

Gender on the Scope of Written Text; in Persian and English Short Stories

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Abstract

This article is a field study that tries to verify the effect of gender on the scope of Persian and English written texts. Variables such as color terms, swearing, hedges, intensifiers, tag questions, adjectives of approximation and adjectives are considered for analysis in the study of selected literary texts in the corpus. The findings of this study show that in terms of color terms, both English and Persian female story writers use more color terms in their stories. Male writers are generally supposed to use more swearing in their stories. In terms of the use of hedging devices in the stories, it is shown that hedging expressions are found more frequently in female authored texts. The study of intensifiers (up graders, boosters) in Persian and English stories shows that, the use of intensifiers is more common within women's writing style. In spite of the very infrequent use of tags in the stories, male authored texts provide more examples of tag questions. Challenging tags are more frequent in men's writing; female writers on the other hand prefer the use of epistemic tags. Frequency of the use of adjectives of approximation is not a good

criterion to differentiate female authored texts from male authored ones in Persian corpus. On the other hand the use of this linguistic feature in English corpus demonstrates that female authored texts use these adjectives more frequently. The study of the use of adjectives in English and Persian corpus shows that female writers use adjectives more frequently in their writing.

Key words: Sociolinguistics Hedge, Euphemism Tag Question, Stylistics Intensifier, Female Sentence

1. Introduction

In recent years there has been an increasing interest in language and gender research. Most of the previous work considered speech, but relatively few studies have focused on gender differences in written texts.

This study tries to analyze linguistically some Persian and English short stories to recognize some linguistic features that seem to distinguish the sex of the author. Variables such as, color terms, swearing, hedges, intensifiers, tag questions, adjectives of approximation and quality are considered for analysis here.

2. Review of literature

The question of identifying and interpreting possible differences in linguistic styles between males and females has exercised linguistic researchers for decades (Trudgill 1972; Lakoff 1975; Labov 1990; coates 1998). It has been argued for sometime that some consistent differences exist in speech (as summarized in Poynton 1989), although the interpretation of such differences remains somewhat elusive. Most previous work has investigated apparent phonological and pragmatic differences between male

and female language use in speech (Trudgill 1972; Labov 1990; Holmes 1995; Eckert 1997).

Several statistical phenomena have emerged that appear to be fairly stable across a variety of contexts. For example, females seem to talk more about relationships than males do (Tannen 1990) and use more compliments and apologies (Holmes 1989) and facilitative tag questions (Holmes 1989). Holmes has suggested that these and other phenomena might be generalized to a number of "universals" including that females are more attentive to the affective function of conversation and more prone to use linguistic devices that solidify relationships. However, the interpretation of the underlying linguistic phenomena, particularly as regards their specific communicative functions, is the subject of considerable controversy. For example, it has been argued that the use of facilitative tag question by women might be more plausibly interpreted as signs of conversational control than as signs of subordination (Lakoff 1975). Nevertheless, broadly speaking, the differences between female and male language use appear to be centered about the interaction between the linguistic actor and his or her linguistic context (the listener as well as the larger speech community)

Hence it is not surprising that nearly all of the work on male/female linguistic difference has focused on speech and other high-interaction linguistic modalities such as correspondence. (Hayward 2003)

Written texts such as books and articles, on the other hand, which are intended for a broad unseen audience, lack the intonational, phonological and conversational cues that are involved in speech and to a lesser extent in correspondence. One might therefore expect, especially in view of the interactional nature of the differences seen thus far between female and male

language use, that such differences would be reduced or even eliminated. It might be hypothesized, that the formal structure of writing with its lack of explicit markings, would lead to texts that do not directly express the author's gender. On the other hand, culturally defined, gender differences might be expected to be revealed within cultural productions, particularly novels, in which there is often assumed to be a personal connection among the author, the story being told, and the way the story is being told. Especially a number of feminist critics have argued that texts are gendered, and that woman's writing is different from man's writing. (Hayward 2003)

3. Theoretical Approaches

To date, most research on gendered writing has followed one of three different perspectives. These three approaches are reviewed very briefly here.

The largest body of work develops from various feminist positions, detecting the presence (or absence) of subversive female voices within a patriarchal male discourse. The second approach, a quantitative one, is a product of computational analyses of style for authorship attribution. In it, traits that may distinguish texts written by men or women have been uncovered. The third approach has been by way of linguistic analyses. Although much of the work from a linguistic perspective has analyzed conversation and other oral forms, there has been some study of differences in written texts. It should be noted that, however, there is a fair amount of overlap among the three approaches.

