

University of Tabriz
Persian Language and Literature
(Former Journal of Faculty of Letters)
Vol. 71, Issue 238, Fall & Winter 2018- 2019

**The Use of Vocabularies in *Symphony of the Dead*
by Abbass Maroufi: from the language and Gender Perspectives**

Naser Naseri¹/ Sakineh Sharafati²

¹ Assistant professor of Persian Language and Literature, Islamic Azad University, Khoy Branch, Khoy, Iran (corresponding author), E-mail: nasernaseri43@gmail.com

² M.A student of Persian Language and Literature, Islamic Azad University, Khoy Branch, Khoy, Iran, E-mail: shahdeadab@gmail.com

Abstract

Language is considered as one of the fundamental elements in fiction writing. One of the important issues in investigating language is paying attention to the relationship between gender and language. Most researchers believe that there is a significant difference between the men and the women language and writing. This article aimed at examining men and women language differences in the scope of the use of vocabularies from language and gender perspectives in the "Symphony of the Dead" written by Abbass Maroufi. The authors have tried to analyze the differences in the vocabularies used by women and men in this novel including variables such as color words, taboo words (vulgar and non-vulgar), swear words, affirmations, moderators, imperative and authoritative words, affective traits and words in the dialogues among the novel characters according to the linguistic scientific rules. Although Abbass Maroufi has created a language proportionate with his protagonists' gender, he has not succeeded in the creation of a language proportional with his protagonists in some cases due to inattention to the scientific findings of sociolinguists, especially in terms of the relationships between language and gender.

Keywords: Abbass Maroufi, "Symphony of the Dead", gender, male language, female language

Abbass Maroufi, as a contemporary fiction writer, playwright and journalist, was born on May 17th, 1957 in Sangsar, Semnan. He studied dramatic arts at Tehran University. “Sociolinguistics is a field which studies the relationship between the language and the society and also, the relationship between the linguistic usage and social structures (Trudgill, 1976:1)”. One of the fundamental issues in sociolinguistics is *gender*. In this research, the dialogues among the protagonists in this novel have been studied in terms of language and gender in the scope of vocabularies including variables such as taboo words (vulgar and non-vulgar), swear words, affirmations, moderators, imperative and authoritative words, affective traits and words. Taboo words are unpleasant and violent ones the use of which is considered rude and indecent in the society. Linguists believe that women tend to use polite and cultured forms of language innately and in contrary, men tend to use taboo words. The statistics show that women use taboo words much less than men, i.e. 12.7% for women and 87.3% for men. Swear words are phrases that a speaker uses for more emphasis, when it is probable that the hearer considers them with doubt. The results of the research by Gom (1981) indicated that, contrary to the common belief, men use the swear words more than women. The studies showed that men swear with 19 swear words compared with women with 3 swear words, and the color words used by women are more diluted than the ones used by men. The color words employed by women are 70% higher than those used by men as 30%. These findings are consistent with the linguistics theories. Moderators are linguistic forms that express the speaker’s uncertainty. The frequency of the application of these words in male dialogues is 75% and it is 25% in female dialogues, contrary to the Lakoff and Fishman and other linguistics research results. The moderators have not been used correctly in the dialogues among the characters in this novel. The writer could not have used the moderators proportionate with the characters gender. Affirmations (short responses) are phrases depicting the positive attention of the hearer to the speaker. Examining the affirmations in this novel showed that the male characters have used 80% and the female characters have used 20% affirmations.

Linguists describe the male language as authoritative and imperative and the female language as supportive and participatory. The authoritative language data in this novel depict that the male authoritative language use was 75% and the female one was 25% and

the writer has succeeded in the application of the authoritative and imperative forms consistent with the linguists' theories.

Conclusion

Abbass Maroufi, the writer of the *Symphony of the Dead*, has been successful in use of taboo words, swear words, color words and authoritative and imperative language and this application is consistent with the linguistic studies; however, he was unsuccessful in the application of the variables of moderators and affirmations and consistency with the linguists standards.

References

- Barzegar Aqgaleh, A. (2009). Gender and difference in vocabularies in the standard Persian used in the contemporary fiction, M.A thesis, University of Tehran.
- Trudgill, P. (1997). Sociolinguistics, introduction to language and society, translated by Dr. Mohammad Tababtabei, Tehran, Agah publication.
- Rezvaniyan, G., Malek, S. (2013). Examining the impact of gender on the contemporary women poets' language, *Journal of Poetry (Bostan Adab)*, Shiraz University, Year 5th, No. 3, pp. 45-70.
- Farsiyan, M. (2009). Gender in vocabulary, M.A thesis, Tehran University.
- Ghaffar Samar, Reza & Alibakhshi, Goodarz (2007). The Gender Linked Differences in the Use of Linguistic Strategies in face-to-face Communication. *Linguistics Journal*, Volume 3, Issue 3, pp. 59-71.
- Lakoff, R. (1975). "Language and Women's Place", New York, Harper & Row.