

# Asymmetric Discourse: Exploring Power Dynamics, Overlappings and Interruptions of Gendered Conversations in 2023 *Honest Bunch* Podcasts

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**Abstract** - This study examined gender differences and discourse styles in select episodes of 2023 *Honest Bunch* Podcasts. The study adopted Deborah Tannen's *Difference Theory*, which posits that women and men use language differently in their conversations; this emanates from their different sociocultural socialization which often leads to miscommunication and misinterpretation of ideas in mix-gender conversation. The study explored how female and male guests of *Honest Bunch* 2023 podcasts used language differently in conversations. The study adopted a descriptive research method which allowed for an accurate and systematic observation of different conversation patterns of both genders. The data consist of three YouTube videos episodes of the 2023 *Honest Bunch* Podcast. Each episode includes two female guests, two male guests and their male hosts engaged in conversations. The findings reveal that female guests predominantly use inclusive language, cooperative listening cues and hedging to foster solidarity and rapport-building. Their speech style also shows a tendency to avoid and manage conflict through overlapping and the use of politeness strategies that signal supportive construction of meaning. However, men frequently employ exclusive language, interruptions, and report talk, emphasizing their status, dominance, and information-giving. The study contributes to gender discourse analysis in the Nigeria media space, showing how different conversation patterns reinforce traditional gender roles in mixed-gender conversations. The study, therefore, recommends that a balanced turn taking should be encouraged in public speaking, women should balance politeness with assertive strategy to ensure they drive their points home, while men should reduce excessive interruptions and adopt more collaborative conversation pattern for inclusivity in order to women to construct and negotiate meaning effectively in gendered conversations.

**Keywords:** *Asymmetric Discourse, Gendered Language, Podcast, Power Dynamics, Socialization*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Language is one of the most vibrant aspects of man and his society. Its dynamic nature is such that enables it adapts to changes in the society, reflects

and becomes responsive to such changes. Language is embedded in human culture and as such, it enables humans to articulate their consciousness by way of replicating their culture: learning and internalizing the norms, values, behaviors, and social skills appropriate to their society. In other words, language provides the basis for individuals to become functional members of their society. However, there is the need to recognize the fact that language has the zip to extend its traditional or primal function to a more complex one that trickles down to the creation and maintenance of different levels of social relationships. Hence, in the words of Keating (n. d, p. 1) "language plays a vital role in establishing and maintaining a society, including conventions, habits, and practices. Through language we create a wide variety of social relationships and social systems". And it is these intricate webs of human relationships that define the structure of every society. Thus, language is not just a system of communication, but a sophisticated and essential tool of social engineering.

As a tool of social engineering, language communicates social meanings at different levels; it reflects the social order of a given society, and it enables its speakers to establish their individual or group identity. Hence, every discourse mirrors the identity of the person, who constructs it. And this explicates the fact that people speak differently based on the social circumstances surrounding any speech event they engage in. The social circumstances may include the following: a speaker's age, occupation, nationality/region of origin, education, and gender among others (Holmes, 2017). In the view of Holmes, women speak differently from men, not necessarily because of their biological make-up, but due to some social explanations of their upbringing and their cultural positions in the society. This implies that we use language to define our relationship with others in the society. And for this reason, Hudson (1966, p.230) avows that, "the social function of language

are the ways in which we use language to give our view of our relationship to other people”.

So many agents of socialization that mold women into shape often design them to prioritize relationship, empathy, and cooperation. All these influence the way they use language; they construct their language in a way that would reflect what and who the society want them to be. While the women, in carrying out their roles in the society follow the path of maintaining relationships, expressing empathy and establishing cooperation, men take the centre stage of dominance and power control. These equally orchestrate the language of men to be different from that of women. Hence, while women are conditioned to be more polite in language use, men use language to express dominance over others. In line with this assertion, Guo (2009, p.16) says:

...men use compulsive and competitive ways of expressing themselves more than women, which means that men dominate society and they are always self-centered. This is reflected in their use of language. Men try to keep their upper status in communication.