The feminist position is well represented by Woolf (1929). In her 1929 essay "women and fiction" she voices a position that has been widely adopted by theorists of feminism:

"Before a woman can write exactly as she wishes to write, she has many difficulties to face. To begin with, there is the technical difficulty That the very form of the sentence does not fit her. It is a sentence made by men: it is too loose, too heavy, and too pompous for a woman's use. Yet in a novel An ordinary and usual type of sentence has to be found to carry the reader easily and naturally from one end of the book to the other .And this a woman must make for herself, altering and adapting the current sentence until she writes one that takes the natural shape of her thought without crushing or distorting it". (37)

Woolf asserted that there was a sentence which women writers had developed which she termed the "female sentence" or the "sentence of the feminine gender". For Woolf, certain women writers crafted a new type of sentence which is looser and more accretive than the male sentence (Mills, 1995:44)

The tenet that women write, or use language generally, in a gender specific way, has informed a wide variety of feminist theories in France, England and the United States, as in Helene Cixous's claim that "woman must write herself" (Cited in Hayward, 2003)

Alternatively, when a woman fails to find her voice in writing, she is forced to assume not a neutral but a male voice, to write in a language "made by men". From this perspective we might expect to find that some women's writing does express gender.

The second approach uses some methods of quantification in computational stylistics and attribution studies and helps us find some rather surprising differences in men's and women's writing particularly in prose fiction. The most significant work in this area is by John Burrows. Working with frequency patterns for the 100 most common words, Burrows found that writing by men and

women form separate clusters (cites in Hayward, 2003), as distinct as the clustering found in moving among time periods (eighteenth versus nineteenth century novels) or national languages- English, American and Australian

The third approach which is the approach used in this study has been more empirical, Men and woman talk differently, as analyses of conversations show fairly clearly. Issues such as turn taking, politeness and the amount of time each gender may use in conversation are gender marked and may be read as reflecting power relationships. Linguistic analyses have also been applied to literary texts, although not quite as often as to spoken discourse. Various studies have found differences between women and men in such issues. In both types of linguistic studies (those applied to spoken discourse and those applied to texts), there are significant implications for theories of feminism.

4. The Procedure &Methodology

This article is a field study within the domain of sociolinguistics that tries to verify the effect of gender on the scope of written text. The approach used in this study is empirical like that illustrated as the third approach above. First of all, some studies by linguists into whether women's speech is different from men's are fully taken into account to draw an analogy with work on writing. Variables such as, color terms, swearing, hedges, intensifiers, tag questions, adjectives of approximation and quality are considered for analysis.

Statistical analysis is applied to figure out the difference in men's and women's writing.

The analysis of the data is conducted in three steps:

First, the study is done on Persian corpus, and then statistical methods are used to determine the differences between men's and women's writing in Persian corpus.

Second, the same method of analysis is done on English corpus and the findings are represented by statistical methods.

Third, the findings on Persian and English corpus are compared together and implications for those differences are provided.

5. Corpus

To from the material for the study, 20 English short stories, 10 by men and 10 by women and 20 Persian short stories, 10 written by men and 10 by women are gathered. The stories are chosen randomly. The only selection criterion was that the stories should be recent, original works, and not translated. The short stories are included in appendixes 1 to 4

6. Analysis of the data

6.1 color terms

Poynton (1989) asserts that women and men seem to include different lexical sets in their total repertoires. It seems that women use color terms more frequently than men and have a different command of them.

6.1.1 Color terms in Persian stories

It seems that women use color terms more than men in Persian stories.

Table 1: Identification of the use of color terms in male and female authored short stories in Persian

Stories	Frequency of the use of color terms by male characters	Frequency of the use of color terms by female characters	Total
In 10 male written texts	50	14	64
In 10 female written texts	4	118	122

This table shows that in 10 female authored short stories, 122 references to color terms were made, while the study of the same number of male authored short stories shows only 64 references in the stories to colors. As for 122 references to color terms in female authored stories, only 4 times they were quoted by male characters. On the other hand, in 64 uses of color terms in male authored texts, 14 times, colors were quoted by female characters. The table above clearly demonstrates that women use more color terms than men in writing and it seems that it can be one of the important factors to differentiate female's writing from male's writing.

In diagram 1, colors that were used in male authored Persian short stories are represented by their frequency of use.

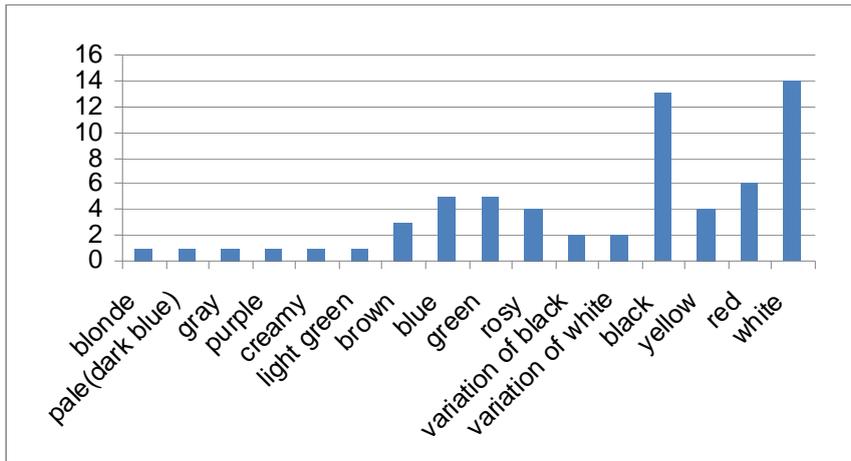


Diagram 1: Colors and their total occurrences in male authored stories.

