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**LANGUAGE AND GENDER: A CASE OF MALAYSIAN  
VLOGGERS**

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**Abstract**

The two topics that are commonly discussed together are language and gender. Gender refers to their physical characteristics, and language is a means of communication, but they can also be distinguished by the way they use language. Some claim that how men and women are raised has an impact on the language they use. This study examines the language used by different genders among Malaysian vloggers by merging the topics of language and gender. To accomplish it, a qualitative approach is used. Purposive sampling is used to select three (3) male and three (3) female vlogs from YouTube, which are then assessed based on features and functionalities. This study examines Lakoff's theory about the language used by women, which includes the usage of questions, intensifiers, empty adjectives, superpolite tags, queries, and specific terminology. This study will help people better understand how men and women express themselves and the factors that influence their word choices. According to this study's findings, women employ more expressive elements, fillers, and hedges. Men, on the other hand, only employ expressive characteristics when they feel that they are necessary. The employment of more emotive features is also observed in female vloggers. The most common language traits between men and women, according to this study, are those that reflect emotions. Since Malaysia has only recently begun to research how men and women use language in vlogs, the results are particularly intriguing.

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## 1. Introduction

Previous scholars have generally agreed that sex differences exist at a biological level between sexes. There have been numerous studies on the topic of women and language. According to Lakoff (1975), sex differences in language use are evident. Dickinson-Land (2021) agrees, arguing that women are more socially pressured to present a positive and courteous image than males are. Men, on the other hand, are supposed to display machismo, ego, and a lower emotional quotient.

Women, according to Farcasel-Jensen (2021), are more likely to use courteous language and work together during dialogues, while men are more likely to structure their conversations in a more adversarial fashion. According to Wahyuningsih (2018), women are more likely to utilise adjectives than men since they have a greater propensity for flowery language. It demonstrates the researchers' assumption that men and women employ contrasting styles of speaking.

Vlogging took off after the launch of Youtube in 2005, and it quickly became a popular type of online media. For instance, (Deshpande, 2021). A vlog, often known as a video blog, is an online video journal. Entertainment, individual, public, travelling, gaming, and technological vlogs are all possible types of vlogs. Opinions, expressions of emotion, sharing sessions on specific topics like beauty tips, diet advice, or a favourite dish are all examples of what you might find on a personal vlog (Fedewa, 2021). Personal vlogging channels are typically laid-back and informal. The purpose of this study is to catalogue the linguistic traits and functions that distinguish the spoken language of Malaysian vloggers on YouTube.

The "dominance approach" and the "difference approach" are two ways to describe the differences between men and women, according to an essay by Boudersa (2020). To begin, the language women use to express their subordination contrasts with the vocabulary men use to express their authority. Second, the disparities stem from the fact that each person lives in a unique reality, surrounded by a unique set of circumstances and subcultures. However, the only thing these methods do is explain the reasons women and men speak differently. Which language is better is beyond debate. Therefore, the primary focus of our investigation is on the contrasts present in the vlogs.

## 2. Problem Statement

Women and men use the English language differently, according to Lakoff (1975). Girls are trained to use the passive voice from a young age, while boys are encouraged to use the active voice (Amir et al., 2012). Compared to men, women are generally regarded to have a lesser vocabulary and to talk before giving any consideration to what they will say. Many studies have been conducted to determine whether or not there are linguistic differences between the sexes, and the results are generally consistent because they all employ the same samples.

For instance, in Malaysia, studies on linguistic variations between the sexes have relied on blog posts as their primary data source. According to the study's authors, the blog's clearer insight in writing forms makes it simpler to trace and identify the changes. However, vlogs haven't been the subject of much study. The personal, conversational tone of a vlog's host provides for engaging viewing and listening. The popularity of vlogs has led to their gradual transformation into a kind of video diary. Given

the intimate nature of vlog content, it is fair to argue that vloggers' everyday speech is reflected in their vlogs. This aids researchers in determining the effects of sexism in their work.

Men and women obviously communicate and respond to language in different ways. The purpose of this work is to catalogue the ways in which Malaysian YouTube vloggers' speech styles vary.

### **3. Research Questions**

There are three (3) research questions that this paper aims to answer:

- i. Does language usage differ between male and female vloggers?
- ii. Which linguistic features are more frequently utilised by men and women?
- iii. What linguistic characteristics are present in the vlogs?

