

Are There Gender Differences in Negotiation Roles? A Case Study in Shark Tank Vietnam

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Abstract

The study of gender language from a socio-pragmatic approach, based on quantitative data from real interactions or sources such as television programs, is considered a promising approach to identify gender language features objectively and accurately. Such findings are not framed in gender stereotypes as those obtained in previous approaches. This article, using a socio-pragmatic approach, identified gender language features from the uses of speech acts in Shark Tank Vietnam, a reality TV program about negotiations. Conversational analysis was adapted in the study to analyze 30 negotiation conversations in Shark Tank Vietnam Season 3, describing five groups of speech acts under Searle's theory in the utterances of male and female investors (sharks) and players. Quantitative analysis showed gender differences in the use of speech acts during negotiations in both groups of participants. The results point to a number of linguistic features in the speech of businessmen and -women from each role in negotiations.

Keywords: Gender language, Negotiations, Vietnamese, Speech acts, Shark Tank

1 Introduction

Gender language has been a theme for research since the 1960s, under multidisciplinary approaches. The literature on gender and communication, predominantly derived from Western cultural contexts, consistently demonstrates distinct differences in language use between men and women in everyday interactions. However, there are few studies on gender differences in Vietnam, especially in a business context. This study examines whether gender-specific communication patterns are evident in negotiation settings, using Vietnamese negotiations conducted in Shark Tank Vietnam, a reality TV program about participants ("players") and investors ("sharks"). The study explores the following research questions from the perspective of Speech Acts Theory:

1. Are there any differences between the speech acts of male and female sharks in Shark Tank Vietnam?
2. Are there any differences between male and female players' speech acts in Shark Tank Vietnam?
3. Are there any differences in males' speech acts in different roles in Shark Tank Vietnam?
4. Are there any differences in females' speech acts in different roles in Shark Tank Vietnam?

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2 Literature review

The worldwide previous research has shown that individuals tend to conform to gender norms and stereotypes when engaging in speech acts (Rahayu & Fauziah, 2021). For example, women are more likely to use polite and tentative language, while men tend to use assertive and direct language. Furthermore, societal expectations based on gender can affect the perception and reception of speech acts (Farrell, 1979), which illustrates that women may face criticism or backlash for being assertive or direct, while men may be viewed as dominant or authoritative for displaying such speech acts. These findings suggest that gender plays a significant role in shaping the way we communicate and how our speech acts are perceived by others. Additionally, several scholars examined how gendered speech acts can reinforce and perpetuate stereotypes and inequalities. They emphasized the importance of understanding and challenging gendered speech acts in order to promote more equitable and inclusive communication practices. Thus, they encouraged readers to critically examine the ways in which our gender influences the choices we make in our speech acts.

Negotiations play a crucial role in various aspects of our lives, from business deals to diplomacy. In these negotiations, language serves as a powerful tool for building relationships, conveying intentions, and achieving mutual understanding (Tylén et al., 2010). One important aspect of negotiation discourse is the use of speech acts. This refers to the actions performed through language, such as requesting, offering, and rejecting (Pinker et al., 2008). Speech act theory has been used to understand and analyze the dynamics of negotiation conversations (Winograd, 1986). The existing literature provides valuable insights into the role of speech acts in negotiations (Teodorescu, 2014). It has shown that the strategic use of speech acts, such as making concessions or issuing threats, can influence the negotiation outcome (Soedjarwo, 2020). Other studies have explored how nonverbal communication, such as facial expressions and gestures, can complement or contradict the speech acts used by negotiators (Adair & Loewenstein, 2013). Akinwotu (2013) stated that speech acts are particularly important as they allow individuals to express their intentions and make commitments.

Gender differences in language use have been observed in negotiation contexts (Pinker et al., 2008). Women and men may employ different linguistic strategies and communication styles, which can impact the negotiation process and outcomes. Baxter (2017) and Chang & McKeown (2019) found that the use of masculine language, such as assertive and dominant speech, can be perceived as more powerful and commanding. On the other hand, feminine language, which is characterized by politeness and accommodation, may be seen as less assertive and commanding (Bate, 1976). The gendered use of language may also impact the perceptions and expectations of negotiators. However, because the male mode of argumentation is taught in schools and colleges, it is not surprising to find many women who write and speak in the male mode. On the other hand, some educated women in certain situations may choose not to use the male mode of argumentation and instead employ the female mode, characterized by indirect and nuanced language (Farrell, 1979). This highlights the complex relationship between gender and speech acts, demonstrating the influence of societal norms and individual choices in shaping communication patterns.