The roles women are confined in the society influence their choice of language in each speech event. The general opinion is that while men are more concerned with power and dominance, women are more inclined to fostering solidarity. This is why Hudson (1996, p.142) affirms that “females give priority to solidarity and concentrate on building and maintaining the social bonds that holds communities together, while the male’s priority goes to power, the struggle for independence”. This, therefore, means that women functions more in the family circle, while men perform better in the professional world, where competition, rivalry and supremacy reign.

These opposing attractions mold the languages of both genders into their distinct peculiarities. And the reason this idiosyncrasies exist, therefore, is because men grow up in the world in which conversation is competitive. So, since theirs is a world of competition, they are always poised to take the lead, or to prevent others from dominating them. On the other hand, for women, talking is often a way of gaining confirmation and support for their ideas (Hohnes, 2008). It is, therefore, in order to give credence to the fact that women and men do not speak the same way that this paper is presented to explore

the power dynamics and discourse styles of gendered conversations in 2023 *Honest Bunch Podcast*.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Deborah Tannen’s Difference Theory (DT) was adopted as the theoretical foundation of this study. DT posits that women and men belong to different subcultures and therefore develop divergent conversational styles, which sometimes lead to misunderstandings and miscommunication. Thus, the theory advocates that misunderstanding/miscommunication between men and women is not because one is right and the other wrong, but because of different expectations and different use of language shaped by gender socialization from early childhood. This alludes to the fact that women and men communicate differently because of distinct cultural expectations and social patterns prevalent in their different worlds. According to Tannen (1990), the effect of miscommunication which occurs between the two genders is likely to be deceptive, because the parties usually do not realize that they are in a cross-cultural encounter. DT further posits that these differences, rather than being inherently biological, are shaped by societal norms and learned behaviours, which lead to misunderstanding in cross-gender interaction.

Before the advent of DT, gender differences in language were often explained using a dominance model, where men were seen to dominate conversations and women to be more passive in speech. (Lakoff, 2004). However, in the 1990s, Tannen (1990) moved the narrative from power-based differences to cultural differences, bringing in sociolinguistic approaches rooted in cross-cultural communication. She assumes that women and men conversational styles are equally valid just that the more each party makes an honest attempt to talk to the other, they speak differently. DT further suggests that most women and men do not understand that because they are differences in the way we speak, in pressing home our points in the different languages we speak, we end up creating more problems in our communication process. The submission of DT, therefore, is that for each gender to interpret the conversation or discourse style of the other and assign meaning to it effectively, each party must first of all understand the dissimilarities of both language patterns. Consequently, this theory would enable us

to establish a better foundation of women and men conversation styles and how each style is influenced by our societal cultural expectations and socialization trends.

#### The Social Nature of Language

The existence of any society is tied to the language of that society. This is because language is a social institution which shapes the society vice-versa (Umera-Okeke, 2019). It, therefore, means that language does not exist in a vacuum, but interrelates with the social structures of any society where it is spoken. The concept of language and society emerged from the recognition of the fact that, language is not just a tool for communication but also a powerful social force that shapes social structures, behaviours, and identities. It grew through the observation of how language varies across social groups and how social factors influence language. Language is not uniform or constant; it is variable and ever-changing. This means that it is inconsistent for every individual user and among a group of speakers who use the same language. Thus, people adjust the way they speak in different social situations; this implies that we enact different identities whenever we use language in context (Holmes and Wilson, 2017).

We reveal our social class, education background, religion, attitudes, and identities through the way we speak. This in return can inform the people we are speaking to and also help them to formulate an opinion about us. Nwala (2015) cited in Afiauwu (2019, p.160) observes that “language is not just an ordinary means of communication, it is the whole essence of man... and a life support system which sustains the continuous development of man in his environment”. For this reason, Afiauwu (2019) maintains that, language is inseparable to the survival of man in his society in a manner that one cannot imagine of a single society without language. In other words, language predominantly serves as a vehicle through which social relationships and interactions with people are hinged on. Furthermore, social changes result in language change. These changes equally influence the value system in every society. In line with this assertion, Umera-Okeke (2012, p.2) upholds that, “language reflects and expresses social attitudes and values, and these social attitudes have the power to influence and shape those attitudes and values”. Hence, language becomes the interface between man and his society.

