belong to one group. She neither has a party, nor has she a defined

direction. Considering our case... we defected to APC... not with the intention of disparaging, we defected with a view to supporting Ganduje. Besides, Ganduje knows the utility of Musa Iiyasu. Thus, no amount of slander will ever intimidate us and our political will is beyond a petty also-ran. God willing, those that are saying we'll be cornered to having an appointment will perish... I swear to God Musa will have an appointment by the grace of God.

***I: Wai ganin qarfin kusancinku da Sardaunan Kano a jam'iyyar PDP wai ta kai aka ce yau Musa Iiyasu ya bar Sardauna, shi ne wasu suke mamaki suke gudun wai kada a can ai masa wa-ta-gangani.***

**Indeed considering your strong relationship with Sardaunan Kano in PDP but to the people's surprise Musa Iiyasu left Sardauna; thinking that by defecting he will be left stranded.**

**P1b:** *Ah... ai ba ka sani ba shi Sardauna Kano ai uba ne. Shi yanzu sardaunan Kano ya ce fitar Musa ba da saninshi ba ne? Da saninshi wallahi! Su wa'yannan wa'yanda suka kewaye shi 'yan kitirmira, in za su fito sui ma duniya maganar gaskiya... Billahillazi la ilaha illallahu ba zan yi kaffara ba, ni [suna], fitar Musa Iiyasu daga [PDP]<sup>5</sup> wallahi da sanin Malam.*

Ah... you have no idea that Sardaunan Kano is a godfather. Could Sardaunan Kano say that he is not aware of Musa's defection? *By God* he is aware! Those that sat around him are mere conspiracists, but it is better for them to publically speak the truth... *I swear to Almighty Allah* without atonement; I, [name], know *for sure* Malam is aware of the withdrawal of Musa Iiyasu from the PDP.

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<sup>5</sup> It is a slip of the tongue. She mentioned APC instead of saying PDP.

**I: *Au jita-jitar da ake cewa da ma Malam ne ya tura shi, shi ma yana tafe. Wato ta tabbata gaskiya ne ke nan?***

**So, the speculation that Malam okayed him to defect first, for, he too will join later. It is so certain that this is true, isn't it?**

**P1b:** *E...to... Malam zai iya tafiya, Malam zai iya fasa tafiya amma fitar Musa ni, [suna], na xauki wuqa na davawa cikina, wallahi da sanin Sardauna. Ai ya san PDP ba za ta sake kai labari ba. Saboda ba su jin shawara, waxanda suka kewaye mai girma Sardaunan Kano uba ne shi amma duk ba masoyansa ba ne, ba i kamar Musa. Kuma Musa da ya fita bai fita da cin mutunci ba. Ya fita da sanin Malam Ibrahim Shekarau, Sardaunan Kano... Saboda haka, nake so in ja hankalin 'yar kitimirmira ta ja bakinta ta yi shiru; in fa ba ta fasa ba ina nan a kan bakana.*

Well... Malam can defect and if he so wished he can remain there. But as far as I, [name], know beyond reasonable doubt, Sardauna is certainly aware of the defection, *I swear!* He is truly conscious that PDP will not shine again. Because those hang around him refused to take advice; his Excellency Sardaunan Kano is a godfather but those hang around him are not his adherents, except for Musa. Besides, Musa did not defect to bad-mouth others. Rather he defected with the full knowledge of Malam Ibrahim Shekarau, Sardaunan Kano... Therefore, I want the leader of trickery to heed my warning by keeping her mouth shut; but if she refuses, I'll stick to my gun [by exposing her dirty deal in that team].

**Female-to-male interaction:** in these discourses a female leads her male counterpart in an interview session and it is revealed that their level of language use is different (see Wardhaugh 2006 and Uchida 1992 for details on gender interactions).

**Programme (2a) with participant (2a):**

**I: *Me ke tafe da kai?***

**What do you want to say?**

**P2a:** *Abin da ke tafe da ni shi ne muna kira ga al'umar jihar Kano musamman ma na qaramar hukumar Garko cewa mu yanzu ba wanda za mu tura majalisar jiha sai xan Kwankwasiyya; wato wanda yake da halin Egnr. Dr. Rabi'u Musa Kwankwaso.*

I am here to call on the people of Kano, especially the people of Garko local government that from now we will not vote for anyone to represent us in the State House of Assembly any more except an adherent of Kwankwasiyya; that is except he who has the similar attitude with Dr. Rabi'u Musa Kwankwaso.