The most frequent colors are white, black and red

In diagram 2, colors that were used in female authored stories are shown by their frequency of use.

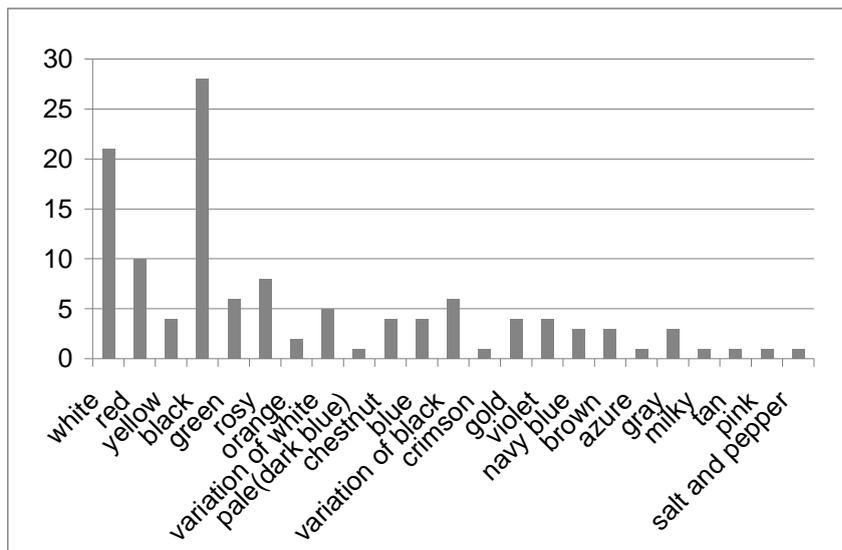


Diagram 2: Colors and their total occurrences in female authored stories.

The comparison of the two diagrams shows that color terms may be used more frequently in female authored texts and also female authored texts benefit from a wider variety of color terms.

Black, white and red are found as the most recurring colors in both female and male authored texts. The answer to the question of why the above quoted colors are more frequent, demands a study of its own. At least one can find the influence of the author's life experiences and culture.

6.1.2 Color terms in English short stories:

It seems that English female writers; similar to Persian female writers, use color terms more frequently than men.

Table 2: Identification of the use of color terms in male and female authored short stories in English

Stories	Frequency of the use of color terms by male characters	Frequency of the use of color terms by female characters	Total
In 10 male written texts	62	8	70
In 10 female written texts	6	102	108

This table shows that in 10 female authored short stories in English, 108 references to color terms were made. On the other hand, the study of the same number of male authored short stories shows only 70 references to the colors in the stories. As for 108 occurrences of color terms in female authored stories, only 6 times, they were quoted by male characters, on the other hand, in 61 uses of color terms in male texts, 8 references to colors by female characters were found.

As it was the case for Persian short stories, females used more color terms in the short stories of English literature and it seems

that it can be one of the important factors to differentiate female's writing from male's writing. In diagram 3, colors that were used in male authored English short stories are represented by their frequency of use.

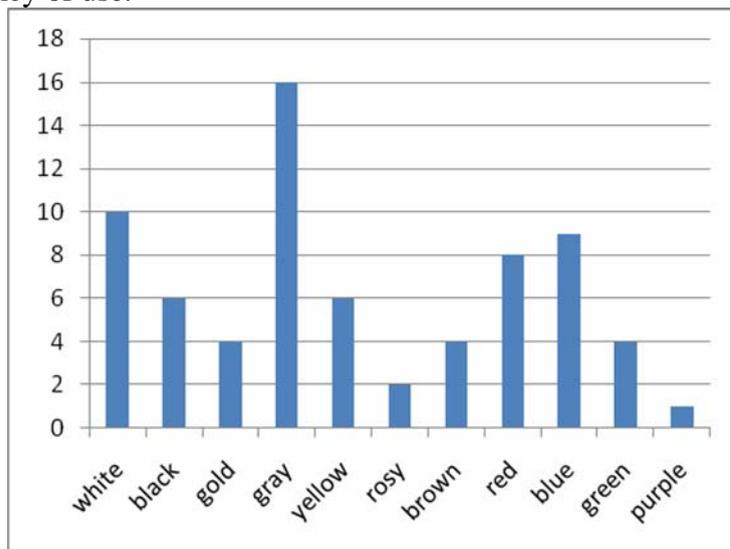


Diagram 3: Colors and their total occurrences in male authored stories.

