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## Sociolinguistics perspectives on gender patterns in instagram

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### ABSTRACT

This article focused on the the gender patterns that were found in the social media Instagram based on the sociolinguistics point of view. There were two research questions were arisen what types of the gender patterns that were found in the social media Instagram based on the sociolinguistics and the factors of the difference language used based on gender in social media Instagram. Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) was used to analyze the data. The data was taken from all of component of the sociolinguistics aspect in social media network especially for gender patterns that existed on the social media instagram college students' users id in Pekanbaru. The writer took 30 Instagram users id as sample. The study found that two types of gender patterns, first; gender in writing and second; gender in profile photo, thus there were five main assumptions that caused the differences language in gender in social media Instagram, namely; (1) an audience is active and goal-oriented in their media consumption, (2) media are used for gratifications, (3) media are in competition with other means of need satisfaction, (4) people understand their personal media use, interests, and motives enough to communicate with researchers about their choices, (5) the audience members are the only people who can make judgments regarding the value of the media content. The study recommends that sociolinguistics is an interesting topic to be researched thus future field of study concerns with the rapid changing phenomena in social media.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Sociolinguistics study the relationship between language and society. They are interested in explaining why we speak differently in different social contexts, and they concerned with identifying the social function of language and the way it used to convey social meaning [1]. In sociolinguistics, there are seven aspects in the sociolinguistics research, as following: (1) social identity from the speaker, (2) social identity of the listener that involve in the communication process, (3) social environment, (4) synchronic and diachronic analysis of the society dialects, (5) the differences of point of view by the speaker for the kind of speeches, (6) variety level and the kind of linguistic, (7) the practical apply of sociolinguistics research [2, 1].

Different people, different gender, different social status, different environment, and different social class would have different point of view in using social media. There are some people who have different point of view will have different language. Education people will have good point of view, and they will have good language. There were 30 users id in this study, so that there were 30 characters and had 30 points of view also expose 30 differences language that is used in social media Instagram. The difference between

men's and women's use of language is particularly thoroughly discussed in sociolinguistic studies. In many speech communities women and men don't speak identically. In virtually all sociolinguistic studies that include a sample of males and females, there is evidence of difference between the linguistic behavior of men and that of women. The conclusion is usually that women use fewer stigmatized and non-standard variants than men from the same social class. For instance, Wardhaugh, R. [3] states that women show a greater sensitivity to socially evaluative linguistic features than men.

The application of linguistics in society depends on the society itself, although the same gender, age, and social status they would be applied the language in different ways. Society has their own characteristic as the identity. The report from Statista <https://www.statista.com/statistics/248769/age-distribution-of-worldwide-instagram-users/>, as of July 2019, it was found that 15 percent of global active Instagram users were women between the ages of 18 and 24 years old. More than half of the global Instagram population worldwide is aged 34 years or younger. The communication tools in Social media like Facebook, Twitter, path, instagram, communication software in smartphones such as Blackberry Messenger, WhatsApp Messenger, Line Messenger, Facebook Messenger, instagram are some of many communication means mainly used in Indonesia. Out of two hundred and thirty million people in Indonesia itself, eighty million are utilizing the Internet technology with seventy million users were Internet mobile users. As quoted in an article from [tekno.kompas.com](http://tekno.kompas.com), Michael S. Sunggiardi said that most of those Internet mobile users only use the Internet for chatting or accessing social media [4-5].

Erin Morris [6] *"She 'Likes' it, He Doesn't: Gender Differences in Facebook Communication Behaviors"* has done his research to explore about patterns of communication that women tend to communicate in more interpersonally oriented ways, while men tend to communicate in more task and individually oriented ways while using Facebook, then these findings have implications for the fields of both communication and sociology. She used survey and content analysis in her research. Many researches have been explored regarding the gender pattern in social media. Barirah Nazir [7] *"Gender Patterns on Facebook: A Sociolinguistics Perspective"* was done in Department of English, University of Sargodha Punjab, Pakistan. Her research was focusing on the differences and similarities tracing on genders using social network which shown that in maintaining the relationship by being polite was done by women while men love to find new relationship.