#### Culture and Gendered Language

The language a people speak has a way of shaping their culture, and vice versa, the culture of a people to a great extent determines the structure of their language. Furthermore, language shapes the thought and the world views of its speakers; hence, there is a strong link between linguistic structures and cultural considerations. To this end, the culture of a people reflects in the language they speak (Wardhaug, 2006). Thus, Hall (1997) cited in Parajuli (2021, p.113), states that “language represents the shared meanings of a particular culture and culture exchanges the meaning through language with members of that society”. Through communication language provides the background that enables culture to establish the cultural values, traditions, and identities that mark the reality of man. In line with this assertion, Buchholz and Hall (2005, p.586) states that, “a person’s identity results in linguistic interactions as a social and cultural phenomenon rather than an internal and psychological one.” So the language performance of a people differentiates their cultural identities since they use distinct languages to perceive and negotiate the world around them.

Culture equally creates gendered language; different societies have several cultural practices that have fashioned or designed the ways women speak as against the speech pattern of their male counterparts. In most cultures women are seen as the guidance of social values and must, therefore, maintain these societal norms. So since women are made, from childhood, to play the role of modeling standard or acceptable behaviours, their language must also reflect such behaviours (Holmes and Wilson, 2017). As a result of this, women must not in their language performance and otherwise offend men and must speak carefully and politely. For this reason, the society sees women as subordinate to men. These reasons of sociocultural and linguistic subjugation which women face have greatly conditioned them to use language differently from the way men use language.

### III. METHODOLOGY

In order to accurately and systematically account for the population of this study, and explore the power dynamics and social norms of gendered

conversations found in 2023 *Honest Bunch Podcast*, we adopted a descriptive and qualitative research design. The population of the study is made up of three YouTube videos the podcast episodes. Each video includes an episode of two female guests, two male guests and male hosts, who engaged in conversations. These three episodes were selected in order to enable us get a wide range data appropriate for the analysis of the study. In this study, we used a random sampling technique to collate the data from series of episodes of the *Honest Bunch Podcast*. This, therefore, means that we selected videos from a larger pool of relevant content (episodes) by applying the principle of randomization—a procedure, which allowed all the subjects in our population an equal opportunity of appearing in the selection. We downloaded and critically watched the selected videos, before transcribing some sections of the videos that are relevant to this study. And finally, we used a descriptive and illustrative analysis to examine and evaluate the collected data.

#### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

##### Data Presentation

Excerpt 1: Home Training and Social Etiquette.

Female guests only.

Host 1(Male)- Husband material (HM)

Host 2 (Male)- Nedu

Host 3 (Female)- Ezinne

Guest 1(Female)- Angela

Guest 2 (Female)- Mrs Best

Host 1: Is the internet taking the place of parents?

Host 2: To be honest with you, I think I will say is a kind of 50 50. There are some parents that are intentional about the upbringing of their children, so they decide the screen time for their children while some don't... but there are still some parents wey say "your screen time must not be more than two hours or five hours, everyday", but the problem is even, for that two hours every day, do you know what they are watching ...?

Host 3: I see one tweet for social media the other time way person say "I wish Rihanna was my mother right now", another person come reply am say "you! Can Rihanna cook ogbono soup? After everything your mother has done for you?"

Host 1: ... if we dey talk about the children now, the whole idea of home training sometimes e dey be like insult, "this child doesn't have home training", e be like say na the parent directly them dey talk to,

because e mean say the parent no raise that pikin well and (Guest 1 speaks).