In diagram 4 various colors used in female authored stories are shown by their frequency of use.

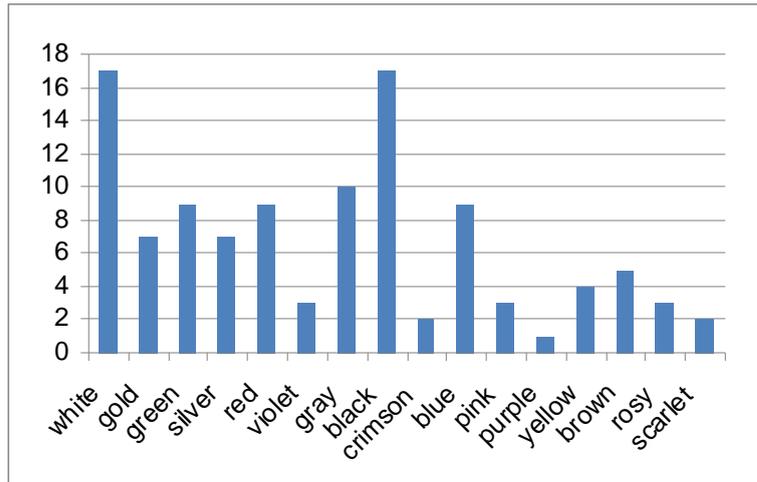


Diagram 4: Colors and their total occurrences in female authored stories.

As in was the case for Persian short stories, the diagrams show that female authored texts provide a wider variety of color terms. Black, white and gray were the most recurring colors found in both male and female authored short stories in English.

6.1.3 Comparison of the data in Persian and English

In terms of color terms, both English and Persian female story writers used more color terms in their stories. Color terms criterion is further more a very important factor in distinguishing female characters in the stories from males

6.2 Swearing

Poynton(1989) stresses that the use of swearing is also regarded as men's territory. Holmes (1995) by focusing on swearing and other

factors such as slangs, intensifiers, tag questions, etc concludes that women are more polite than men.

According to Poynton (1989) women have a consistent reputation for being less prepared for swearing and prefer euphemism.

By comparing male and female authored stories in Persian, we would notice that the same is true in writing.

6.2.1 Swearing in Persian stories

Male authors used 83 swears in their stories while female authors used 62 swearing.

Table 3: Identification of the use of swearing in male and female authored short stories

Stories	Used by male characters (Frequency)	Used by female characters (frequency)	Total
In 10 male written texts	70	10	81
In 10 female written texts	20	42	62

According to table 3, out of 62 occurrences of swears in female texts, 20 occurrences of swears were quoted by male characters. On the other hand, out of 81 swears in male texts, 10 occurrences of swears were quoted by female characters. The table above may also show that men use swearing more than

women do. 90 occurrences of swears out of the total 143 occurrences of swears were quoted by male characters. It seems as though the use of swearing can be another factor to differentiate female's writing from male's and also males from females in general.

Table 4: Identification of the use of swearing by male and female characters in Persian short stories

Total number of swearing	Used by male Characters	Used by female Characters
143	90(63%)	52(37%)

6.2.2 Swearing in English Stories

The study of the use of swearing in English stories also demonstrates that swearing is considered as men's territory.

Table 5: Identification of the use of swearing in male and female authored texts in English

Stories	Used by male Characters (Frequency)	Used by female Characters (Frequency)	Total
10 male texts	52	3	55
10 female texts	6	11	17

According to table 5, out of 55 occurrences of swears in male texts, 3 swears were quoted by female characters while out of 17 occurrences of swears in female texts, 6 occurrences of swears were quoted by male characters. The table above can also show that as it was the case in Persian stories, men use swearing more than women. 58 occurrences of swearing out of the total 72 occurrences of swears were quoted by male characters.

Table 6: Identification of the use of swearing by male and female characters in English short stories.

Total	Used by male Characters	Used by female Characters
72	60 (84%)	14 (16%)

The table demonstrates that men use swearing more frequently.

6.2.3 Comparison of the data in Persian and English

Male writers are generally supposed to use more swearing in their stories. The study of the use of swearing in the stories has shown that both English and Persian male writers used more swearing in their stories.

6.3 Hedges

Crystal (2003) defines hedges as an application in pragmatics and discourse analysis of a general sense of the word (to be non-committal or evasive) to a range of items which express a notion of imprecision or qualification. Hedges have multiple functions. They can add a degree of uncertainty and non-commitment to an utterance and indicate that a speaker does not want to give up his/her speaking turn yet. Coates (1996:152-173) names several words and phrases, such as "maybe", "sort of", "you know", "may"

, "might" and "I mean". Holmes (1995) includes pauses and hesitations like.....eehm.....eeh.... in the category of hedges since they can be used to express a speaker's reluctance to impose. She lists fall-rise intonation, tag questions and modal verbs, lexical items such as "sort of" and "I think".