**I: Saboda wane dalili?**

**For what reason?**

**P2a:** *Yanzu idan kika duba xan majalisar jiha na Garko Hon. Abba Ibrahim Garko irin ayyuka na alheri da yake kawo wa al'umar qaramar hukumar Garko... Ya yi ayyuka da dama a duk lungu da saqo na qaramar hukumar Garko. Ko'ina ya yi masu aikace-aikace wanda za su amfana.*

Now if you go around to see the outstanding projects embarked on by the member of the State House of Assembly representing Garko, Hon. Abba Ibrahim Garko, considering the many developmental projects he presented to the people of the Garko local government area... he really executed number of projects in every nook and cranny of Garko local government area. So, he did many projects everywhere to them so that they will benefit from them.

**I: *Misali kamar me?***

**Like what, for instance?**

*Kamar kowacce mazava... kamar mazavu yanzu guda biyar ya ware ya kawo... ya gigginsu masu bulok-bulok a makarantu na sakandire da makarantun firamare da makarantun Islamiyya ya aikata waxannan ayyuka. Yanzu a mazavar Sarina...ah...mmh... sakandiren mata ya samar masu da bulok-bulok. A mazavar Garko sakandire ta mata ya samar masu da bulok. Ga kuma ayyukan tuqa-tuqa da yai a mazavu daban-daban. Sannan kowace mazava sai da ya kai mata tuqa-tuqa... rijiyar tuqa-tuqa guda bibiyu. [Kin]<sup>6</sup> ga kowane lungu da saqo ayyukan xan majalisar jiha ya shiga. Saboda haka mu yanzu al'uma muna so su gane cewa xan majalisar jiha ya biya abubuwan da aka tura shi ya yi domin yana yin hali irin na mai giram gwamna.*

For instance, in each ward... he currently selected five wards and provided them with... he constructed blocks in secondary, primary and Islamiyya schools. Presently, in Sarera ward... er...er... he built blocks at Government Girl's Secondary School. In Garko ward, he constructed a block for another Government Girl Secondary School. Similarly, he provided each ward of the area with hand pumps ... at least two hand pumps were put up for each and every ward. As you can see, the projects executed by the member reached every nook and cranny. Therefore, we now want people to realize that the member is doing well for his people in the State House of Assembly, because his determination resembles that of His Excellency governor.

**I: *To, tun da haka ne da me ku kuma za ku saka mashi?***

**So, if that is the case, in what way would you return such a kind gesture?**

**P2a:** *Ah... abin da za mu saka mashi shi ne mu qara tura shi ya daga wakiltarmu a majalisar jiha tun da ya riqe 'yan jam'iyya, yana yi wa mutane ayyukan da suke so, ayyukan da suke buqata.*

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<sup>6</sup> Here, we have a mismatch of the anaphoric reference. He used masculine *ka* instead of feminine *kin*.

Well...er... to pay him back means to give him another chance to represent us in the State House of Assembly, because he often assists party members and embarks on projects needed by the general public.

### **Programme (2b) with participant (2b)**

**I: *Me ke tafe da kai?***

**What do you want to say?**

**P2b:** *Na zo kan abin da yake faruwa a jam'iyyar APC cewa ba a xauki layin da zai bulle ba.*

I came here solely to talk about what is happening to APC – to be honest, that will go down badly.

**I: *Wa'yanne irin abubuwa ne?***

**Like what?**

**P2b:** *Yawwa! Saboda tun yanzu mun fara samun labarin akwai wasu daga cikin shugabanni suna kiran shugabannin jam'iyya na qananan hukumomi da kuma delegate suna gaya masu cewa ga xan takarar da za a yi na gwamna. Wannan kuma ba daidai ba ne a damakwaraxiyya. Ya kamata a bari shugabanni da delegate su zavi mutumin da ya dace ya zame wa al'ummar Jigawa alheri.*

(Good! Now that, we started having a speculation in which certain foremost figures, where some among them, are calling on the local government party chairmen and delegates, saying they should vote for Mr. X who is contesting for the governorship. Democratically, this is wrong. Party chairmen and delegates should be allowed to nominate the eligible candidate who is going to be a messiah to the people of Jigawa.)

