



Gender in Arabic Language Learning: A Social-Educational Analysis

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Abstract: This research aimed to determine gender relationships in Arabic language learning in social-educational studies. The method used in this research employed a library approach with the data source being actual and factual literacy, and Mels and Heberman data analysis was utilized using interactive techniques. The results of this research showed that gender was not a true social construct or form, was not innate from birth, and could not also be said to be God's nature or provision because gender was related to the process of believing how men and women should act and behave in accordance with structured values, social and cultural provisions in the place where they were located. Learning Arabic could not be separated from linguistics and was included in the subcategory of grammar, especially in understanding the placement of mudzakkar and muannast. In the structure of the Arabic language, masculinity was the fundamental that was subjected, while femininity was the branch that had no ability as a subject.

Keywords: Language, Educational, Gender, Arabic Language Learning, Social.

INTRODUCTION

Language is an activity that is carried out by humans all the time in interaction with others. Judging from its function, language plays a role as a tool to convey feelings, thoughts, and ideas to others. Therefore, when communicating with others, the majority of people use language, both formally and informally. The use of this language is seen in formal situations such as speeches, product presentations, or scientific presentations, and also in informal situations such as jokes, small talk, or just casual chats (Wibowo 2020).

a foreign language has become a very valuable skill in today's era. A person who can master one or more foreign languages, especially international languages, is considered to have added value. Although English is not the only recognized international language, Arabic has become one of the world's increasingly important languages as Middle Eastern countries develop (Ridlo 2015).

For the people of Indonesia, which is a country with the largest Muslim population in the world, Arabic is not something unfamiliar. Many schools or educational institutions, especially Islamic-based ones, place Arabic as the main foreign language for their students to learn (Aziz dkk. 2018). fact, in some cases, Arabic began to shift the

importance of English as a subject tested by the state in schools (Khasanah 2016).

Sociolinguistics places the position of language in relation to the use of language in society, thus viewing language as a social system and a communication system. The use of language (language use) is a form of social interaction that occurs in concrete situations. Thus language is not only an individual symptom, but also a social phenomenon. As a social phenomenon, language and language use are not only determined by linguistic factors, but also influenced by social and situational factors. Social factors such as: social status, education level, age, economic level, gender, etc. Situational factors for example: who speaks, in what language, to whom, when, where, and about what issues. (Taufik, Maltuf Anam, dan Gufron Zainal Abidin Sdawi Manasiq 2023)

According to (Paramita 2017), In the sociolinguistic field, changes occurring in the structure of language are seen as a response to various phenomena and diverse social functions. It also emphasizes the importance and limitations of such changes. Sociolinguistics observes various aspects of language learning and its variations, such as the use of language based on gender (male/female), as well as the difference in the pitch of sounds or types of words used between the two. Primarily, the focus is on aspects of learning related to things that are

considered inappropriate or not recommended in conversation.

In society, there is often confusion and misunderstanding between the terms gender and gender, even though they have important meanings. According to (Nugroho 2008), Gender refers to the difference in roles assigned to women and men, which are largely the result of social and cultural constructions, rather than something determined by biological factors from birth. Meanwhile, "gender" refers to the biological characteristics that a person has from birth. Gender is more related to a person's social and cultural identity as a woman or a man. The importance of gender roles in society is explained by (Fasya, Karwati, dan Herwina 2022), which states that gender gives birth to expectations for how women and men should think, behave, and feel things. This creates what are referred to as gender roles, which are norms or standards that determine the behaviors that are considered appropriate for women and men.

Language is not only a means of communication, but also a system of signs that contain terms, concepts, and labels that distinguish based on gender. Language has a huge influence on our perception and view of the world. Every word we use does not just convey meaning, but also carries certain social implications and values. Language is a powerful means of socialization, helping in the preservation of attitudes and values in society. Even more than that, language has a significant impact on the physical movements of humans who use it. Through certain words, language has the power of suggestion that is able to influence individual and group social behavior and actions. Thus, language not only affects the way we interact, but can also be a driver for social actions based on beliefs and values conveyed through language. (Taufik dkk. 2023)

(Rahman 2023) stated that many things are fundamental to the emergence of language differences. In speaking, women have a tendency to express their intentions honestly through gestures or speaking styles (meta messages), while men tend not to do so, they convey their intentions frankly.