Crompton (1998) in Lewin (2005) proposes the following test for determining whether or not a proposition is hedged. Crompton asks, "Can the proposition be restated in such a way that it is not changed but that the author's commitment to it is greater than at present? If yes, then the proposition is hedged. He then applies this test some structures characterized by others as hedges.

6.3.1 Hedges in Persian Stories

The study of hedging devices in Persian stories shows that hedges were used more frequently in female authored texts. Male authors used 60 hedges in their stories while female authors used 86 hedging expressions.

Table 7: Identification of the use of hedging expressions in female and male authored stories

Stories	Frequency of the use of hedges by male characters	Frequency of the use of hedges by female characters	Total
In 10 males texts	50	10	60
In 10 female texts	5	81	86

According to table 7, out of 60 occurrences of hedging expressions in male text, 10 hedging expressions were quoted by female characters. On the other hand, out of 86 occurrences of hedging expressions in female texts, 5 occurrences of hedges were quoted by female characters.

The table, analyzed more carefully may also show that women use more hedging expressions than men. Female authored texts provide more examples of hedging expressions; further more out of the total 146 occurrences of hedging devices in Persian stories, 91 occurrences of hedges were quoted by female characters in the stories.

Table 8: Identification of the use of hedging devices by male and female characters in Persian stories

Total	Used by male characters	Used by female characters
146	91 (63%)	55 (37%)

6.3.2 Hedging Expressions in English Stories

The study of hedging expressions in English stories shows that like Persian stories, hedges are used more frequently in female authored texts. Male authors used 183 hedging devices in their stories while female authors used 202 hedges.

Table 9: Identification of the use of hedging expressions in female and male authored stories

Stories	Frequency of the use of hedges by male characters	Frequency of the use of hedges by female characters	Total
In 10 male texts	133	50	183
In 10 female texts	22	180	202

According to table 9, out of 183 occurrences of hedging expressions in male texts, 50 hedging expressions were quoted by female characters. On the other hand, out of 202 occurrences of hedging expressions in female texts, 22 occurrences of hedges were quoted by male characters.

The table also demonstrates that women use more hedging devices than men do. Female authored texts, provide more examples of hedging expressions (although the difference is not great enough to notice it as significant, as it is also the case for Persian stories), and also out of the total 385 occurrences of hedging expressions, 230 occurrences of hedges were quoted by female characters in the stories.

Table 10: Identification of the use of hedging devices by female and male characters in English stories

Total	Used by male characters	Used by female characters
385	155(40%)	230(60%)

6.3.3 Comparison of the data in Persian and English

In terms of the use of hedging devices in the stories, it was shown that hedging expressions were found more frequently in female authored texts in English and Persian.

6.4 Intensifiers

Lakoff (1975) mentions that women use an intensity of intonation and modifiers such as ("so", "such" and "very") to emphasize their utterances.

6.4.1 Intensifiers in Persian Stories

The study of intensifiers (up graders, boosters) in Persian stories shows that, the use of intensifiers is more common within women's writing style. Female authored texts benefit from a wider variety of intensifiers and use them more frequently. Male authors used 57 intensifying devices while female authors used 145 intensifiers

Table 11: Identification of the use of intensifying devices in female and male authored stories

Stories	Frequency of the use of intensifiers by male characters	Frequency of the use of intensifiers by female characters	Total
In 10 male texts	48	9	57
In 10 female texts	13	132	145

According to table 11, out of 145 occurrences of intensifying devices in female texts, 13 occurrences of intensifiers were quoted by male characters.

On the other hand, out of 57 occurrences of intensifiers in male authors' texts, 9 occurrences of intensifiers were quoted by female characters.

The table also shows that women use intensifiers more than men do. Female authored texts provide more examples of intensifiers. Furthermore, out of the total 202 occurrences of intensifiers in Persian stories, 141 occurrences of intensifiers were quoted by female characters

Table 12: Identification of the use of intensifiers by female and male characters in Persian stories

Total	Used by male characters	Used by female characters
202	61(30%)	141(70%)

6.4.2 Intensifiers in English Stories

The analysis of the use of intensifiers in English texts, demonstrates that, like Persian stories, intensifiers are used more frequently in female authored texts.

Table 13: Identification of the use of intensifiers in female and male authored stories

Stories	Frequency of the use of intensifiers by male characters	Frequency of the use of intensifiers by female characters	Total
In 10 male texts	53	17	69
In 10 female texts	6	95	101

According to table 13, out of 69 occurrences of intensifiers in male texts, 16 occurrences of intensifiers were quoted by female characters. On the other hand, out of 101 occurrences of intensifying devices in female texts, 6 occurrences of intensifiers were quoted by male characters.

