

# Good essay about factors affecting language use

[Technology](#), [Development](#)



Language is an important, essential and foundational human characteristic. However, the way language is shaped, spoken, its grammar and other specifics are made and expressed with various accents is based on many different factors. In this paper, we analyze how culture as a whole and two other important factors inter-related with culture including gender and geographic location influences, impacts and effects the way a person uses a language. It shall be noticed that culture and language has strong bonds so much so that language is an expression of culture. Similarly, gender through culture and independent of culture (psychologically) shows variations in language use while geography is found to have more cultural specific dimensions in the ways a language shapes itself and is used.

## **Culture**

First of all, if we talk about culture's overall affect on language, the relationship between the two is very strong. One explains or defines the other, thus, culture have significant effect on shaping language use. Geng argues that language is expression of the culture and history of a nation (219). How it works! Geng explains that tribes or nations experience the universe in their own unique and particular way. So, they develop particular premises and assumptions, based on which they start expressing their views and develop structures of expressing them. In this way, a language is developed in a totally culturally centralized manner (219). Hence, a culture influences its language in the deepest way possible. So much so that Geng further takes the view that culture differences are one of the primary causes of language differences among different nations and countries (219). He also argues that " language is inextricably bound with culture" (219). In other

words, culture is reflected in the language such that a language cannot be fully learned if the culture is not understood properly (219). At this point one may question how children learn language as they are not exposed to the overall culture at such an early age. So, Parlakian and Sanchez explain that even children understand and learn language in a cultural context, but for them the culture is based in and restricted to house alone (52). But culture is not a straight away simple terminology to understand. It is very complex and involves a set of factors that could be seen in their own categories to understand culture better which then explains language. Thus, in the coming paragraph we understand how gender and geography influences language in a given cultural context.

## **Gender**

There are various reasons why male and female are found to use language differently. Meunier argues that since women has been denied power and higher social status historically, it has led women to historically have a different and lower social status than men. And that historical setup has by time become cultural and psychological factor too (n. p). This means that women's conversation style is very different than men. Lakoff argued that women use tag questions like ' aren't you' and hedges like ' it seems like' more often than men. Similarly, he tried to categorize many more differences too. Although, Lakoff's categorization is premised on cultural and historical context, however, scholars have also argued for factors that have been found independent of cultural contexts.

The categorization of gender difference has always been quite difficult, according to Newman et al., because of a historical lack of agreement over

the language analysis (211). But Newman et al. standardized an analysis method based on 70 studies and then analyzed 14000 people to analyze gender differences in use of language. His study results showed that the degree of use of psychological and social processes related words usage was higher among women while for men, impersonal topics and object properties related words were in higher degree (211). The sample was random enough to be applied in different cultural contexts and hence, the gender differences in use of language are quite psychological, at least in the twenty first century.

### **Geographic Location:**

Culture is always geographically contextualized to a great extent and hence, language use also varies from one geographic location to another. Nerbonne did an extensive quantitative research on how language structure, shape and use varies as we move from one geographic location to another. He found 14% to 38% variation (1). However, later in the research he further analyzes and argues that geography is not simply about distance, but much more than that. So, he takes Germany as a case study and analyze the German dialect areas which increased the language variation to 32% being lower and 45% being upper level. Thus, in both cases he finds geography influencing significantly language shape and usage.

However, Geng explains more qualitatively how language varies from one geographic location to another. He compares UK and China as a case. He compares two poems by famous poets of each country. Both talk very differently about ' east wind.' Hence, Geng argues that the two poets are influenced differently by their geographic location to use their language in

particular manner. That is why the use of ' east wind' in Chinese poem might be quite incomprehensible for Westerners (219). Similarly, Thomas Wier explains qualitative differences in language use based on geography as follows: geography does not directly affect, in a significant manner, how humans use language, but its indirect effects are significant and very relevant. Therefore, in the indirect effects or influences, the geography can be divided into two areas: residual zones where there are mountains and rivers and spread zones which have flat grounds. Each location has its own benefits and costs, thus, the resources available for residents of these places are also quite different to each other and used in a certain manner. When the basic resources differ, the development may also differ and hence, the agriculture style, technology development and knowledge development may differ in each type of area. All these factors join up and form a cultural context which gives a certain shape to language and its use (Wier n. p). Thus, geography affects in a very distinct manner how language is used. In short, language is strongly related and rooted in given contexts. There is a reason why Arabs did not have a word for Mango and adopted it from Englishman as Manjo because they were introduced to mangos by Englishmen. A particular cultural context gives a particular and specific shape to language and its use. Moreover, gender has culture dependent as well as psychological effects too on language use. But a geographic location seems to have more culture dependent influence. However, it is not that straight idea. There is a lot of complexity in coming to this one liner conclusion and still there is a lot of room to dig for and produce a better understanding of factors influencing language use.

## Works Cited

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