In social linguistics, one can start with social problems and relate them to language, but also vice versa, start with language and then relate it to social events, festivals. Sociolinguistics can refer to the use of data and analysis of language and other sciences related to social life, and vice versa means social data and language analysis and study. For example, it is possible to see the existence of two different linguistic variants in a language first, and then associate them with social phenomena such as gender differences, so it can be concluded that variant (A) is used by women. (B) supported by men in this society. Or conversely, one can start by classifying society by gender and male-female, and then analyze the language or speech used by women or the language spoken by men. (Rachma 2020)

However, with the increasing attention given to Arabic language learning, questions have arisen about how social factors, such as gender, influence the effectiveness of this learning process. Gender, as a major social factor, can play a significant role in the learning process, affecting how male and female students understand and use the language. For example, research conducted by (Holmes 2013) shows that gender roles influence how individuals learn and use language. Differences in gender in language use can affect students' participation and motivation in language learning contexts. Other empirical studies, such as those by (Maltz dan Borker 1982), demonstrate that gender differences in communication can impact classroom dynamics and learning outcomes. This is relevant for understanding how gender specifically affects Arabic language learning. Furthermore, research by (Jane 2000) on gender issues in second and foreign language learning identifies how gender roles can influence language education outcomes.

Based on the background outlined above, this study is important for a deeper understanding of the relationship between gender and Arabic language learning. This research focuses on analyzing the relationship between gender and Arabic language learning from a sociolinguistic perspective, aiming to understand how gender differences affect the learning process.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative method by utilizing a literature review that uses a descriptive approach (Darmalaksana 2020). Selected data references include relevant books, articles, and reliable literature. The data analysis process uses intrative techniques which include data exposure, data reduction, data analysis, and drawing conclusions, as explained by (Abdurahman dan M Mansyur 2021)

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Grammatical Gender in Arabic Language Learning

Language learning, particularly in the context of grammatical gender, plays a crucial role in shaping students' social identities. (Hymes 1972) theory of Communicative Competence emphasizes that understanding social contexts, including gender differences, is essential in language use. Children begin their first language acquisition by recognizing phonological and morphological cues that help them grasp gender roles in the Arabic language. Over time, their understanding evolves to include more complex semantic and syntactic signals.

Children's acquisition of a first language often begins with understanding grammatical gender as one of the important aspects (Franceschina 2005). The process of acquiring a mother tongue for children depends on the various gender signals available in their language, which

include phonology, morphology, semantics, and syntax. At first, children tend to rely on phonological and morphological signals to understand gender, but over time, their understanding of semantic and syntactic signals also develops. This is in accordance with the view expressed by Koehn and Levy that in interpreting gender, especially in nouns (isim/nouns), grammatical categories such as adjectives, verbs, and imperatives play an important role in understanding gender, especially in the context of nouns (Zuhriyah 2022).

In Arabic grammar, the distinction between *mudzakkar* (masculine) and *muannas* (feminine) is not merely a linguistic rule, but also reflects societal views on gender. (Labov 1972) theory of language variation demonstrates that differing language use among social groups can reinforce existing gender roles. Arabic, with its system of grammatical markers, establishes the male form as the default norm, while the female form is considered a variant that requires special markers.

In the context of formal systems, the determination of the meaning of objects is subject to predetermined rules, as mentioned earlier, such as the rules of morphology and phonology. The rules of morphology study the formation of word structures that are related to semantic science. The connected system is divided into two ways; First, it has semantic rules, and second, there is an overlapping system with semantic rules in the derivative system, because in essence there is no pure morphological system, such as Muslims. Nouns that are formed with a suffix and sound "tun" in the rules are affixed with the letter "ta' to indicate the meaning of women.