The table above demonstrates that women use intensifiers more frequently than men. Female authored texts provide more examples of intensifiers. Furthermore, out of the total 170 occurrences of intensifiers in English stories, 111 occurrences of intensifiers were quoted by female characters.

Table 14: Identification of the use of intensifiers by female and male characters in English stories

Total	Used by male characters	Used by female characters
170	69(35%)	111(65%)

6.4.3 Comparison of the data in Persian and English

The study of intensifiers (up graders, boosters) in Persian and English stories shows that, the use of intensifiers is more common within women's writing style. Female authored texts benefit from a wider variety of intensifiers and use them more frequently. It is also shown that female characters used intensifiers more frequently than men.

6.5 Tag Questions

Lakoff (1975) Claims that women use tag questions more than men do. By using tag questions in their talks they request the agreement of their addressee. . According to Holmes (1995) there is a rich literature on the complex syntax and phonology of tag questions. Holmes claims that tags differ in polarity and in intonation. Many language and gender researchers have ignored this variation and treated tags as invariant forms. Holmes, in the examination of her New Zealand corpus, identified four distinct functions of tag questions: "epistemic modal", "challenging",

"facilitative" and "softening". Epistemic modal tags express the speaker's uncertainty. Challenging tags are confrontational strategies. They may pressure a reluctant addressee to reply or aggressively boost the force of a negative speech act. Facilitative tags are quite different in function. They are examples of hedges which serve as positive politeness devices. They invite the addressee to contribute to the discourse. Softening tags are negative politeness devices, used to attenuate the force of negatively affective utterances such as directives.

6.5.1 Tag Questions in Persian Stories

The study of Persian short stories indicated that male authored texts provide more examples of tag questions. In other words, tags are more frequent in male authored stories

Table 15: Identification of the use of tag questions in female and male authored stories:

Stories	Frequency of the use of tags by male Speakers	Frequency of the use of tags by female speakers	Total
In 10 male texts	7	3	10
In 10 female texts	1	3	4

According to table 15, out of 10 occurrences of tag questions in male authored texts, 3 occurrences of tags were quoted by female speakers.

On the other hand, out of 4 occurrences of tags in female texts, only one tag was quoted by a male speaker.

In what follows we will analyze the aforementioned tags according to Holmes classification. Furthermore, table 16 clearly identifies the use of tags by female and male speakers in male texts.

Table 16: Identification of the use of tags by female and male speakers based on the classification of Holmes in male authored stories

Tags	Quoted by male speaker	Quoted by female speaker	Total
Epistemic	3	2	5
Challenging	4		4
Facilitative		1	1
Softening			

The finding shows that in 10 examples of tags in male texts, there were 5 epistemic tags, 3 were quoted by male speaker and the remaining 2 were quoted by female speaker. All the four challenging tags were quoted by male speakers and the only facilitative tag was quoted by female speaker.

In table 17, we will analyze female authored texts similar to what was done in table 16.

Table 17: Identification of the use of tags by female and male speakers based on the classification of Holmes's in female texts

Tags	Quoted by male speaker	Quoted by female speaker	Total
Epistemic	1	3	4
Challenging			
Facilitative			
Softening			

All the tags were epistemic. Out of these 4 tags, 3 tags were quoted by female speakers. Comparing tables 16 & 17 would show that challenging tags are very much favored by males. There were also fewer examples of tags in female's writing.

6.5.2 Tag Questions in English Stories

The study of tag questions within English stories indicated that male authored texts provide more examples of tag questions.

Table 18: Identification of the use of tag questions in female and male authored stories

Stories	Frequency of the use of tags by male speakers	Frequency of the use of tags by female speakers	total
In 10 male text	7	3	10
In 10 female texts	0	1	1

According to table 18, out of 10 examples of tag questions in male authored texts, 3 occurrences of tags were quoted by female characters.

Table 19, shows the distribution of tag questions in male authored texts according to Holmes's classification. The table also shows the frequency of the occurrences of the tags quoted, based on the sex of the characters of the stories

Table 19: Identification of the use of tag questions by female and male speakers, based on the classification of Holmes:

Tags	Quoted by male characters	Quoted by female characters	Total
Epistemic	3		3
Challenging	3		3
Facilitative	1	2	2
Softening		1	1

The findings of table 19 shows that in 10 tag questions found in male texts, there were 3 epistemic tags quoted by male speakers, also there were 3 challenging tags which were quoted by male speakers , there were 3 facilitative tags, out of these 3 facilitative tags , two tags were quoted by female speakers. The only softening tag found in male texts was quoted by a female speaker.

Although tag questions were very rare in English texts but the findings show that epistemic and challenging tags are more favored by male speakers.

It should be noted that the only tag question found in female authored text was a softening tag quoted by a female speaker in the story, "tears, idle tears".