Guest 1: But that's the truth (concurred by the other female guest "yeah, that's the case"). Like some of these cases are the truth. Like if you see some of these guys in Leki now hopping up and down looking for rich women to be following up and down...Like when you give your child everything that your child needs, your child is no gonna always want to be looking out for peoples' things... the thing is (Host 1 tries to say something, "I think the foundation of this is"), your parents have the major job to do, whether they are traveling abroad, whether they are living everywhere (Host 2 "whether na work hold them"), you have to keep someone who is clean around your child, and how you get to do that is what you impact to people that live with you, now, people you leave your child for, very important...Because me normally if I dey house or come back from work or anywhere, once I walk into my house people way dey watch TV inside my house go won greet me or something, I go take style sight the TV to know watin dem dey watch, if na something way no dey healthy to my son, that TV I don disconnect am that day that day (Host 1 "hmm! so the parent that have") and I go give very sound warning "next time you want to watch your bullish don't put my son in it...(Host 1 "hmm!)", so whether I'm around or not my son knows what to watch... so it really a problem and that's why, that's why I said it's very important who you are leaving your kids with, all these parents are just to....

Guest 2: Just to add to what she's talking about in the roles parents play I mean, if we even go back to, for those of us who are Christians (Host 2 "Hallaluya"), the bible says "train up a child in the way he should grow and when he gets old, he won't depart from it (Host 1 "that thing is in the New Testament na!" making a sound with his two hands fingers raised) and that's just what it means.

Guest 1: And they will say our parents are old fashioned...but there are a lot of things to learn from what they did... (Host 2 "I want to say something", raising a figure like to take permission) do you understand....

Host 2: Now! Now! Now! Going by the thing HM mentioned "that you people will now say our parents are old fashioned", Nasbio came here and said...the truth is, in as much as there is truth in it, there's, you can still not (emphasizing) take the place of your parents, e no get watin you won do. This matter, this conversation way we dey discuss as social media and

parenting, look, you have to from beginning, from beginning (HM “of course, because the child is vulnerable e no sabi”) yeah! E no understand anything and that child is the reflection of the lessons that you impact in their lives (in agreement with HM). Hold on (raising one of his hands), sorry sorry, before you enter (to HM). From beginning you don dey imbibe watin you won imbibe for example....

Host 3: I wanted to make a case for, like what she said, I really have seen people who are Christians, very good Christians who have trained their children very well butt, these children you’re not going to keep them at home, you’re not going to do home schooling for them...so when these children go to school, I’m making a case for parents now, so when these children go to school you’re hoping “oh my child go well” but you cannot say who (Mrs Best “control everything”) their classmates would (pointing ga finger to Mrs Best like to say “let me finish”) be, who they are going to warmup to (Nedu “na this thing me and Angela dey talk, na the same thing Best dey talk na e I win tell you” she continues, pointing a finger at Nedu to wait and let her finish), so the corruption sometimes comes from outside.

Guest 2: Yeah, but there’s a way you will train your child (Nedu “gbam!”) they would be able to differentiate, children learn from what they see.

Host 2: Let me say something (Mrs Best tries to speak), you will say what you want to say. Ahm...is like a slate, garbage in garbage out, what you put is what you will get. Now, you have to understand how children grow... some people take it seriously to raise their children. You see this thing way Angela talk, say every school for obodo-oyibo don dey teach “it okay for a man to kiss a man” (Angela “nmbakwa”), you know (HM “so this is what I have to say”, Nedu points at him like to hold on), I was driving at something, now, (Angela “ this things are demonic so I don’t want my child to be demonic”)... must of the times it is influence, is not just about what the parent can do, who are they associating with in school!

Host 1: ...I think it’s important like she said, that they are a lot of damaged people, people who needs to unlearn a lot f things that they have learnt because that person na adult... and when we talk about this (baba no vex, pointing towards Nedu to hold on) in fairness, society places our parents at a disadvantage because... (Nedu starts to talk).

Guest 1: ...there are some stubborn kids like you said. You know, you just tell them not to go to a computer, not to watch these things, the moment

you’re out of the house they are watching it, so (Mrs Best “you have to look for a teaching that works for the child”), you can control (Nedu “there is a pace of prayer too”, Ezinne “thank you!”), what happens around, yeah! (as others continue to break in).