Recent gender research in Vietnam also investigated the stereotypes as well as the transitions between sex speech styles in certain contexts. Particularly, three studies on gender differences in speech acts such as compliments, criticisms, bargaining, etc. were conducted by Le Thi Thuy Ha (2014), Pham Thi Ha (2013), and Tran Thanh Van (2012) on speech, verbal actions in short stories, in interviews and in everyday communication. Conversation and discourse analysis have produced some interesting observations. Le Thi Thuy Ha (2014) pointed out that in family interactions, both men and women tend to criticize people of the same age, and women criticize more than men in the same age group. However, both elderly men and the very young appear to be more critical than women, although their criticism strategies are different.

At work, men become more reserved and polite; women in a position of seniority criticize more than those in the younger group. Pham Thi Ha's (2013) findings were that women use compliments more than men, especially with people of the same sex, and for a wider range of purposes such as expressing agreement, admiration, and being social. For maintaining a conversation to soften face-threatening behavior; women use more indirect compliments with full complement structures accompanied by explanations than men; whereas men prefer direct, brief compliment structures, and affirm the compliment more. For receiving compliments, men prefer response strategies such as complimenting the person who just complimented

them, asking again about the compliment, or just saying "thank you". Women tend to use thanks and share information about the compliment, express emotions, etc. Research by Tran Thanh Van (2012) about specific negotiating situations shows that in successful sales conversations, male buyers agreed with the seller's price more than female buyers and often accepted the price offered by female sellers, while female sellers agreed with the buyer's price more often than male sellers. In unsuccessful sales conversations, female buyers took the initiative to end the sales conversation more often than male sellers. In the role of buyers, female buyers also took the initiative to end the conversation more often than male buyers; and both used speech acts such as compliments, thanks, instructions, agreements (in successful sales conversations) or acts of complaining, regretting (in unsuccessful sales conversations) to end the sale.

In a study examining cultural and linguistic dynamics, Vietnamese participants communicating in Vietnamese provided a unique context to test Searle's (1969) categorization of speech acts. While Searle's framework was developed in a Western context, research suggests that its principles are broadly applicable across cultures, capturing universal elements of language use. However, cultural nuances influence how men and women utilize speech acts, including politeness strategies and power dynamics, making it essential to validate these categories in non-Western settings like Vietnam. Vietnamese cultural norms, emphasizing indirectness and respect in communication, particularly align with Searle's directives and expressives, offering a culturally relevant means of analyzing gendered communication differences. Such cultural differences support the use of Searle's categorization to explore everyday communication in Vietnamese, to provide insights into its applicability beyond Western paradigms.

Searle's categorization of speech acts, which outlines the fundamental types of communicative functions, such as directives, expressives and declarations, is one prominent framework for analyzing language use (Brundrett & Dung, 2018). While Searle's theory emerged from a Western philosophical perspective, recent scholarship suggests its principles may be more broadly applicable, capturing universal elements of language (Searle, 1969; Smith, 2003). However, it is essential to validate these categories in non-Western contexts, as cultural nuances can significantly influence how speech acts are employed, particularly in terms of gendered communication dynamics (Searle, 1969). The Vietnamese cultural context, with its emphasis on indirectness and respect, provides a unique opportunity to examine the applicability of Searle's framework. Existing research indicates that Vietnamese cultural norms, which prioritize politeness and hierarchical relationships, may align particularly well with Searle's directives and expressives (Ha, 2011; Hang, 2023). Exploring everyday Vietnamese communication through the lens of Searle's theory can offer valuable insights into how gender shapes the use of various speech acts (Brundrett & Dung, 2018). This study aims to examine the validity of Searle's speech act categorization in the Vietnamese cultural context, with a specific focus on gendered communication patterns.

3 Theoretical framework

3.1 *Negotiations*

Effective communication is the lifeblood of successful business negotiations. Negotiators must master the art of expression, seamlessly exchanging ideas, thoughts, and opinions to achieve their desired outcomes. At its core, negotiation is a collaborative process where parties work together to find mutually beneficial solutions (Groth, 2001). Business negotiations (Koester 2014, p.37 quoted in Gardani, 2017) proceed through three main stages: (1) Information exchange; (2) Bargaining (the core of the activity); (3) Agreement. These stages can overlap, and if the parties do not reach an agreement, then they can recur. Their nature is reflected in communication and follows a structured format in business negotiations (Rehbein 1995, p.68).

Business negotiations are complex, multifaceted interactions that require a deep understanding of the underlying dynamics and strategies involved. One influential framework for analyzing negotiations is the argumentation theory developed by Frans H. van Eemeren, a leading scholar in the field of communication and rhetoric. Van Eemeren's concept of "strategic maneuvering" provides valuable insights into how negotiators can reconcile their pursuit of effectiveness with the need to be reasonable and adhere to principles of critical discussion (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 2010). Strategic maneuvering occurs across

all stages of the negotiation process, as negotiators carefully select from the available topical potential, adapt to audience demands, and utilize specific presentational devices.