6.5.3 Comparison of the data in Persian and English

In spite of the very infrequent use of tags in the stories, the data is not enough to issue any judgment, the study of Persian stories indicated that male authored texts provided more examples of tag

questions. In other words, tags were more frequent in men's texts. More over, the analysis of the use of tags according to Holmes classification showed that challenging tags were more frequent in men's writing; female writers on the other hand preferred the use of epistemic tags. Further more the use of challenging and epistemic tags were also very important to differentiate female characters from males. Female characters preferred epistemic tags while male characters used challenging tags more frequently. The study of the use of tags in English corpus, demonstrated that tags are more frequent in male authored texts.

6.6 Adjectives of Approximation

Poynton (1989) claims that women use adjectives of approximation like “about” and “around” more than men do.

6.6.1 Adjectives of Approximation in Persian Stories

The study of this kind of adjectives in Persian stories indicated that this may not be the case in writing. The difference between the frequency of the use of approximations in female and male authored stories was not significant.

Table 20: Identification of the use of adjectives of approximation in female and male authored stories

Stories	Frequency of use by male characters	Frequency of use by female characters	Total
In 10 male texts	39	23	62
In 10 female texts	25	42	67

According to table 20, out of 62 occurrences of adjectives of approximation in male authored text, 23 adjectives were quoted by female characters. On the other hand, out of 67 occurrences of these adjectives in female authored texts, 25 adjectives were quoted by male characters furthermore, out of the total 129 occurrences of these adjectives in Persian stories, 64 adjectives were quoted by male characters and 65 adjectives were quoted by female characters.

Table 21: Identification of the use of adjectives of approximation by female and male characters

Total	Used by male characters	Used by female characters
129	64(49.66%)	65(50.34%)

Unlike the use of intensifiers, frequency of the use of adjectives of approximation is not a good criterion to differentiate female authored texts from male authored ones. Furthermore, table 21 also demonstrates that the frequency does not differentiate female characters from males.

6.6.2 Adjectives of Approximation in English Stories

The study of the use of adjectives of approximation in English stories demonstrated that female authored texts use these adjectives more frequently.

Male authored texts used 63 adjectives of approximation, while female authored texts used 82 adjectives.

Table 22: Identification of the use of adjectives of approximation in English stories

Stories	Frequency of use by male characters	Frequency of use by female characters	Total
In 10 male texts	51	12	63
In 10 female texts	11	71	82

According to table 22, out of 63 uses of adjectives of approximation in male authored texts, 12 occurrences of these adjectives were quoted by female characters.

On the other hand, out of 82 uses of these adjectives in female texts, 11 adjectives were used by male characters. Furthermore, out of the total 145 occurrences of approximations in English stories, 83 adjectives were quoted by female characters and 62 adjectives were quoted by male characters.

So the use of adjectives of approximations can be a good criterion to differentiate female texts from male texts and also female characters from males.

Table 23: Identification of the use of adjectives of approximation by female and male characters

Total	Used by male character	Used by female character
145	62 (42%)	83(58%)

6.6.3 Comparison of the data in Persian and English

The study of the use of adjectives of approximation showed that, the frequency of the use of adjectives of approximation is not a good criterion to differentiate female authored texts from male

authored ones in Persian corpus. On the other hand the use of this linguistic feature in English corpus was very different from what was considered in Persian. The study of the use of adjectives of approximation in English demonstrated that female authored texts use these adjectives more frequently. It was also an important factor to differentiate female characters from males.

6.7 Adjectives

Poynton (1989) claims that women tend to use adjectives more than men.

6.7.1 Adjectives in Persian Stories

The study of the use of adjectives in Persian stories shows that adjectives are used more frequently in female authored texts.

Table 24: Identification of the use of adjectives in female and male authored stories

Stories	Frequency of use by male characters	Frequency of use by female characters	Total
In 10 male texts	104	39	143
In 10 female texts	36	178	214

According to table 24, out of 143 uses of adjectives in male texts, 39 adjectives were quoted by female characters. On the other hand, out of 214 uses of adjectives in female texts, 36 adjectives were quoted by male characters.

The study of table above, demonstrates that female authored texts provide more examples of adjectives. It will also show that

women use more adjective than men , out of the total 357 occurrences of adjectives in Persian stories, 217 adjectives were quoted by female characters but male characters used 140 adjectives .It seems as though, the use of adjectives is a good criterion to differentiate female's writing from male's .

Table 25: Frequency of the use of adjectives by female and male characters in Persian stories

Total	Used by male character	Used by female character
357	140(39%)	217(61%)

6.7.2 Adjectives in English Stories

The study of the use of adjectives in English stories shows that, like Persian stories, adjectives are used more frequently in female authored texts.

Female authored texts provided 187 occurrences of adjectives while 123 adjectives were found in male texts.

Table 26: Identification of the use of adjectives in male and female authored texts

Stories	Frequency of Use by male character	Frequency of use by female character	Total
In 10 male texts	81	42	123
In 10 female texts	46	141	187

According to table 26, out of 123 occurrences of adjectives in male texts, 42 adjectives were quoted by female character, while

out of 187 adjectives found in female texts, 46 adjectives were quoted by male characters.