Guest 2: You can tell two set of kids “sit down there” one would easily be scared and sit (Ezinne makes a body language in agreement), one would say “why are you shouting” (Ezinne “thank you”)... so you cannot approach your kids with one method, you have to use the one that works for each child (back to Guest 1).

Excerpt 2: Entertainers and Entertainment money.

A male guest only.

Host 1: HM

Host 2: Nedu

Host 3: Female

Guest: Kunle

Host 1: Entertainers and Entertainment money. Why e be say some people dey always dey tie or associate their earnings or source of wealth to something way dey dishonest, why?...

Host 2: It comes from outside watin them dey do. Now, have ever, Kunle Remi is a wonderful person... Kunle Remi cannot come and tell you that he brought an autobiography (a car) worth hundreds million, not because he doesn’t have the money but there are people who showcase these things. At first, I first dey believe this person dey try oh, wonderful thing but, you no ask yourself “watin be the extra thing “? You know what that does....

Guest: ...some people will say to you “how come the girls are doing better than the makes”? that’s a very valid question. I get to set (a movie location), and I see.... Imagine I as a talent, speaking for myself, gets a 100k from every renewal (to resign a movie on a particular platform), do you know what that is for me? on 80 films, then I can live a certain life because I would know want to work more, make that 80 films 90, because I know that by the time I’m retiring...I know that there is money coming from every job I have done. But we are not considered that way, which is why I understand why people mix other things with their career... but people around see it as though “what are you not, what are they doing differently”? I can’t answer that question till tomorrow.

Host 1: ...but I dey look say for example, some people might enjoy patronage from maybe other things that they do, because the truth is, I don’t see where they will say rate my drip, somebody go talk

say my hair is 800k, you understand. If you get person way be say (Nedu tries to speak) may be (with a hand gesture “I dey go some were), maybe if the person dey do another business way dey make am money, because I mean, many people don’t say anything until you begin to tell them something....

Host 2: You know something, I ehh, Kunle has said everything he said and he is hundred percent correct... so what is the extra thing!?

Host 3: But I really think that where we shouldn’t, because there are some people that, is fine ooh, what you guys are saying is correct, there are some ladies or some men that whenever the pull up you’ll be wondering aah, is it the same thing we are doing that you are doing (Nedu “the men that are doing that are fruity men, men that are fruity”), some of them are not fruity, so of them (Guest “some of them ae even bankrolled”) they are not fruity, there are other things that they can do that is not, it doesn’t have to do with any sexual activity. Guest “but even in that space, there is something called, which we all know, “you see packaging”...).

Guest: ...baba, I had to post “you see this film, is sweet go and watch it, one of my boy gave me 200k... because I know there are so many people that look up us, so many, I never want to lead people astray and make you feel like things are rosey, it took me a decade for people to appreciate my craft....

Host 2: ...let me say something, what I want to say is, it’s easy, almost every girl I know for their bio na... bro! I know two girls, I n won call names (Guest “no no, can I burst your head, what happens now, you no longer pay the director be in the movie, you make money however way you make money and pay the producer to make a film and make you the lead”...), now, the question way I go ask you....

Host 3: But I’ll say that we should be careful the way we pocket-watch people because like, there are some people, I’ll stand my grand on this again, there are allowed to have like other things. (Nedu (now apart from, yeah, I get it, apart from Rita Dominic that I know that has a good family, which other actress get good family...).

Host 1: ...you now when we have conversations like this ehhen, we always try as much as we can to identify lessons that people can imbibe, ehmm, the truth is, you will be faced with trailers and tribulations, there would be temptations (everyone hums in agreement), it wouldn’t be easy.... I think it is important to keep in mind that these things will

happen and this people would come but, you should....

Excerpt 3: Why should Women never Shoot their Short?

Guest 1: Male (Nasty)

Host 1: HM

Guest 2: Female (Shawa)

Host 2: Nedu

Guest 3: Male (Sydney)

Host 3: Toun

Guest 4: Female (Naomie)

Host 1: Ok so let go. On this episode we are discussing something very very interesting, we are talking of interaction and, you know, initiating ehmm, conversations when it comes to building relationship... so were going to start first with an important question, would you as a woman initiate the conversation?...