Effective business negotiators must be mindful of the potential pitfalls of negotiation, such as the cognitive biases that can systematically reduce their ability to reach agreements that maximize their interests. Recent research has identified key variables, including power balance, accountability, cooperative motivation and time constraints, that can influence the trajectory of a negotiation, moving the parties from “selfish misers” to “pro-social thinkers” capable of achieving mutually beneficial outcomes (De Dreu & Beersma, 2005; Jagodzińska, 2020).

According to van Eemeren (2010, 2023), the ideal debate process goes through four stages corresponding to the four stages in the critical discussion process including (1) the stage of confrontation, (2) the introductory phase, (3) the debate phase, (4) conclusion stage.

Within the scope of this article, negotiation is defined as a genre structured from van Eemeren’s model, including communicative facts, communicative members, and communicative purposes. Because the negotiations in this study are designed as reality TV talks with agreed-upon structure, the genre of the show reveals four parts corresponding to the four phases of van Eemeren’s model.

3.2 *Speech acts in negotiation conversations*

John Searle, a foundational figure in pragmatics and philosophy of language, defines speech acts as actions performed via utterances in communication. According to Searle (1969), every speech act has three key components:

1. *Locutionary Act*: The actual utterance and its literal meaning (e.g., “It’s raining” simply describes rain).
2. *Illocutionary Act*: The intended function or purpose of the utterance, such as making a statement, asking a question, giving a command, or making a promise.
3. *Perlocutionary Act*: The effect or outcome the utterance has on the listener, such as persuading, frightening, or comforting them.

Searle’s classification of speech acts (1969) serves as a foundational framework for analyzing how language functions in communication, making it a valuable tool for examining gender-language characteristics. By categorizing speech acts into assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations (see Table 1), Searle provides a lens through which researchers can explore differences in how men and women use language in various contexts.

There are three main applications of the speech acts framework in gender-language studies:

1. *Gender and speech act frequency*: Studies show that men and women differ in their preference and frequency of using certain speech acts. For instance, women often use more expressives and indirect directives, reflecting relational and emotional focus, while men are more likely to employ assertives and imperatives to convey authority and directness (Ghorsong, 2016; Holmes, 2013).
2. *Cultural and contextual variations*: Searle’s categories help researchers identify how gendered speech patterns vary across cultures and social situations. For example, in professional settings, men may dominate with declaratives tied to institutional roles, while women might use hedging in assertives to maintain politeness or reduce conflict (Bauler, 2019; Holmes, 2013).
3. *Quantitative and qualitative analyses*: By applying Searle’s taxonomy, researchers can measure the frequency and context of speech acts, correlating them with gender-specific traits like politeness strategies, power dynamics, or collaborative tendencies. This dual method allows for a nuanced understanding of how gender influences language use in different social interactions (Almusallam, 2018; Asma, 2023; Ghorsong, 2016).

Table 1: Searle's classification of speech acts and gender differences.

Speech Act	Definition	Example	Gender differences
Assertives	The speaker commits to the truth of what is asserted.	present, inform, comment, tell, explain, oppose, negate, affirm, show, agree, introduce, predict, describe, guide	Men are often found to use assertives more frequently and with greater confidence, emphasizing authority and certainty. Women may frame assertives with hedging or qualifiers (e.g., "I think", "It seems"), to convey politeness or mitigate the force of the statement.
Directives	The speaker makes an attempt to get the subject to do something by expressing his/ her wish.	suggest, request, ask, invite, advise	Men may use more direct and commanding forms of directives, reflecting a hierarchical or task-oriented approach. Women are more likely to use indirect or polite forms of directives (e.g., "Could you please...?"), emphasizing collaboration and relationship maintenance.
Commissives	The speaker commits to take a future action.	promises, hopes/wishes, commitments	Both genders may use commissives (e.g., promises or offers) in ways that align with traditional roles, with women often focusing on nurturing commitments and men on task-oriented agreements.
Expressives	The speaker expresses a variety of psychological states.	apologize, compliment, criticize, express positive feelings, express negative feelings, wishes	Women tend to use expressives more frequently, reflecting their greater emphasis on emotional expression and relational dynamics. Men may use expressives less often or in a more restrained manner, focusing on situational appropriateness or self-presentation.
Declarations	The speaker brings about a change in the world via words.	declare, baptize, abdicate	Gender differences in declarations are context-dependent, often influenced by societal roles and access to authority. Men, historically more likely to occupy formal positions of power, have greater opportunities to use declarations that affect social reality.