On the other hand, there are instances where morphological and semantic systems are not always close together. For example, in the masculine language level, there is a type of declension "baitun" that is attached to the word element. The phonological system is related to the structure of sounds in which the grammatical gender type of the word is determined by the sound of the final letter. As in Arabic and other languages, language is made up of symbols or markers. Every form of vocabulary used in the language is a meaningful symbol on its side (Al-Quzwaini 1993). , in analyzing the meaning of words in Arabic related to gender equality, one of them is to analyze lexical meanings, especially those listed in the dictionary (Akmaliyah 2021).

(James paul 1999) concept of "Discourses" is relevant in this context, where language use and structure not only reflect social realities but also shape them. The grammatical structure of Arabic can reinforce traditional gender roles, which in turn affects how students understand and internalize their gender identities.

Gender in Arabic Language Learning in the Classroom

In the classroom context, gender often influences the dynamics of learning. (Lather 1991) through her theory of feminist pedagogy, emphasizes the importance of creating an inclusive learning environment that is sensitive to gender differences. Empirical observations show that male and female students tend to adopt different approaches when learning Arabic; female students are more likely to use collaborative strategies, while male students tend to be more competitive.

This analysis can be explained by Lather's theory, which suggests that teaching should be tailored to the needs and characteristics of students based on gender. This means that a one-size-fits-all approach to teaching may not be effective for all students and should be adapted to be more inclusive.

By utilizing the learning strategies proposed by (Macaro 2001), Arabic language teaching methods in the classroom can be redesigned to ensure that gender differences do not become barriers to academic achievement. This includes developing language learning strategies that support all students, regardless of gender, to achieve their best results.

Arabic is one of the languages with a very detailed grammatical structure in describing situations, rich in vocabulary, and has an excellent ability to express human ideas and feelings through words (Zulifan 2018).

The Arabic grammar system in gender relations has been explained by Nasr Abu Zaid, which is driven by the concept of men and women (*mudzakkar* and *muannas*) by having rules; first, *Isim* (noun) recognizes the status of male and female so that there is no neutral element; second, the concept of male and female is applied in the noun good has human genitalia so it is called *mudzakkar haqiqi* as the word "محمد، رجل" and *muannast haqiqi* as the

saying "نساء، امرأة" and those who do not have genitals, then

they are called *mudzakkar majazi* as the word "باب" and

muannast majazi as the saying "اليد، الشمس" in Arabic. As

in Mahdi Sadjadi's research, classifying masculine is a form that is not marked while feminine usually has a marker. Most morphological feminine nouns are marked with one of three feminine suffixes: -ah/ -at, such as the word "شجيرة", -aa', such as the word "سهر", and -aa, such as the word "ي- ذكّر". The suffix *taa' marbutah* -ah/ -at,

pronounced "-ah" in the form of a pause and, for the sake of simplicity will be referred to in the form of a pause, is a feminine marker the most common. Less often feminine nouns are given the suffix *alif mamdudah* -aa' or *alif maqsurah* -aa (Sadjadi 2019). As a general rule, Arabic nouns that do not have a feminine ending are masculine.

However, some masculine words are given a suffix with the feminine suffix "ah", such as the word "همزة" "male name". As the word masculine is referred to in the literature (Ryding 2005), are few words and low frequency in the language.

Third, the masculine and feminine status in Arabic sentences will determine the structure of the mudzakkar and muannast types in the form of verbs (فعل) fa'ala - fa'alat; huwa, hiya, category (ضمائر), hadza, hadzihi, category (إشارة), isim maushul etc. The Arabic language system is driven by both men and women, thereby reflecting the worldview of the Arab society is gender. However, gender is not limited to biological genitals, but this mention is called social gender (gender).