### **4. Past Studies**

#### **4.1. Linguistics Features**

Svendsen (2019) incorporates Lakoff's (1975) work on language aspects into her study. Lakoff's intuition, research, and observation inform each of the ten traits. Although Lakoff's list of traits was published in 1975, it is still used by a large number of researchers today. Despite the passage of time, the continued relevance of Lakoff's theories demonstrates that there have been no significant linguistic differences between men and women.

Words like "hedging," "tag," "rising," "empty," "colour," "intensifies," "hypocorrect," "super polite," "avoid," and "emphatic" were all on Lakoff's list of ways to avoid being understood as dishonest. Male and female bloggers differ in a number of ways, according to Qadi's (2020) report. He came to the conclusion that there were linguistic hedging devices, tag inquiries, intensifiers, and a general avoidance of taboo terms. This fits up with Lakoff's idea on gender differences in language use. Lexical hedges, followed by tag questions and increasing intonation on declarative, ranked top in a study of women's language features made by Prasetya et al. (2023). The most recent research confirms once again that Lakoff's (1975) idea is correct.

#### **4.2. Function of Speech**

For this reason, it's fascinating to examine how Malaysian vloggers employ different parts of speech for different purposes in their videos. Very little study has been done on the role of speech in vlogs thus far, however this can be extrapolated from existing studies. Oktapiani et al. (2017) cite Jakobson's (1960) classification of six functions of language. The speech function is applied to further define the purposes of a speaker's utterances. According to Leech (as cited in UKEssays, 2018), there are three main uses for language: to instruct, to refer to other sources of knowledge, and to remark on the language itself. Informational, expressive, directive, aesthetic, and phatic are the five (5) purposes of language identified by Leech (1974). They both believe that language exists to inform, to convey the speaker's feelings, to issue orders or requests depending on the context, to express awe and wonder at

something's aesthetic qualities apart from any practical considerations, and to facilitate interpersonal exchanges. Its purpose is to keep the conversation continuing by eliciting irrelevant information.

The goal of this study is to determine whether there are any gender disparities in vloggers' linguistic preferences that are particularly noticeable. Vloggers are characterized by their laid-back demeanor and casual, face-to-face delivery, according to (Riboni, 2017). What the vloggers say in their vlogs is indicative of the way they talk in real life. Thus, vlogs can be included in the data collection process. The most popular television shows in Malaysia are those related to beauty or sharing. Therefore, the study's authors anticipate hearing a high volume of vloggers' utterances serving both referential and expressive functions.

### **4.3. Gender Difference in Language Use**

Interesting subjects to address include gender and language. Not only physically, but also in many other ways, men and women are different from one another. Men are known to be tougher, more curious, and more interested in talking about general subjects than sensitive ones. According to studies by Jespersen (1922), women typically don't finish their sentences, have limited vocabulary, and write fewer complicated sentences.

On the other hand, Kloch (2000) argues that, generally speaking, it was masculine speech patterns that established linguistic standards since they were more enduring and noticeable while speaking in front of an audience. According to Chouchane and Chouchane (2016), dominance is the primary difference between males and women's speech. Men tend to dominate conversations more than women do, and they do this by interjecting and talking over one another. The features that may be observed in men's vlogs will be used to add any new features as well as to further clarify the existing ones.

### **4.4. YouTube, Vlogs and Gender**

Before YouTube came into the picture, there is only television for home entertainment. The shows, drama, movies on the television for example are made by proper production companies and usually this involves cost and labour work. In 2005, YouTube came into existence and it aims to be the leading online videos platform. Now in 2023, it is the most preferable platform that people choose to watch online videos. YouTube offers various genre of online videos. This includes comedy, entertainment, sports, beauty channels, travelling, personal vlogs and few others. The person who does vlogging is called vlogger. This study focuses on personal vlogs. Fedewa (2021) defined personal vlogs as vlogs that gives window to viewers to view the vlogger's personal life, provide updates of their lives and their vlogs act as home video. Similar to television program, YouTube has channels selections. The channels contain video logs of the vlogger and the vlogger has full power to determine the direction and genre of the his or her channels. YouTube allows vloggers to be their own production house and do their own structure for their channels. Depending on the number of viewers, vloggers can make good money from making interesting video logs.

## 5. Methodology

### 5.1. Brief Overview of Channels on YouTube

In order to find differences in language between men and women, six (6) videos were taken from six (6) different channels. The selected vloggers were Johanis Sani, Cupcake Aisyah and Vivy Yusof to represent women. Aqid, Alif Satar and Shawn Lee to represent men.