Yuliani [8] *"Perbedaan Gender Dalam Penguasaan Bahasa Dipandang Dari Perspektif Psikologi Pendidikan"* did research at the different acquisition of language for both genders men and women in psychological perspective. This research focused on the psychological aspect which influence the different language usage for different gender. Hajia Hauwa Salihu [9] *"The Sociolinguistics Study of Gender Address Pattern in the Hausa Society"*. This research focused on the shifting and the gender differential linguistics style of the use of names in a Hausa community. Hausa society was influenced by Cultural Revolution in Hausa land, therefore the types of names the Hausas utilize, the context in which they are applied, the semantics, and the circumstance that motivated their creation, the addresser and the addressee relationship, the historical, cognitive, and ideological reality which determined the choice, the changes and the address variants.

Michael B. Hudson, et al [10] *"Examining How Gender and Emoticons Influence Facebook Jealousy"* finished their research on Facebook towards young generations which associated with jealousy. The results showed different result in qualitative way and quantitative way. Y. Volkovich, et al [11] *"Gender patterns in a large online social network"* has done their research that concerned about gender patterns that showed a general tendency towards gender homophile, more marked for women however users having a large circle of friends tend to have more connections with users of the opposite gender. The relevant studies above led the researchers to explore more the gender patterns which were employed by id Pekanbaru in social media instagram which is now spread widely in Indonesia.

The phenomena of social media have been revolved tremendously in Pekanbaru and the relevant studies also revealed that some impacts towards the observers' views on them whether influenced in positive and negative ways. Based on this, the reserachers would like to find out the usage of these social media network in term of sociolinguistics perspectives on the both sexes in instagram.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research was descriptive research, which aimed at describing the finding in qualitative ways. It discussed about data collecting which had been taken from the documentation. The writer took 30 Instagram users id in Pekanbaru as sample. In collecting the data, the researchers collected the document in form of social media account then grouped it in to gender. After getting the media account, the researchers screen capture those account from instagram user id caption, next, the researchers listed the gender patterns

based on sociolinguistics point of view and analyzed the gender patterns based on the indicators of sociolinguistic perception.

The time allocation of observing these phenomena of instagram usage by the two genders was during two months. The total of capturing photoes was more than 135 photoes and only 30 photoes to be sample in this research. The researchers took two genders (male and female) of their expressive photos, then five models of emoticons were used in this research, namely; cognitive appraisal, bodily symptoms, persuasions action, facial and feelings expression [12-13].

### 3. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

There were two main items to be answered and analyzed in these result findings, first was type of gender patterns was found in expressive photos taken and the second was the factors of the difference language used based on gender in social media Instagram.

#### 3.1. Type of gender patterns based on sociolinguistics perspectives

The researchers exposed the Table 1 with 10 samples of context of gender patterns and the factors influenced in language used based on gender in instagram. The other 20 samples did not display in details, thus it was explored in the term of summary of data findings.

Table 1. The description result of the data

No	Female Context of Gender Patterns	Male Sociolinguistics Perspectives
1	 <p>Female: in this context the user felt disappointed on someone who has broken her heart, lied about something, and she planned what she would do next, moreover, based on the picture above that her body language of the user id seemed to have a plan, thinking about some plans, and will do something to revenge what had already happened to her.</p> <p>Male: in this context the user shared something was really cool. Cool mean here was the mountain temperature and the view was also cool (a good view).</p>	 <p>In social media most of female exposed their activity whether it was general or private. The reason they did it because they felt that she connected to each other in social media. Everyone has to know her feelings, everyone should understand her feelings. The main point of this user in her caption was to give a warning to someone who had made her disappointed that she will come someday to make a revenged, thus in this point she also made an ambiguo statement and meaning. Based on the caption of this user 'Watching the Old Drama', it ddid not mean that she watched old drama in television, or cinemas but the old drama here was there was someone did something that made her disappointed and that drama finally revealed. This drama also can be played male, or other female that close to her. On the other hand, there was contrast between user id above, men shared the caption that explicit style, caption related to the situation, and his feelings.</p>

Table 1. The description result of the data (*Continue*)