Source: Searle (1969); Holmes (2013), Gborsong (2016).

Searle's framework (Table 1) not only provides an objective basis for analyzing language but also highlights the social and cultural constructs underlying gender differences in communication. It continues to inform interdisciplinary research in linguistics, sociology, and gender studies.

Negotiation is a fundamental aspect of business interactions, requiring individuals to engage in effective communication and employ various speech acts to achieve desired outcomes (Fells & Sheer, 2019). These speech acts involve the use of language to express intentions, make offers, provide information, seek clarification, and reach agreements. By understanding and utilizing different speech acts, negotiators can navigate the complexities of a negotiation and establish rapport, build trust, and effectively convey their interests and perspectives. Additionally, speech acts play a crucial role in managing conflicts, resolving disputes, and finding mutually beneficial solutions. Furthermore, speech acts can help negotiators establish a positive and productive atmosphere during negotiations by fostering open dialogue, active listening, and constructive feedback. Overall, speech acts are a powerful tool in business negotiations as they enable negotiators to convey their intentions, gather information, make offers, and reach agreements in a way that facilitates effective communication, builds relationships, and ultimately achieves desired outcomes (Bardovi-Harlig, 2019). In any negotiation, the use of speech acts plays a vital role in shaping the outcome and promoting effective communication between parties involved. Whether negotiating a deal, resolving conflicts, or reaching agreements, effective communication is crucial (Searle, 1969) (Twitchell et al., 2013) (Teodorescu, 2014) (Mandel, 2019).

3.3 *Shark Tank Vietnam – a genre of negotiation*

Shark Tank Vietnam is a practical talk show, a Vietnamese version originated from Shark Tank, an American business reality television series. The show features a panel of investors called "sharks", who decide whether to invest as entrepreneurs make business presentations on their company or products. The reality show is vivid and natural, capable of clearly expressing gender language characteristics in groups of people

communicating in negotiations. The study's material was collected from episodes of Shark Tank Vietnam Season 3, which aired from October 7, 2018 to May 12, 2019 on VTV3 television.

As in van Eemeren's negotiation model, the negotiations in Shark Tank Vietnam are divided into three stages: *Introduction*, *Information Exchange*, and *Negotiation*. The scope of this article's research on gender-language characteristics is limited to the Negotiation phase.

4 Methods

A descriptive mixed method was adapted in the current research to identify gender differences in the use of speech acts in negotiation conversations. Data from 10 Vietnamese pitch conversations from episodes 1 to 5 in the Shark Tank Vietnam Season 3 program was recorded and transcribed. After transcribing the tapes, the utterances (in the forms of words, phrases and sentences) of the investors (sharks) and the players were identified and classified according to Searle's speech acts functions based on 5 types (Assertives, Directives, Commissives, Expressives, Declarations). Besides, Directives speech acts are also categorized into direct and indirect speech acts based on Yule (1996). The coded data were then analyzed quantitatively with the independent samples t-test in SPSS to check significant differences by gender in both investors/sharks' and players' speech acts. Then the most frequent speech acts would be chosen to compare and illustrate the different speech features according to gender and roles in negotiations. Besides, conversation analysis and contrastive analysis were used to describe speech/utterances in the interactions between sharks and players to clarify main speech acts in negotiation conversations and identify the similarities and differences in negotiating interactions between males and females in both roles.

In the Shark Tank program as a genre of negotiation (van Eemeren & van Haaften, 2023), there are four main parts including: opening stage (presenting offer), confrontation stage (exchanging information), bargaining/argumentative stage, and concluding stage (accepting or refusing offer).

Participants in Shark Tank Vietnam all have certain characteristics of social position, occupation, and purpose of attending the show. Investors (called sharks) are entrepreneurs or managers who have capital invested in projects in the program. They are all social influencers having assets and high positions in society. The number of investors in the program is 5, of which three are males and two are females. Player(s), a total number of 4 women and 6 men, is one or a group of startups who have had experience or established a company for 1-3 years, registering to participate in the program with the purpose of calling and persuading investors to accompany and participate in investment for their projects. They are also the founders and operators of the company.

5 Results

5.1 Summary of results

Table 2 illustrates the frequency analysis of the five types of speech acts by gender from players' and sharks' roles during bargaining, the most interactive stage. Of those, Assertives, Directives, and Expressives are the most used in sharks' and players' utterances. The χ^2 test with $p = .223$ shows that there were no differences in male and female sharks' speech acts in the negotiating phase. However, there is a significant difference between male and female players ($p < .001$). In general, when male and female negotiators are in the role of soliciting investments, they have different speech features; whereas those in the role of deciding the investment (assumed to have more power in making decisions) show no differences in speech styles.