Host 2: I don talk am here before, girl don toast me before and its more like an ongoing thing, you know what I am saying ... (HM “so but wait, when she first tell you, na the first time abi?) no it felt good. It felt good because of the fact that, I mean, I wasn’t looking at her like that, you get what I’m saying. The fact that some saw me (Nasty “baba you do am abi you no do”?), I no do am (Sydney “the thing is ehheh, they usually come to us, right, but it’s not our type”... Toun “what if you type approaches you, what will you do”? Sydney “I swear to God that’s hundred percent love”, Toun “does that make you see the lady any lesser”? the males chorus “no!” Shawa “it does”).

Host 3: I have said this before and keep saying it, you won’t die. There’s nothing wrong in approaching a guy and let him know your feelings... (Guest 2 “let me say something”, trying with her hands to calm the speakers).

Guest 2: Hold on, hold on, so basically, I personally feel that when you approach men, you know, I believe in strategic, like, position yourself in a strategic way, let them come and meet you... because when you go and meet men they now take you for granted (Guest 3 “wrong men”, Guest 1 and Host 3 tries to speak but Guest 2 raises her hand to calm them). My belief is one time is luck, two times is a charm, third time (she rolls her eye balls. Guest 3 “that’s your belief”. Host 2 and Guest 1 tries to speak), hold on, so basically, me I always position myself, I don’t (Host 3 “you’ve never moved to a boy”?) I have moved to a boy, that’s why I said one time... I have moved to three guys, and I can tell you that, all the guys I guys I have moved to that I liked,

I was their type, but they were all dying for me. Let me explain... (Guest 1 "oh!" she tries to stop him) Nasty wait....

Guest 1: ... I have to give you that, like the last thing you... he's a man he knows what he wants (Guest 3 tries to speak) hold on, let me be honest with you, just like the girl that says talking stage can take up to three months... it boils down to the fact that, it's a world, you cannot predict it (Guest 3 "can I say something"), ok go ahead....

Guest 3: You guys hold on (Host 3 tries to speak, she calms her with hand, "babe sorry, sorry to cut you short"), if it's for FWB (friends With Benefit) or Sneaky-link, shoot your shot (the room becomes noisy).

Host 2: Sorry I want to say something, (raising both hands, like to take permission) before you say something, Sydney was saying something. You see me as a person ehheh... ok Shawa is here and she's beautiful, I find her attractive... (Guest 4 "that's the problem, why do you have to wait for her to walk up to you"? Guest 1, 3 and Host 3 choruses "it doesn't mean anything").

Host 3: ...we need to be sensible, you'll be fighting for equal right every time, I'm not saying to equal right reaches here oh, but I mean, it's not done, you won't die, you're just the one making these men feel superior to us.

Host 1: Ok wait. I think Shawa said something about, you know ehheh, go for what you want like a lion but, be wise about it and they example she gave was... so is it more of "who you are attracted to, Host 2 tries to speak) hold on, or more of an ego thing, or the fear of embarrassment that if I tell this guy I like him the guy might tell everybody else (the room becomes noisy). Let's take this a step further. Has any lady on this planet sent a Dm to a guy? (With a sort of high tone. All the male guest tries to speak but Guest 2 tries to calm them all)

Guest 2: Let me confess. I had a friend who is a Dj and I found him very attractive, I was actually 19, the (Guest 1 "he's your friend... wait, wait, wait he's your friend abi"?... Nasty wait let me continue, said Guest 2). So basically, I liked the guy so I now thought that if I Dm this guy (in a calm voice) "how are you doing" it will come off as weird so....

Guest 1: ...it is a turnoff for me. I don't care, you know am doing well for myself. Trust me ehheh, name the place we'll go there but if we go there I cannot buy a house there that's the only thing... but I don't like ladies that put it to me that, you must have money, it sounds transactional, (Guest 2 "but they

must have big bombom"). No no, wait wait, (waving his hands as he says) hold on hold on, talk to me (pointing to Guest 2, talk to me. Guest 2 tries to calm others. "Why is it that, wait wait, Sydney hold on, why is it that, Guest 1 "guy hold on let her talk, look at me", Guest 2 continues "men like it when they go for looks but I cannot go for your account balance, why"?).