No	Female Context of Gender Patterns	Male Sociolinguistics Perspectives
2	 <p>Female: This user id stated that "single is better than having love" which mean she just broken heart. In fact she was not alright without having love but she wanted to show to someone out there that she was strong without having love. It can be seen on her picture profile that her eyes were full of sadness and expecting supported from the environment.</p> <p>Male: This user id really loved his job. The picture showed that he is maintaining something.</p>	 <p>This user id shared about her private problem, in order to get sympathy from other instagram user id. In social media most of female shared their feelings to get sympathy, comments, and suggestion from other friends in the instagram. Sympathy was really meaningful for female, as much likes and comments they got.</p> <p>Contrasting with male, language that was used more formal and explicit style. It seems like self – promoting and shared something as needed only. Also, men more focused on business product, or investment. It is related to the user id photo that show about he is on doing business.</p>
3	 <p>Female: This user id showed that the expression of her feelings, it related the caption and the profile picture which the profile and caption showed that she got disappointed by someone that she loved.</p> <p>Male: The caption and the photo of the user id related to his standing position which showed that he was healthy.</p>	 <p>This user id shared about her private problem, in order to get sympathy from other instagram user id. In social media most of female shared their feelings to get sympathy, comments, and suggestion from other friends in the instagram. Sympathy was really meaningful for female, as much likes and comments they got.</p> <p>Contrasting with male, language that was used more formal and explicit style. It seems like self – promoting and shared something as needed only. Also, men more focused on business product, or investment. It is related to the user id photo that show about he is on doing business.</p>



Table 1. The description result of the data (Continue)





No	Female Context of Gender Patterns	Male Sociolinguistics Perspectives
4	 <p>Female: This user id had already been left by someone who she loved much. Male: This user id showed that he will enjoy the Weekend.</p>	 <p>Most of female are biologically wired to social networking. Female use social networking sites to make connections and stay in touch with family or friends. It can be seen when she made a caption there were a lot of likes and comments about her caption. This user make captions in order to attract her friends in Instagram to keep in touch with her event the situation of the caption irrelevant with her situation, while men's user shared his authority as self – promoting to others. Beside, his language that is used contained as an involvement.</p>
5	 <p>Female : This user id shared about holiday moment. It can be seen on her face that She looked happy doing the vacation. Male : This user id also doing vacation to refresh his mind.</p>	 <p>Female use more personal information than male in social media. It can be seen from this user id that she shared everything during the vacation. People already seen her that she was doing vacation based on her picture, thus that was the characteristic of women who wanted to reveal more about their personal life, they loved to share moment to others, however, the man's user id also presented commercial products or accessories like bags, glasses, sandals, and clothes. Men used simple language, direct and explicit. Caption and the profile picture also related that he looked happy event there was someone who had already broken his heart. It is different from the female user id in the caption "I need refresh my mind", but the sentences were still unclear refreshing from what. Meanwhile the male user id really clear stated that he did the vacation to refresh his mind because of broken heart.</p>

Table 1. The description result of the data (*Continue*)





No	Female Context of Gender Patterns	Male Sociolinguistics Perspectives
6	 <p>Female : This user id shared about the important of time and gave the implicit message to people do not waste time for nothing. Male : Caption and photo was related that he was really happy becoming who he was.</p>	 <p>One of females characteristic was more aware of the impact of their pictures and contents. It can be seen on this user id, she was really careful shared the photo and caption in Instagram. The photo and the caption can be concluded that the user id was really aware on the impact of social that created negative comments, and cyber bullying. To prevent those factors happened the user id just shared the positive photo and caption that showed good impact whether it was for the user itself or for other users in Instagram. Men, sometimes tended to communicate in more task and individually oriented ways. It can be seen on the photo that he would like to show about his personality, and followed by a caption which proved that he was really happy to become who he was.</p>
7	 <p>Female: This user id showed other users that they should act just the way they were. Becoming simple person was better than trying to become someone else. Male: He told people that smiles made people better. He persuaded others to keep smiling no matter how big, how bad, and how hard problems that he faced.</p>	 <p>Women more likely shared something that contained with product like accessories, clothes, etc. from this user id she exposed more about the natural hijab style. She means that the most important not the pretty but the beauty. Men usually tend to communicate in more individually oriented ways. When men asked people to smile they smile first. It can be seen on his photo profile when he smiled, he shows to other people that how better he is when he is smiling.</p>