At the position of calling investment, male and female negotiators' speech acts were different in the following ways:

- Assertives: Female players give opinions, present, explain, etc. more than male players.
- Directives: Male players use more directive speech acts, which make effects or force the listeners to do something after getting the message.
- Commissives: Male players commit or promise twice as much as females do.

Table 2: Distribution of speech acts by male and female sharks and players in the negotiating phase.

Speech acts	Players				Sharks/Investors			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Assertives	76	31.4 %	132	58.9 %	344	32.8 %	68	28.3 %
Directives	88	36.4 %	30	13.4 %	304	29.0 %	64	26.7 %
Commissives	32	13.2 %	14	6.3 %	134	12.8 %	40	16.7 %
Expressives	42	17.4 %	48	21.4 %	254	24.2 %	62	25.8 %
Declaratives	4	1.7 %	0	0.0 %	14	1.3 %	6	2.5 %
Total	242	100 %	224	100 %	1050	100 %	240	100 %
$p (\chi^2 \text{ test})$	0.000				0.223			

Source: Author's work.

- Expressives: Female players show their feelings or emotions more than males.
- Declaratives: No differences (limited number)

For detailed analysis into each type of speech acts, gendered language is illustrated according to each group of participants in the negotiations. Independent-samples t-test and descriptive analysis were applied to all categories of speech acts.

5.2 Gender differences in assertive speech acts in negotiations

5.2.1 For players

The χ^2 test with p -value of .000 demonstrated a gender difference in utterances containing assertive speech acts. Figure 1 shows that male and female players mainly perform assertive speech acts of presenting, explaining, replying, and affirming. Gender differences can be summarized as follows:

- Male players comment more than females.
- Female players present, affirm, explain, reply, and agree more than males.
- The frequencies of the assertives of informing, negating, admitting, telling, boasting and intending ($\sim 0\%$) are too low to be compared.

5.2.2 For investors (sharks)

The p value of the χ^2 statistic is .000, which shows that there are several differences in assertive speech acts between male and female investors. Figure 2 illustrates that both male and female investors comment and explain at high rates during the negotiating stage. Gendered features in Assertives can be generalised as follows:

- Male sharks/investors negate, explain, tell, boast and comment more than female ones.
- Female investors affirm, tease, offend, and agree more than male ones.

Findings of gender characteristics in assertive speech acts share similarities to the communication and negotiation styles of each gender in previous studies, that is, men communicate and speak with a focus on solving problems while females' communication is more about compromise and collaboration. Moreover, the gendered language features are different in different positions/roles in communication. Male sharks, assumed to be more powerful or active in conversations, tend to negate, boast, comment more than females, while female players who want to get the investment and try to persuade the listeners affirm and explain more than males.

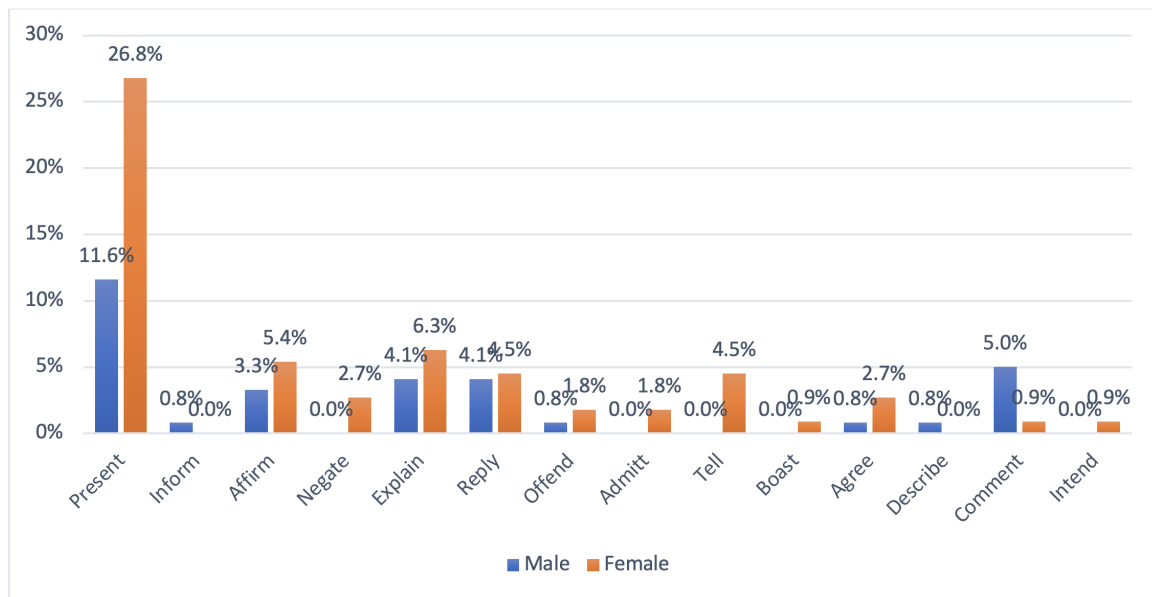


Figure 1: Distributions of assertives in players' speech by gender in the negotiating phase. Source: Author's work.