Host 2: Let me answer that question. Now I'm going to speak for myself. Now, I have money to take care of you, do you understand what I'm saying, (Guest 2 "I got money to take care of you too"), no you can't take care of me, you haven't got money to take care of me (Guest 3 "make una calm down, which one be this one"). Wait let me say something, like Nasty said, when you come to me, I like you, and I make it obvious to you say I like... you don't need to tell me that I need to take care of you, once you say that, it means it's becoming transactional (Guest 1 echoes "transactional" together with Host 2). Hold on make I finish....

Guest 2: ...Nasty hold on. There are different kind of women. Some women love providers (Guest 3 "and it's not wrong), me I love a provider but I'll still provide for my provider (Host 3 "yeah"), that's how I am (the room becomes noisy with them singing for her) ... (Guest 4 tries to speak).

Host 2: Let me say something, hold on, let me say something (Guest 4 "no no no, Nedu hold on", raising her hand to calm him, "no hold on", Host 2 raises his voice "no let me talk", Guest 4 "Nedu hold on please, I have to talk". Host 1 "let's hear what she's saying", Host 2 "no let me finish something". Guest 4 "but I have to correct the notion that nobody is supporting the notion that a woman should be a liability". Simultaneously Host 2 continues). You were talking about eh, you were saying about, see it's good, yes I don't want you to tell me, oh you have your own money, I obviously don't need your money, but as a man we like women that can take care of themselves, no be woman way be say na everything you go dey ask me for (Guest 4 "yeah! Take care of yourself, which one be say you won take care of man way never marry you"), and also personally, because most people their problem na say, ok... (Guest 4 "every girl that's in love with the man that she is dating would definitely take care of the man, that's fact". Guest 1 and 3 responds "it's not true oh!". Host 3 "not really oh". Guest 3 raising his voice "it's not Lagos girls oh". Guest 4 "no, if a woman is in love, what do you mean, do you know how many girls...

Guest 1 “she’s not a good girl oh”. All these simultaneously).

Guest 1: What are you saying? (Referring to Guest 4). At the beginning of this podcast Host 1, you said something “you are intitled to your opinions”, but there’s something called fact, and it’s the general truth abi? Let me use one example before I go back to what I want to say... (Guest 3 says something), Sydney wait wait, hold on, (raising both hands to calm the people talking) wait I am sorry, can I make my point, please I want to say something (Host 2 “Nasty wants to say something”). So what I’m saying is that, even if you tell me that... (The room becomes noisy and the men try to give their opinion with a loud voice).

## V. DATA ANALYSIS

Women often use overlapping in their speech style to demonstrate support and establish rapport, while men engage interruption regularly to gain control of a conversation. In excerpt 1, while Angela makes a case that, when a child lacks a good upbringing it suggests that his/her parents did not raise that child properly, Mrs. Best overlaps in support, “yeah, that’s the case”, one of the hosts, who is also woman contributes by saying, “I think the foundation of this is...” These overlaps and affirmation highlight the cooperative nature of female conversational style. It equally implicates that, in most speech events, women do not chase dominance or power control. Unlike men they support other conversation participants to construct and negotiate mean. For instance, rather than competing for dominance Mrs. Best and the other woman co-construct meaning with Angela, reinforcing shared values about parenting and social behaviour.