**I: *To, laifi ne idan mutum ya zo ya bayyana gwaninsa?***

**Is it wrong if someone comes and advertises his candidate?**

**P2b:** *Ai... ba maganar bayyana gwani ba ce ba. Magana ce ta ana kiran mutane su bi wani. Wannan abun da ma shi ne abin da ya faru cikin*

jam'iyyar ANPP a baya kuma yanzu ana kunnawa APC. Shi ya sa muka zo muke kira da jan hankali ga shugabanni jam'iyya da delegate domin su xauki mataki na gaggawa.

(well... it is not the issue of a candidate, but rather about the fact that people are being called upon to rally around someone. This was what previously destroyed ANPP and it is now confronting APC. That's why we came here to call the attention of party chairmen and delegates to take a drastic action.

**I: *Ina ganin ai duk waxanda suke zuwa suke faxin cewa sun tsai da mutum suna ganin nagartarshi ne da qwarinsa shi ya sa har suke kira ga shuwagabanni da su fito su tsaya a wannan takara.***

**I think those that are coming to say they nominate a person are satisfied with his eligibility and expertise that is why they call on key figures to contest for this position.**

**P2b: *To babu wani dalili a damakwaraxiyya da mutum zai fito ya ce wannan shi za a yi tingwal xan takara, babu. A bar jama'a su zavi wanda suke so shi ne damakwaraxiyya. Abin da ta ba da shi ne mutane su fito kowane xan takara ya kasa hajarsa wanda jama'ar Jigawa suka ga ya yi masu daidai su zave shi.***

Well... there is no any reason in democracy for someone to suggest the nomination of a single candidate by forcing people to consider him alone. It is democratic to allow people to vote for their choice. What is acceptable in democracy is that every candidate should sell himself better; it is up to people of Jigawa to decide and vote for their choice.

### **Homogeneous-gender interview**

This type of interview has to do with the same-gender interaction which investigates the patterns of language use at the time the interview session. It is of two forms, namely: male-to-male and female-to-female interaction.

**Male-to-male interaction:** In this type of interview, the interlocutors – i.e. two male persons sit one-on-one for an interview and their level of language use is assumed to be comparable (Freed and Greenwood 1996).

### **Programme (3) with participant (3)**

**I: *Da wacce kake tafe?***

**What do you want say?**

**P3:** *Muna so mai girma gwamna ka yi wa Sanata Yahya Isa Zarewa godiya a bisa abubuwan da yake yi mana—mu ’yan Kwankwasiyya. Ya xauke mu da mutunci ya xauke mu da kima. Domin a takara ta Kano ta kudu, takarar Sanata dukkan wani xan takara in ba wanda i nuna yana tare da ’yan Kwankwasiyya ba, wanda i nuna jin maganarmu. A baya Sanata Yahaya Isa Zarewa ya xau wani layi wanda layin da ba zai vulle ba—wato layin Kawu Sumaila, duk inda suka je yana bin sa a baya. Amma yanzu ya gane ya dawo turba ta gaskiya wato turbar Kwankwasiya. Kuma muna godiya ga mai girma gwamna muna qara gaya maka da kai masa godiya, saboda irin abin da muka ga ya yi.*

We want you, the Excellency Governor, to commend Senator Yahya Isa Zarewa for what he has been doing to us – we the partisans of Kwankwasiyya. He respects us with high consideration. Because, during the senates’ election of Kano south, any aspirant except the one in favour of the partisans of Kwankwasiyya, who listens to our grudges. Earlier Senator Zarewa drifted into a different political bearing which is a mere impasse – that is, the political trend of Kawu Sumaila thereby expressing loyalty. As for now he realizes the right political bearing that is the Kwankwasiyya trend. We also thank you, the Excellency; and because of what he did we reiterate that you acknowledge his effort.

**I: *Yanzu wakilin Ghana... wakilin gwamna a Ghana duk mutun da ike wani tsari ba na Kwankwasiyya ba; kenan komai ingancinsa ba cikkaken xan takara ba ne kenan?***



**So now the Ghanaian representative ... the representative of governor in Ghana does it mean that anybody taking onto a trend other than Kwankwasiyya even if he is eligible, is he not a candidate?**

**P3:** *Ah... gaskiya in dai mutumin ba ya cikin tsarin Kwankwasiyya kuma bai yi haquri ya daure ya bi 'yan Kwankwasiyya ba, ba ya tare da mai girma gwamna, kuma ba zai bi umarni mai girma gwamna ba!*

Well...er... honestly, if a person disengaged from Kwankwasiyya by being impatient to endure in following the trend of Kwankwasiyya; that person is not with his Excellency governor and (the person) will not obey him.