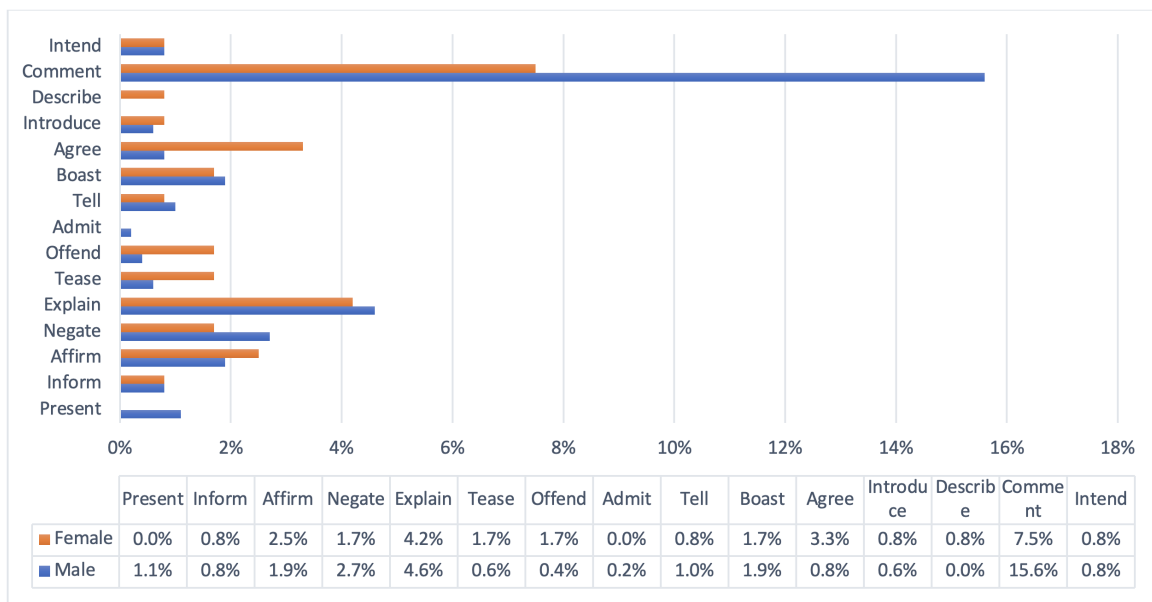


Figure 2: Distributions of assertives in sharks' speech by gender in the negotiating phase. Source: Author's work.

5.3 Gender differences in directive speech acts in negotiations

5.3.1 For players

A χ^2 test with p value of .002 shows the presence of gender differences in using directive speech acts in players' utterances. Males and females both use a large number of asking, bargaining, desire speech acts (Figure 3). From the detailed analysis, we can infer several features:

- Males use more bargaining, asking for permission, and asking speech acts than females.
- Females offer and want more than males.