According to Nasir Abu Hamid, Arabic grammatical patterns note the importance of connecting masculine conjunctions with feminine nouns, as regulated in three rules: First, feminine nouns can generally be formed from masculine nouns by adding the suffix ta' marbutoh. This reflects the view of society that men are considered primary and women are considered secondary. Second, in certain groups, the masculine plural form is used to refer to women (jama mudzakar). This rule shows that in its use, men are considered more valuable than women, no matter how many women there are. Third, the male group can include women, but the female group cannot include men. Naturally, most vocabulary in Arabic has a masculine form, unless it has a specific marker for feminine. This is because the male form is considered a basic form and does not require any special markers to indicate its gender. These rules reflect the societal view that men are considered active actors while women are considered passive recipients.

Gender Equality in Arabic Language Learning from an Islamic Perspective

Arabic language learning within the context of Islamic education offers a unique opportunity to explore gender equality through the use of language. (Hymes 1972) emphasizes that social contexts, such as religious teachings, significantly influence how language is taught and learned. The Islamic perspective on gender equality, as conveyed through the Qur'an, provides a strong theoretical framework for creating a fair and equitable learning environment.

Gender is a symbol used to express one's gender, which is based on an individual's social role within society. Gender identity symbols are sometimes associated with sex identity, although gender is more of a distinction between public roles determined by the agreement of members of society in a certain context of time and place. (Maslihah 2018)

Gender studies emphasize the development of aspects of masculinity (rajuliyah) and femininity (nisaiyah) of a person, in contrast to sex studies which focus more on the biological aspects and chemical composition of the bodies of men (zukuriah) and women (unutsah). Therefore, the process of growing up to be a man or woman is more appropriately analyzed using the term gender. Meanwhile, issues related to reproduction or sexual activity are more appropriate to be discussed with the term sex. However, there is a perception in society that associates gender differences with sex differences, even though sex differences do not always cause gender inequality in people's lives. (Umar 2001)

When a child is born, he or she automatically takes part in the gender assignment of his or her cultural environment and society. This gender assignment depends on the cultural values that develop in that society. When we discuss gender relations between men and women, there are absolute and relative differences. Absolute difference is known as natural difference, which is God's natural provision and does not change over time, applicable to all human beings in all ages regardless of their social status. On the other hand, relative differences are the result of social and symbolic implementations, better known as social constructions. (Maslihah 2018)

These differences are not fixed, and it is very possible to undergo changes. In fact, change and exchange can occur based on existing social and cultural constructions (nurture). This difference is better known in the form of assumptions about "female characteristics and characteristics" and "male characteristics and characteristics". For example, women are often perceived as more emotional while men are perceived as more rational. Men are often considered to have a stronger intellect while women are considered to have a more limited intellect. In the social order, men are usually considered leaders while women are considered to be the leads, and this pattern is reflected in the division of space and roles. Men tend to play a role in the public sector while women are expected to take care of the domestic and reproductive sectors in full. (Wekke 2013)

(James paul 1999) argues that language can be used to challenge existing social norms. In this context, Arabic language instruction can be designed to support principles of gender equality by demonstrating that, while Arabic grammar differentiates between genders, Islamic principles emphasize the equality of men and women in the eyes of Allah.

The Qur'an, as a source of law for Muslims, has outlined the principles of gender equality as follows:

- a) Men and women are considered equally as servants of Allah.
- b) Men and women are equally commanded to be caliphs on this earth, which means they have a shared responsibility to maintain and manage this universe.

c) Men and women both accept the primordial covenant, which is God's promise to man from the beginning of time.
 d) Adam and Eve, as male and female representatives, were equally involved in important events in human history.

e) Men and women have the same potential to achieve achievements in life, both in the spiritual field and in the material world (Umar 2001).

Some of the privileges given to men are the result of the greater responsibilities they carry compared to women. However, this does not make the position of men as superior creatures. This privilege is solely due to the more dominant public and social roles for men in society (Solichin 2006).