**I:** *Yanzu qaddara wani ya fito daga wani gari shi ma haka ya naxa wa kansa suna da inkiya irin na wannan garin nasa kuma ya fito neman takara kuma yana da inganci; idan dai ya inganta ba za a bi shi ba kenan?*

Now let's assume that someone hails from a given town as a political aspirant, he nicknamed himself after his town and he is a good person; so long as he deserved to be, won't he be supported?)

**P3:** *Ai yanzu inkiya da suna... yanzu [sun] wuce. Yanzu ba mu ga...ban da dai iko na Ubangiji, ba wata inkiya da za a zo a yi da ta wuce ta Kwankwasiyya; inkiya ce a federal government an san ta, inkiya ce a qasa an san ta, inkiya ce a Ghana an san ta, inkiya ce a duk inda ka zaga [qasashen] duniya an san ta. Kwankwasiyya ta fito da Kano, Kwankwasiyya ta fito ta fito da Arewa, Kwankwasiyya ta fito da abubuwa wa'yanda... in dai mutum ne ba wata inkiya da za ai da za ta danne ta Kwankwasiyya.*

Presently, nickname and designation... are over now. We have not seen... except by the power of God, but no any amount of symbolic designation that can ever outweigh that of Kwankwasiyya; it has influence at federal level, it's known everywhere across the nation, it's known in Ghana, and wherever you go on the globe it's known. Kwankwasiyya makes Kano very attractive, it glamourizes the North, it makes things look so fascinating that no any nickname worthy of dominating Kwankwasiyya.

**I: *Ba kuma ma sa ran cewa nan gaba za a zo a yi abin da ya wuce na wannan gwamnati?***

**So, are we not to anticipate having a government that will do more than the present one in the future?**

**P3:** *Yanzu misali, ba Audu Baqo ne – ya zo Allah yai mai rasuwa – ya zo ya shimfixa ayyuka na alkairi! ...to yanzu in ka cire mai girma... in ka cire mai girma Audu Baqo... kai mai girma gwamna abubuwan da i kawo shekaru nawa akai ana yiyyi gwamna[tocin amma] ba ai ba? Ai daurewa ce da zuciya ta aiki ba wai mutane ne... gwamnati ba za ta iya ba... ai zuciyar aiki ce... ya za a yi a tallafi talaka, ya za ai talaka... ai mai abin da zai gani ya ji daxi ya za ai a kawo abubuwa na ci gaba. Yanzu misali, ka duba ayyuka da akai ...yanzu wannan ayyukan da akai hat tashin kiyama ...muna tunanin in dai ba wani qadari na Ubangiji ba, ba zai ru... ba zai kautu ba. Yanzu ka diba flyover nan, ka diba abubuwa na zamani mahadi-ka-ture... yanzu irin wa 'yannan a zo a ce wata gwamnati ta zo... ai a zuciya ne.*

Now take for instance, is it not Audu Baqo – he passed on – who executed excellent projects! So now, with the exception of his Excellency... except for his Excellency Audu Baqo ... what his Excellency governor embarked on, how many administrations passed by without doing anything for years? So, it is the matter of dedication and working industriously but not the so-called individuals... an administration cannot... it is an enthusiasm... of being compassionate to masses, for ordinary people to be happy and bear witness about such outstanding, capital projects. Now for example, check out the projects executed, these projects will last forever ...we think that, except by the will of God, it will remain an indelible mark. Now look at this flyover, look into the many modern projects that will last for so long ...so, now hardly certain other administrations can execute this sort of ... it has to do with determination.

**Female-to-female interaction:** The discourses, here, engage two female persons in an interview session in which their level of language use is understood to be of equal value (Coates 1996).

**Programme (4) with participant (4):**

**I:** *[Suna] da wacce kika zo?*

**[Name]** what would you say?

**P4:** *Mu dai abin da muke son ya sani Kwankwaso da Buhari kamar uwa xaya uba xaya ne. In aka fito... in Buhari ne ya cancanta wallahi Kwankwaso ma da kansa zai ce dole mu bi Buhari. In Kwankwaso ne ya dace aka duba aka ga ya cancanta... ai ubansa ne. Zai dafa ma xansa.*

What we really want him to know is that both Kwankwaso da Buhari are brothers. When it comes to the election... if Buhari deserves, *for certain* Kwankwaso, himself, must direct us to follow Buhari. If Kwankwaso deserves after careful consideration... he (Buhari) is a father to him. He will also support his son.