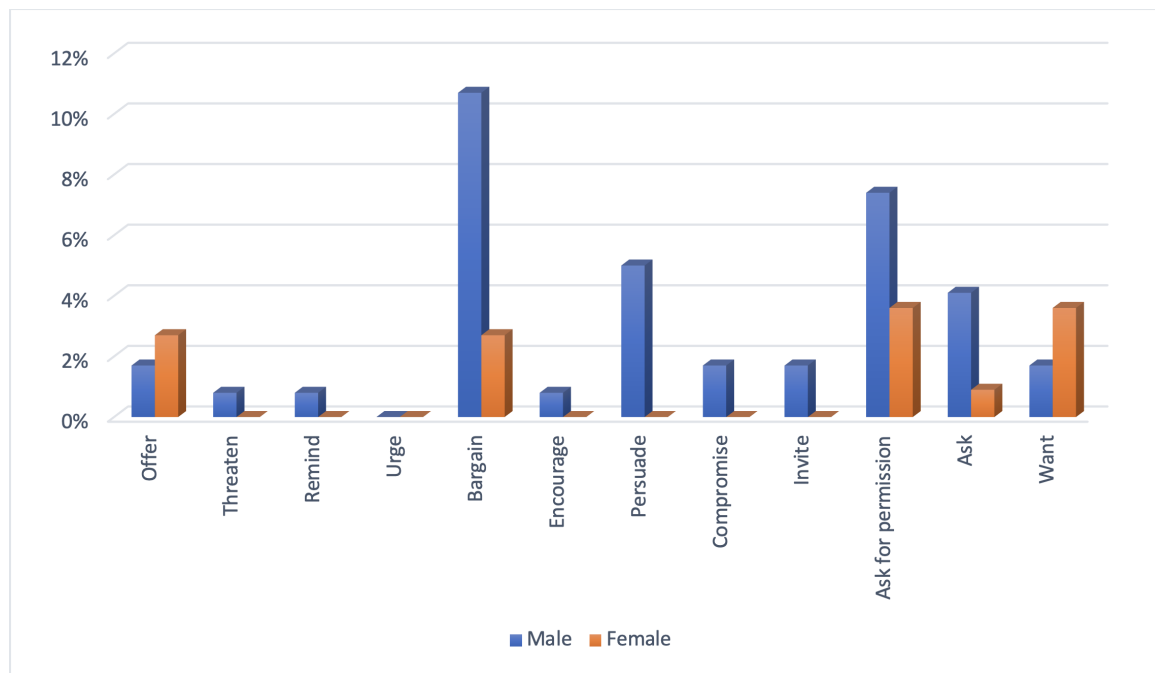


Figure 3: Distribution of directives in players' speech by gender in the negotiating phase. Source: Author's work.

5.3.2 For investors

A χ^2 test with p value of .000 shows the existence of gender differences in sharks' directive speech acts during the negotiating phase in which sharks mainly offer, ask, advise and want the players to do certain actions. The statistics in Figure 4 display several gender features in sharks' directive speech acts, as follows:

- Males ask and advise more than females.
- Females offer, threaten, encourage, compromise, and want more than males.

Table 3: Distribution of sharks' and players' direct and indirect directives by gender in the negotiating phase.

Directives	Players				Sharks			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Indirect	24	27.3 %	2	6.7 %	36	11.8 %	2	3.1 %
Direct	64	72.7 %	28	93.3 %	268	88.2 %	62	96.9 %
$p = .019$					$p = .037$			

Source: Author's work.

To assess the direct and indirect styles of directive speech acts in sharks' and players' utterances, χ^2 tests were applied to 486 directives which were classified and coded into indirect and direct, as illustrated in Table 3. The findings indicate there are gender differences in indirect and direct directives. Direct ones were the most used by both genders, but females in Shark Tank Vietnam show more straightforwardness than the males:

- Regarding direct speech acts, the investors/sharks perform clearly through exact verbs with denotative meaning such as "*I offer, I want, I advise you...*" to implement illocutionary acts. For example, sharks use directive speech acts to give a recommendation: "*Shark offers to invest 1 million for 5 % and if there is a next round, we will go to the end*". Similarly, the players refuse and request through using a question and desire in speech: "*I am expecting whether there are any more attractive offers?*"