Recently, the problem of gender discrimination among Muslims has arisen, the form of discrimination is in the form of negative imagery attached to men and women (gender stereotype). This discrimination puts women in a subordinate position compared to men, women are often marginalized in various aspects of life. In addition, there are also various gender-based violence, as well as the placing of an excessive burden on women compared to men. Gender discrimination like this can trigger obstacles to the development process in all fields. This is because there is not a small amount of human resource potential possessed by our nation and religion that comes from women. Thus, it is appropriate that the position of men and women is seen as the same through gender-responsive activities (Cholil 2010).

As a result of this analysis, it is recommended that the Arabic language curriculum reflect these principles by ensuring that language instruction not only upholds traditional gender roles but also promotes equality and social justice.

Arabic Learning Materials

Learning, as one of the important aspects of education, emphasizes on imparting knowledge to all students. The main components in learning are teachers, students, and learning materials. In the learning process, there are two important stages: first, the teacher's very significant role in conveying knowledge to all students, and second, students' efforts to learn and understand every knowledge conveyed by the teacher (Sanjaya 2008).

In the Arabic dictionary, the word Learning or teaching is termed with the word ta'lim (masdar of the word (a'llama-yu'allimu). The root of the word "alima means "to know" or "to understand". And the word learning is also termed with the word tadrīs (masdar from the word darrasa-yudarrisu), which means to learn or learn (Ali dan Muhdlor 1998).

The purpose of learning Arabic is to provide students with reading and writing skills in Arabic, so that they can understand the past history to take lessons, and gain new knowledge from Arabic literary works. It is

expected that students will be able to communicate fluently and appropriately using Arabic, both in conversation and writing (al-Rukabi 1996).

Learning materials refer to all the content taught to students in the classroom, covering various areas of science. Through these learning materials, students can achieve a certain level of learning or obtain a certificate from a recognized educational institution in a country. Thus, learning materials are an integral part of the learning curriculum applied in an educational institution (Bahruddin 2010).

Learning materials in education should include three types of components, namely: affective components (attitude values), cognitive components (knowledge), and psychomotor components (skills) (Asrorah dan Amin 2010). According to Rusydi Ahmad Thu'aimah, in learning Arabic, the material is divided into two groups based on the level of students' abilities, namely beginner students and advanced students. The definition of Arabic learning materials for beginner students is:

For beginner students, Arabic learning materials include:

1. Textbook: This book is intended for students in every beginner class. The learning materials cover four basic Arabic skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

2. Exercise Book: Used by students to do assignments related to Arabic language materials.

3. Teacher's Handbook: Contains a guide for teachers to teach Arabic. This includes procedures for delivering material, learning objectives, language skills, cultural aspects related to Arabic that can be developed by students, as well as strategies to implement teaching materials in accordance with the curriculum that has been designed. Meanwhile, for advanced students, Arabic learning materials include:

1. Reading Books and Literary Works: Providing reading materials, including literary works, and Arabic texts that students can study.

2. Arabic Exercise Book: Used to do tasks related to grammar rules (nahwu), morphology (sharaf), spelling (imla'), and calligraphy (khat).

3. Arabic Books with Specific Titles: Contains materials that can help students gain new knowledge and be liked by students.

4. Teacher's Handbook: Provides guidance for teachers in using Arabic textbooks in advanced classes (Thu'aimah 1998).

CONCLUSION

In addressing the growing misconceptions about gender bias, it is important to understand that the concept of gender actually establishes a correlation between the masculine and feminine in the social context of society. Therefore, education is one of the efforts to apply the concept of gender by incorporating the principles of gender equality into the curriculum. This requires

adjustments in Arabic learning materials, which are very thick with the use of gender grammatical, such as the use of nouns that have masculine and feminine genders, verbs, adjectives, even in the structure of sentence formation, paragraphs, both in oral and written language. However, it should be noted that in the study of Arabic linguistics, there is no known gender-neutral structure.

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