**I:** *[Suna], an ce fu, “habaicin kura na mai akuya ne”, ke da waye?*

**[Name]** it is said that, “lit. an irony of a hyena is purposeful to the owner of a goat” [your disparagement is for someone else] who is it that you are castigating?

**P4:** *Mu do[n] Allah do[n] Annabi yadda suka vata CPC a da... Kuturu, ka shiga taitayinka! Kai da man bige-bigenka ba ruwanka da kake cewa kai al’uma kake ma... ai wa ya mutu wa ya tashi... kawai aljihunka kake yi ma.*

For the sake of Allah and the Prophet the way they previously destroyed CPC... A bloody leprotic, you should be very careful! You have been doing unnecessary things, saying that people are your concern... this and that... you are just making money for your own good.

**I: *Wai shin wa kenan haka?*  
Who are you referring to?**

**P4:** *Ya san kansa, yana ji na. Wallahi ta Kwankwaso... abin da Kwankwaso ya yi a jihar Kano, wallahi har ya mutu, bayan ransa ma...wallahi shai an ringa Allah ya shi masa albarka. Allah ya jiqan sa, ko Audu Baqo wallahi bai aikin da Kwankwaso yai ba.*

He knows himself, he is listening to me. I swear, that of Kwankwaso... what Kwankwaso did to Kano state, by God even after his demise... I swear that he will be blessed. May Allah have mercy on his soul, by God even Audu Baqo did not execute what Kwankwaso did.

**Discussion**

As the study observed the behaviour of real people—categories of people, with real linguistic patterns and pragmatic behaviours, the purpose of the present treatise is much to do with cross-gender interview sessions considering Difference Theory as its framework. The ultimate goal is to link linguistic forms to socio-cultural constraints or factors under which gender is constructed, defined and analyzed. There are many sociolinguistic, experimental considerations that have been identified by some scholars of gender studies to designate distinctive aspects of men's or women's ways of behaving whenever they interact linguistically. Some of these constraints or parameters were being identified by Lakoff (1975), Tannen (1990), Holmes (1995), Mulac *et al.* (2000, 2001), Swallowe (2003) and Wardhaugh (2006) among others. Therefore, to establish gendered speech variations, the discussion of the data below is guided by the following parameters:

- Pleading and swearing
- Exclamatory expressions
- Collaborative versus competitive expressions
- Verbosity versus silence

- Overt prestige versus covert prestige

### ***Pleading and swearing***

In specimen (1a) the female interviewee's language has much to do with emotional words of pleading in the form of volitive expressions like saying '*Allah ya taimake shi* (may Allah assist him) and '*muna fatan alheri...*' (we wish him the best...); which labelled women as vulnerable pleaders. It is observed that during such a verbal interaction women often speak so sympathetically to demand for something. In (4) to respond to the second question the female interviewee started with a pleading '*[...] don Allah don Annabi*' (for the sake of Allah and the Prophet) as a device to achieve communicative competence. With regard to swearing, specimen (1b) and (4) present us with the fact that in the discourses of less than two minutes both interviewees swore five times each with a view to indicating an emphasis or to convincing their interviewers. As evident from the data, it is believed that women swear more often than men do. This in the sense that men in the second question of (1a) and (1b) as well as in the entire discourses of (3) and the responses of (2b) use assertive verbal communication, while women as shown in almost all the questions asked from specimen (2a) and (2b) use non-assertive language (see especially Tannen 1990 and Wardhaugh 2006: 331). But swearing, here, is used as a device to mark women's assertion as found in (1b) and (4). Because it is hard to believe in women at once, so they have to swear for them to assert or emphasize their theses. Contrarily, all the discourses of men from the data lack the linguistic forms of pleading and swearing.

### ***Exclamatory expression***

Lakoff (1975) identified that in most normal verbal interactions females employ the use of rising intonation on declaratives. As evident from pleading and swearing, both serve as emphatic tone to call audience's attention in advertising the eligibility of their favourite candidate especially by women. However men talk straight forward and authoritatively with equally such a rising intonation when it comes to politicking. Nevertheless, women often use it as a style of calling attention or when they are in the state of hysteria in which their tone seemed to be

emotionally pathetic. In favour of Holmes (1995), it is generally observed from the data that there is a little or no significant difference among men and women in terms of a(n) exclamatory expression or rising intonation in the context of political programme discourses. This study asserts that exclamatory expressions are found in both men's and women's speech during the interview session. As such both men and women employ this rising intonation throughout the interactive session as a communicative device to make an effect to their target audience. But the least it can be said here is that where women's rising intonation seemed pathetic, as for men their exclamatory expressions seemed to indicate aggressiveness.