Table 1. The description result of the data (*Continue*)






No	Female Context of Gender Patterns	Male Sociolinguistics Perspectives
8	 <p>Female: This user id shared about the happiness moment when she stayed around with her friends. It was more like a friendship theme.</p> <p>Male: This user id shared that the happiness vacation with his friends.</p>	 <p>The caption and the photo of user id illustrated about the happiness life that she felt. Its related to the women characters who were more expressive to share about their feelings, emotions, communication and words. They shared everything that related to the happiness, sadness, and all of matter which contained private matters. On the other hand, men just shared moments as long as it was needed, moreover, men made caption more specific that related to self – promotion oriented.</p>
9	 <p>Female : She got many comments from people around her. Based on the caption “ No one knows your problem....” Your problem means her problem. People did not know what she felt, what happened with her and what problem that she got.</p> <p>Male : People did not know about him, they just looked him from the outside meanwhile they did not know about what he felt, what he was doing, what his background.</p>	 <p>Women usually shared their problem and experiences about someone or about something. They did purposely in order to get the sympathy from others social media user. It can be seen from likes around 124 likes and also there were 6 comments in this capture, thus it means that there were some sympathy from other user for her. On the other hand man's user id shared about his truly feelings that many people who did not know him well.</p>



Table 1. The description result of the data (*Continue*)

No	Female Context of Gender Patterns	Male Sociolinguistics Perspectives
10	 <p>Female : She was really happy to have love event it was not as big as people had. At least be thankful. There were two meanings based on this caption; first, she suggested people to be grateful for what they already had, or she was really grateful for what she already had.</p> <p>Male: He looked really enjoy his weekend with his friends when they were having vacation.</p>	 <p>Based on sociolinguistic perspective: women's user id made a caption implicitly which related to one of the women character that always stated something that was contextual. It is needed more comprehension to understand it but it is different from male user in social media Instagram whether it was in the pictures, the captions or messages that shared simple, explicitly, straight to the point and the meaning also related to what he feels, related to the condition, and situation.</p>

The analysis data of the result findings was that the researchers found out there were some gender patterns found on the Instagram user id that related to the sociolinguistic perspective. The most of user id used social media Instagram to get information, share information, moment, communicate each other whether it was new or old friends, moreover, Instagram also as a field to explore creative ideas, commercial of products and to make each other closer [14-17].

The findings in Sociolinguistics perspectives that there were differences between male and female whether it was on language, characters, identity, and the way they shared photo and created captions on social media instagram and most of them were different point of view, language use, character, and the way they explored the ideas [18-21].

Instagram more likely used by female than male not in the number of users, but the frequency of the time. Female was often updated their moments, photos, and caption than male which used social media Instagram for important thing only which purposed to share general information, related to outside object. Meanwhile female shared anything that related to feelings, family, friendship, love, sadness, joy, anxiety and included private matters. Female also shared many pictures, moments, captions, fashion, cosmetic products, and accessories but male preferred to share something which contained to self – promoting, business products, cars, and investment [22-25].

In social media Instagram female used language in ambiguity way which had many meanings that should be understood well, moreover female shared more personal information than men, but they were more aware of the impact of their pictures and its content. Female user id in Social media Instagram got more attention, responses, comments, likes and followers, meanwhile male was revealing more about personal life, used social media to gather the information they needed to build influence, helped their perform research, gathered relevant contacts and in order to increase their status and finally male to be a follower which the purpose was to gather as much as information from other users [26-27].

Sharing photoes, female shared more photoes than male which contained cute photos, involving, cosmetic, and domestic products, moreover female usually more informativeness. The purpose of female more often shared moments, photos, caption, and videos were to inform the other user about their moments, personality, family, love, event private matters [28-29].