The female guests, here, use overlapping as a tool for rapport building. Guest 2 counsels the audience to be aware of what their children do in school. And Guest 1 steps in to say “*mmbakwa...*!” “These things are demonic, so I don’t want my child to be demonic” and Guest 2 immediately overlaps saying, “you have to look for a technique that works for the child”. What these women did was always to quickly step in to assist one another to either complete a particular meaning which one of them has created or find a way to expatiate one which has already been created. This signals some sort of agreement and establishes emotional connection between them. It also reflects a

conversational pattern where talking simultaneously is not seen as rude, but as an involvement in shared meaning-making. Furthermore, the overlaps showcased, here, do not demonstrate abrupt floor-grabbing pattern typical of competitive interruptions by men. Instead, the female speakers maintain and manage the original speaker’s thread of conversation while lending their own voices. Thus, it indicates that they overlap not to dominate but to co-construct narratives and maintain social harmony. It also reflects a cultural conversational pattern where overlapping shows enthusiasm and alignment rather than disrespect and power dominance.

Even though overlapping may be confused for interruption, it is gender sensitive. From our data in *Excerpt 1* overlapping never signaled interruption. Nonetheless, in *Excerpt 2* interruptions occur frequently with multiple male voices speaking simultaneously. The male guests use interruptions as a mark of male dominance in the mixed-gendered conversation. They interrupt to either correct, redirect, or assert control; this influences meaning making by moving the conversation away from women’s relational narrative towards a more male centered, status-oriented and power control framing. Kunle in *Excerpt 2* exhibits abrupt turn-taking pattern that shows no indication of yielding space for other speakers. Each time he grabs a turn, Kunle holds on to the floor without a preference to yield space for others to talk. While there are no overt interruptions by the host, the uninterrupted flow of his speech equally functions as a tool to restrict a collaborative exchange of turn-taking.

The guest, Kunle lays emphasis on his achievements and morals (“a decade”, “I never want to lead people astray”) further illustrates the report speech style in which personal success are presented as factual evidence rather than emotional negotiated contents. This conversation pattern adopted by Kunle demonstrates the power dynamics of men language. In conversations, men always call attention to themselves, instead of constructing their meaning through the subject matter of a shared conversation. In *Excerpt 3*, Guest 2 is often interrupted. While she speaks on her personal view about being strategic in relationships and how men respond to women when they are approached, Guest 3 interjects with short abrupt interruption. This interruption differs from the cooperative overlapping found in women’s talk, instead, it has the quality of report talk interruptions.

He labels her experience with a dismissive phrase and minimizes the validity of her point while simultaneously drawing attention to his own perspective.

Again, he raises his voice to reinforce his point, and then Guest 1 interjects with, “what are you saying?” while others are in mid-conversation. What seems like overlap here is competitive interruption designed deliberately to seize the floor. This fits Tannen’s claim that men interrupt more often to assert dominance or to control the topics of conversations. Guest 1 also interrupts Guest 2 in her narrative, “he’s your friend... wait, wait, wait he’s your friend abi?”. This interjection cuts across her ongoing conversation, diverting attention from her narrative to a side inquiry. The interruption here is intrusive rather than collaborative, as it halts the flow of the speaker’s account of a narrative. Even though she responds with “wait let me continue”, explicitly reclaiming her turn and reasserting her right to the conversational floor, the fact that she begged to be allowed finish her conversation flipped the power dynamics in favour of her male counterpart in the conversation process.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The social life of language is showcased in asymmetric discourse, where gendered conversations do not only reveal distinct discourse styles of both gender, but how language is used to enact our social realities. In gender conversations, men and women construct and negotiate mean differently. From this study, it is evident that women’s use of collaborative and inclusive language plays a central role in shaping the interactions and the meaning derived from it. This approach does not only ameliorate disagreements/conflicts, but it also ensures that the conversation remains socially cohesive and strengthens social bonds while advancing personal viewpoints. On the other hand, men prefer authoritative information sharing, and less collaborative delivery that leave minimal space for shared construction of meaning. This study has shown that men are more inclined to sharing information in manners that give them dominance in public or mixed gender settings, revealing their preference for tangible solution-oriented talk over supportive or emotional dialogues. However, these different conversation patterns by men and women do not interpret linguistic choices as signs of weakness

or strength, but as evidence of different social norms and interpersonal goals in mixed gendered communication. The study, therefore, suggests that recognizing and addressing these differences in the conversation styles of men and women can bring about a healthier communication between both genders.

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