### ***Collaborative versus competitive expression***

The investigation observed that women are passive; such that they never take an active part during the interactions. They are collaborative in the sense that they remain mere listeners or stooges. From specimen (2a) and (2b) above the study found that the female interviewers do invite their informants, especially men, with simple, short questions and then allow them to dominate the interview session. Contrarily, in (1a) and most especially (1b) their male counterparts are competitive as such they often intervene or interrupt the interaction with strong questions and interrogate actively with a good sense of reasoning thus making the interaction more lively and balanced. An interesting thing with these parameters is that even in the homogeneous-gender interview – i.e. in (3) and (4) the result is still the same. Thus, women never intervene or drag when asking questions; as such they only maintain relationship and intimacy by being collaborative. But men are characterized with the habit of dragging (trying with effort) in order to persuade their informants.

### ***Verbosity versus silence***

It is believed that men dominate interaction more than women do (see Kaplan and Farrell 1994 and Swallowe 2003). To take a critical analysis of specimen (2a) and (2b) this study realises that men deny their women counterparts turn-taking to ask question in such an interaction thereby forcing them to be silent. Except in the last question of (2b) the

interviewer did contribute noticeably less when compared with (1a) and (1b). As for specimen (1a) where the interviewee became short of words and was able to answer only two questions as she quickly withdrew herself from the interview session. Similarly, in (4) the interviewee was able to answer three questions in scanty words. Therefore, it is only in (1b) the female interviewee employed the use of lengthy linguistic forms to potentially achieve the communicative competence. However, this observation found that men intervene in such verbal interaction using lengthy words and logical questions but women on their part provide short contributions or simple questions to intervene.

### ***Overt prestige versus covert prestige***

Sometimes, silent make women to make excellent selections of their diction that is why they are said to maintain standard use of nouns, verbs and preposition, but use few adjectives (Lakoff 1975). Similarly in terms of figurative expressions and style females make their words richer than their male counterparts. Men, on the other hand, do not pay much attention to being overt, this in the sense that their linguistic forms are more prone to giving command and directives (see Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003: 36 and Yule 2010: 275-77). In specimen (2a) and (3) above, as a result of employing too much wording by the interlocutors, the study found that the language of men is characterized by the use of fewer ungrammatical expressions, lots of tautology, so many pauses, fragmented linguistic forms and unnecessary wording. But against this backdrop, the male interviewee in (2b) made wonderful selections of his linguistic forms to being overt. Nevertheless, the language of female interviewee in (4) was a bit ungrammatical and is fragmented with fewer pauses.

From the foregoing, the study in question dissects various linguistic forms from the interviews that are labelled as either homogeneous-gender or heterogeneous-gender political discourses. The study asserts the investigation made by Wardhaugh (2006) that the polarization of gendered use of language is naturally unavoidable. Similarly, it asserts Swollowe's (2003) findings that men drag actively while women remain passive in the use of media for interpersonal communication. Like

Climate (1997) and Tennen (1990), this study discovered that females' use of language is rather short which makes them to always maintain relationship and intimacy. Equally, this investigation supports the argument raised by Lakoff (1975) and Mulac *et al.* (2001) that the way women identify themselves through the use of language differs significantly with that of their men counterparts where it shows lack of confidence and tentativeness in the speech of women, except when it comes to the rising intonation or pitch which is obtainable from the utterances of both men and women in political discourses. The paper also finds that it is women, not men that do swear more succinctly in their discourses.

### **Conclusion**

To sum it up, this study observed the patterns of language use during an interview session in a cross-gender interaction. In doing so, the investigation found out that the polarization of language use among men and women comes at varying levels of parameters; and the stereotypical nature of women being passive, shy, overt and wordless is naturally unavoidable. But one can argue – by considering the above discussion – against this background that some women if professionally groomed to handle such a political programme or if developed the attitude of being cunning politicians *may* deliver well. Here, language and gender are discussed from a perspective that incorporates observations of particular behaviour in a manner that gives an insight into gendered speech patterns. So, it is through this kind of verbal interaction between the interviewers and the interviewees this study observed how men and women linguistically vary.

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