There are many women vloggers in Malaysia that speaks in English in their video. However, researchers have limited the number to 3 videos only to ease the process of transcription and analysing.

Table 1 below illustrates the details of the selected women vloggers as of 2023:

**Table 1.** Summary of Women Vloggers

Vlogger's name	Johanis Sani	Cupcake Aisyah	Vivy Yusof
Type of vlog	Beauty	Cooking	Life Style
Start vlogging	12 March 2012	30 <sup>th</sup> March 2011	28 September 2011
Accumulated viewers (as of 2023)	19,092,753	119,467,933	7,242,410 (decreased since vlogger removed a number of vlogs)
Subscribers (as of 2023)	177K	503K	247K
Video listed	<i>New Zealand Vlog Part 2 (Skydiving).</i> 12:22 minutes	<i>Vlog: Official Fridge Tour.</i> 26:04 minutes	<i>Ramadhan Diaries: Day 6 + Surah Al-Fatihah.</i> 14:08 minutes

The real challenge is to find men vloggers that converse mainly in English in their videos.

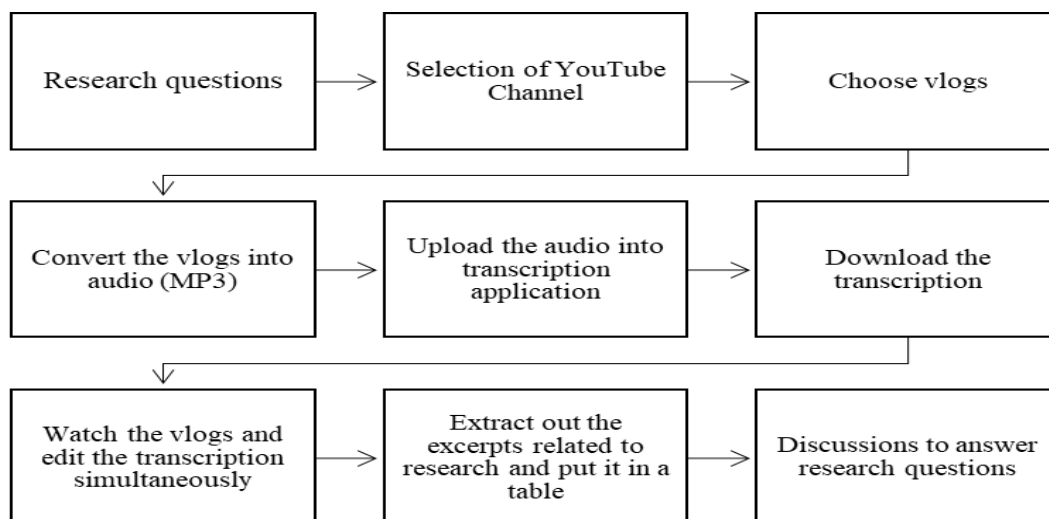
Table 2 below shows the details of the selected men vloggers as of 2023:

**Table 2.** Summary of Men Vloggers

	Aqid	Alif Satar	Shawn Lee
Type of vlog	Travel	Family	Technology
Start vlogging	22 <sup>nd</sup> August 2014	10 <sup>th</sup> August 2018	17 February 2006
Accumulated viewers (as of 2023)	10,619,791	74,227,148	104,762,908
Subscribers	123K	509K	461K
Video listed	<i>JEJU- RM 2,000 Luxury Villa, Tangerines, Snow and more.</i> 10:23 minutes	<i>Alif Satar &amp; Family Zoo Negara Visit!</i> 17:43 minutes	<i>She Slapped Me...</i> 13:43minutes

### 5.2. Research Design

The researchers discovered that the qualitative method was the one that was most frequently employed to carry out studies of this nature, according to earlier studies. If there are gender differences in language use, this approach can be used to investigate, clarify, and understand why. As shown in Figure 1, YouTube videos are the source of the data for this study.



**Figure 1.** An Overview of Research Design and Procedure

### **5.3. Research Instruments and Sampling**

#### **5.3.1. Research Instruments**

There are two (2) instruments involved in the study. First, the videos were converted into audio (MP3) using [www.onlineconverter.com](http://www.onlineconverter.com). Then, the audio was uploaded on [www.temi.com](http://www.temi.com) to convert it from audio into text. The transcriptions were downloaded and edited. The vlogs were again watched, listen to, and were cross-check with the transcription processed by Temi. Once all the videos had been transcribed, the features of language in both men and women as well as the functions were identified. The data collected was then sorted out accordingly and analyzed.