Like Persian stories, the table shows that women possess a greater command of using adjectives. Out of the total 310 adjectives found in English stories 183 adjectives were quoted by female characters in the stories while 127 adjectives were used by male characters.

Table 27: Identification of the use of adjectives by female and male characters in the stories.

Total	Used by male characters	Used by female characters
310	127(41%)	183(59%)

6.7.3 Comparison of the data in Persian and English

The study of the use of adjectives in English and Persian corpus showed that female writers use adjectives more frequently in their writing. The use of adjectives is a very important factor to differentiate female characters from males as well.

7. Conclusion

Since findings are based on only forty samples of Persian and English short stories, no certain generalizations can be made but they point to new directions for inquiry on a larger scale. Some linguistic features that seem to distinguish gender are identified. In terms of color terms, both English and Persian female story writers use more color terms in their stories. Male writers are generally supposed to use more swearing in their stories. In terms of the use of hedging devices in the stories, it is shown that hedging expressions are found more frequently in female authored texts. The study of intensifiers (up graders, boosters) in Persian and

English stories shows that the use of intensifiers is more common within women's writing style. In spite of the very infrequent use of tags in the stories, male authored texts provide more examples of tag questions. Challenging tags are more frequent in men's writing; female writers on the other hand prefer the use of epistemic tags. Frequency of the use of adjectives of approximation is not a good criterion to differentiate female authored texts from male authored ones in Persian corpus. On the other hand the use of this linguistic feature in English corpus demonstrates that female authored texts use these adjectives more frequently. The study of the use of adjectives in English and Persian corpus shows that female writers use adjectives more frequently in their writing.

We should also bear in mind that anyone who has learned the conventions of "Ecriture Feminine" or of women's writing, can write a woman's book. It is a simplification to assume that all women will write in a similar way or that all men will. However, that is not to say that there are no differences between texts which are due in part to their authors and the purpose of this study is to examine the differences that there might be in texts. However, that is not to say that there are no differences between texts which are due at least in part to gender, and in this study ,It was tried therefore to examine the differences that there might be in texts.

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Appendix 1: English Stories: Male Writers

	WRITER	STORIES	WRITER
STORIES			
A woman who had no eyes for small details	William Maxwell	The limit	Joyce Cary
A rose for Emily	William Faulkner	All the years of her life	Morley Callaghan
Two loaves of bread	O. Henry	The sniper	Liam O'Flaherty
Home	W. Somerset Maugham	The killers	Ernest Hemingway
Luck	Mark Twain	The man of the house	Frank O'Conner

Appendix2: English Stories: Female Writers

STORIES	WRITER	STORIES	WRITER
Bright Moment	Jessica Jane Stuart	Charles	Shirley Jackson
Tears, idle tears	Elizabeth Bowen	The Story of an Hour	Kate Chopin
A Mother in Mannville	Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings	A Haunted House	Virginia Woolf
The Phoenix	Sylvia Townsend Warner	A Sunrise on the veld	Doris Lessing
Old Mr. Marblehall	Eudora Welty	The Grave	Katherine Anne Porter

Appendix3: Persian Storioes: Male writers

STORIES	WRITER	STORIES	WRITER
Khabe Minoo (minoo's dream)	Behrooz Tavakkoli	Ankaboot (spider)	Siamak Golshiri
Arameshgah (a place to rest)	Bagher Rajab Ali	Vapasin Neveshteh (the last letter)	Mehdi Shahbazi
Naghshe digar (the other role)	Yazdan Ashiri	Shab goor (night and grave)	Maziar Tehrani
Shabi az shabha (one of the nights)	Mohammad Keshavarz	Neghab (mask)	Shahram Bahraminejad
Tehran (Tehran is the capital of iran)	Mehdi Bataghva	Do Baradar (two brothers)	Alireza Eghtedari

Appendix 4: Persian Storioes: Male writers

STORIES	WRITER	STORIES	WRITER
Khale Shokat (aunt shokat)	Nahid Tabatabaee	Varaghaye binaghsh (the undesigned papers)	Behnaz Alipoor
Jaye Khali Chashmha (the empty place for the eyes)	Nooshin Gharib Doost	Sonbol (a kind of flower for treating the injuries)	Natasha Amiri
Gharibeh va zan (the stranger and the woman)	Zohre Hakimi	Kafe pari daryaie (pari daryaie café)	Mitra Elyati
Yek dastane na kheyli talkh (a story thatis not very sad)	Navida Hadian	Eshgh va jigh (love and scream)	Chista Yasrebi
Az kooch ta bahar (from immigration to the spring)	Fatemeh Alamdar	Yek zan yek eshgh (one woman ,one love)	Farkhondeh Aghaie