The result of research findings about gender patterns on sociolinguistics perspectives can be concluded as follow:

- Women used general language when made captions
- Women shared more moments, pictures, captions, and videos
- Women usually posted cute pictures, meanwhile men shared photo as self – promoting
- Women shared anything including private matters like ; family, love, friendship, sadness, happiness, anxiety, so, social media Instagram seems like their diary blog that contained their activity, their moments, and their feelings but men more likely shared anything that related to external contents. It seemed that Men used social media instagram like a filter blog which meant that they filtered the photos, caption, and videos that would be shared.
- Female used informative language, Men use involvement language
- Female used general, implicit, contextually language, meanwhile Men use direct, explicit, specific language.
- Female shared caption, photos which contained commercials, domestic products, accessories, fashion, meanwhile Male more focused on cars, business, products or investments.
- Female more likely to share personal information than male.
- Female shared more about personal life, more vocal, expressive and willing to share, in contrast, using Instagram did not share information but to gather information.
- Female were more interpersonally oriented ways, men individually oriented ways.

So, based on explanation above, it can be concluded that there were some different gender patterns that were found on social media instagram between male and female users based on sociolinguistic perspective.

### 3.2. The factors influenced in language used

Language and society can not separated each other, where there is language there must be society. Among the society there are differences that is used event in the same society, and same characteristics. For example, event the area is society Malay, they will use Malay language but, there must be different language among the society itself. Based on the analysis on the 30 user id of Instagram college students the writer found that there were some factors that were caused the language which created language differences, as follow:

#### 3.2.1. An audience is an active and goal-oriented in their media consumption

An audience here really involved the language which had purpose for media usage. It can be seen on the user id of Instagram which use language different ways. Different people, different social status, different education will have different language. Based on Instagram user id which all of 30 data taken from college students user id of course they used language in as educational language. Meanwhile, not all of them used suitable language that contrast with their character which also affected by the goal of media usage [30-31].

#### 3.2.2. Media are used for gratifications

The social media were used for gratitude, expose the emotional, showed sympathy, happiness, sadness, condolence and others. The users id were likely to use language depended on the response of other user id as the viewer. For example, it can be seen on the user id caption of the Instagram used different expression of gratification to attract likes and comments from the followers [32].

#### 3.2.3. Media are in competition with other means of need satisfaction

There are social class, variant of society that exist in a community which are connected each other. When all of society communicate each other it will created an atmosphere and situational which called environment. Every environment will show some competitions that is caused differences needs of language. When in bad competition, there born bad language. That is also happened in social media Instagram user id. Social media is the place for all of people in the world gathering together discussed anything to share and comments anything. That is what makes the difference needs between genders. Event the user id in the same gender, the language must be difference [30 & 32].

#### 3.2.4. People understand their personal media use, interests, and motives enough to communicate with researchers about their choices

Event people understand the use of Instagram but the choices of purpose of users depend on their own way in expressing the language. For example, event the Instagram user id in this research was college students and Indonesian people, but the dialect must be different even they in the same gender, environment

and social class. Different education, different level and kind linguistic will affect the language. In social media instagram there are a lot of people who have variety gender, level and the kind of linguistic [32-33].

### 3.2.5. The audience members are the only people who can make judgments regarding the value of the media content

Different people, different social status, different environment, and different social class would have different point of view. There are some people who have different of view will have different language. Education people will have good point of view, and they will have good language. There are 30 users id on this research, so that there are 30 characters and have 30 point of view also will have 30 the differences language that is used in social media Instagram [34-35].

## 4. CONCLUSION

The result findings in sociolinguistics are really interesting to be observed especially in gender patterns. The differences exposition in using language and pictures from these two sexes showed that the purpose and intention of the uploaders, however the viewers and followers are getting different perception and views. This research is valuable to enrich the other research to be explored because some discrepancies and the challenging movement of technology occurred rapidly and under beyond. Exploring more about the effect of gender patterns in using language both in positive and negative ways might be researched in the future, hopefully, this research gives more enrichment for other researchers in doing the same aspect of gender patterns.

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Dr. Sri Yuliani is an active researcher in English education field. She has written some publications international and local Journal. She is interested in research and she is willing to have a collaboration research with other researchers.



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