#### **5.3.2. Sampling**

Purposive sampling was a technique used in this investigation. Etikan (2016) define purposeful sampling as an approach that is not random that comprises carefully choosing participants depending on what they can contribute to the study's success. Since they are suited for it, three (3) video blogs from each gender are employed in this study. The suggested YouTube channels total six (6). The channels will have to adhere to a set of requirements.

- i. Malaysians should own the channel
- ii. The vlogs must be primarily in the English language. As long as English is the primary language, code switching and code mixing are acceptable.
- iii. The chosen channels must to have been available on YouTube for at least six months.
- iv. Duration of the videos should be between 10 minutes to 30 minutes
- v. Genre for each personal vlog is different

## **6. Findings and Discussions**

Data collected from all six (6) vlogs are arranged and analysed.

## **6.1. Features of Language Used**

In the beginning of this study, the features that the researcher tends to look at are mostly based on Lakoff's theory. There are ten (10) features listed but not every feature is present in this study. Based on the findings, women are more expressive than men. They tend to give more opinion on something, tell viewers how they feel, share with their viewers their opinion and some even share what they love. Women's talks a lot too. This can be proven based on the length of transcription where words filled the paper. Men didn't have much to talk but when it comes to their favourite topic, they can talk longer than women.

### **6.1.1. Use of Emotional Expression**

Comparison can be made between Shawn Lee who loves to vlogs about what he loves and enjoys with Alif Satar who vlogs about his family. It is not that Alif does not like his family but because he is a father, he usually uses simple sentence to communicate with his children. He keeps on asking questions to initiate conversation with Alisya (his daughter). It differs from Shawn Lee who do vlogs about this work. It allows him to communicate like an adult. Surprisingly despite of the initial theory of believing that men are less expressive, Shawn is nothing like that. He expresses how he feels really well, he describes things, he motivates people and he shares about how he feels regarding his achievements. Shawn proves that men can express their feelings well when they allow themselves to communicate the feelings via vlogs.

### **6.1.2. Use of Fillers**

Women are observed to use fillers more frequently than males. All three (3) women in the vlogs uses, 'so' as a filler. They use it to start their sentence instead of 'um', 'mm' and 'hmm' that is usually used by others. This shows that women tend to find the right sentence before uttering any word. They need to think thoroughly on what they want to say. Men use less fillers compared to women. This shows that they don't really care about the arrangements of words. They don't hesitate as much as women do.

### **6.1.3. Use of Hedges**

Women uses more hedges than men. Ques such as 'I think', 'I guess' can be found in the vlogs. Men is seen to use less hedges. They are seen to be firmer than women when it comes to utterances.

## **6.2. Functions of Language Used**

### **6.2.1. Expressive Functions**

All the women in the vlogs make use of their expressive abilities, which are similar to their features. They do what they're doing with greater gusto and enthusiasm. Vivy Yusof, for one, has been known to complain about feeling weary. Aisyah says she got a late start and is now exhausted. Johanis says she has no intention of getting drenched by the water. These are all instances of evaluative capabilities. They want their audience to feel what they are feeling while watching the vlogs.

Shawn Lee and Aqid use many types of linguistic expression than men. For instance, Aqid frequently expresses his gratitude towards mother nature by remarking on how stunning Korea is. He wants others to experience the same awe and wonder he experiences whenever he gazes upon the natural world, and he hopes that reading about it will inspire others to do the same. When Alif Satar is with his daughters, he often uses phrases that prompt his daughters to share their thoughts.

### 6.3. Frequently Used Features

Based on the findings, it is seen that the most used feature is emotional expression. Emotional expression can be seen in all vlogs between men and women. Relating this to the vlog, vlogger wants to interact with viewers. They want viewers to know how they feel, what is the weather, their thoughts on something, their opinions and so on. Hence expressive functions appear to be the highest feature on the list.

## 7. Conclusion

Men and women utilize language differently; however, women tend to use more emotional expressiveness and expressive functions in their speech. Men will talk more about something they can relate to or love, while women will talk more about how they feel. Self-reference is one aspect unique to men's vlogs that is not present in women. Men frequently think that their listeners will automatically agree with them. Not like women, who often assume their viewers will share their views on a certain topic.

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