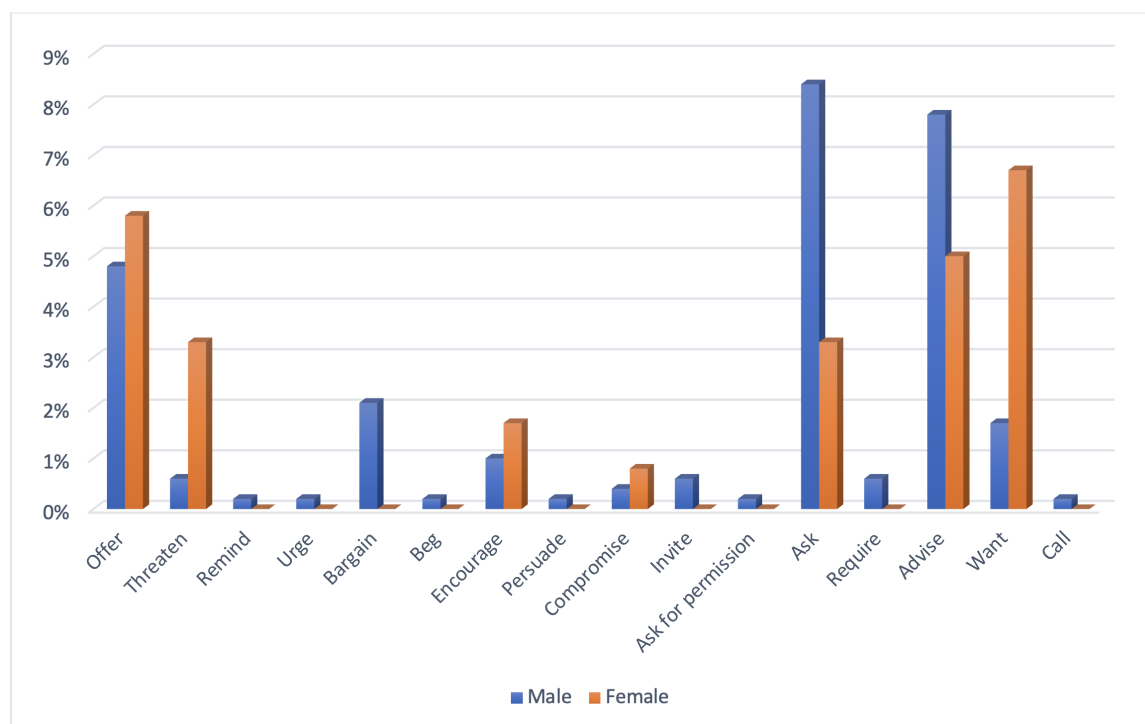


Figure 4: Distribution of directives in sharks' speech by gender in the negotiating phase. Source: Author's work.

- Regarding indirect speech acts, the investors/sharks used locutory speech acts for other purposes. For example, female sharks used indirect speech acts to motivate the players to agree or accept their offers: *"In fact, my offer of 35 % is very supportive"*, or to threaten the players to think about accepting an offer *"If you don't accept the offer, I am sure that we have to stop here."* In the examples, female sharks used comments or statements to imply the effects on listeners' decision. In another example, male sharks use re-offering acts indirectly through the question *"Why don't I rather take 1 million for 20 % discount to swing trade?"* This helps the shark avoid direct requests or suggestions.

As can be seen, sharks and players of both genders tend to use direct directives which are a common linguistic feature in negotiations. Particularly, females talk more directly than males, which is opposed to earlier findings about indirect speech as female speech style.

From the analysis of directives, there are significant gender differences in directive speech acts showing different speech styles of the genders. Males stereotypically demonstrate clear wants and needs to achieve their aims in negotiations, while females in positions of both sharks and players use directness, power in their utterances, although they also use a variety of conciliatory or cooperating speech acts in negotiating such as motivating, encouraging, desiring, etc.

5.4 Gender differences in commissive speech acts in negotiations

5.4.1 For players

The χ^2 test with a p value of .012 shows a statistically significant gender difference in commissives in players' speech. The results in Figure 5 illustrate that the players mainly promise, commit or agree to cooperate in the future. Analyzing gender features of Commissives, the findings can be summarized as follows:

- Male players show more hopes and commitments than females, which implies that player males are stronger and more determined than females in persuading sharks to invest in the projects.
- Female players have more agreements (accept) on future cooperations than males, which indicates that females are more cooperative and compromising in negotiations.

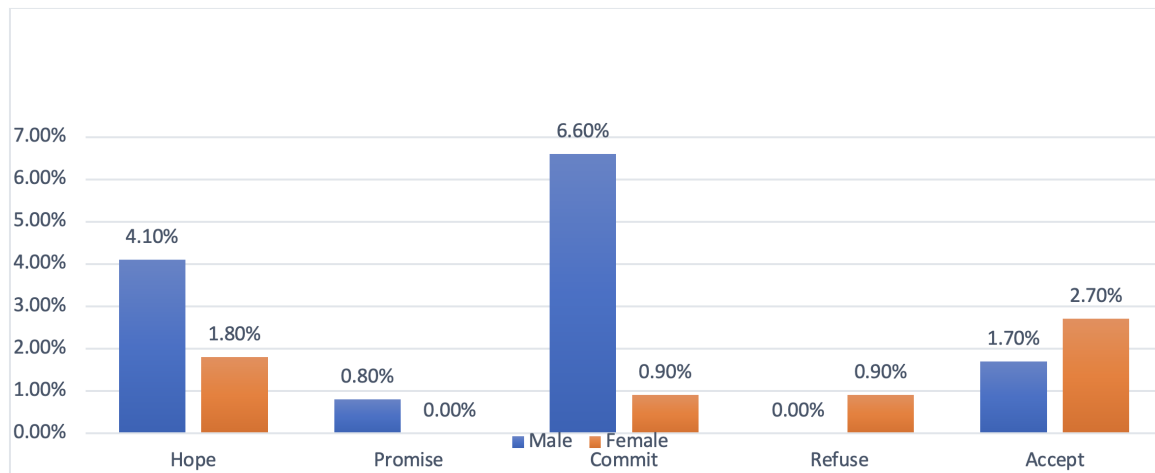


Figure 5: Distribution of commissives in players' speech by gender in the negotiating phase. Source: Author's work.

5.4.2 For investors

The χ^2 test with a p value of .000 shows that there are significant differences between male and female sharks' commissive acts. Specifically, female sharks promise and commit more than males while male sharks refuse more than females (Figure 6).

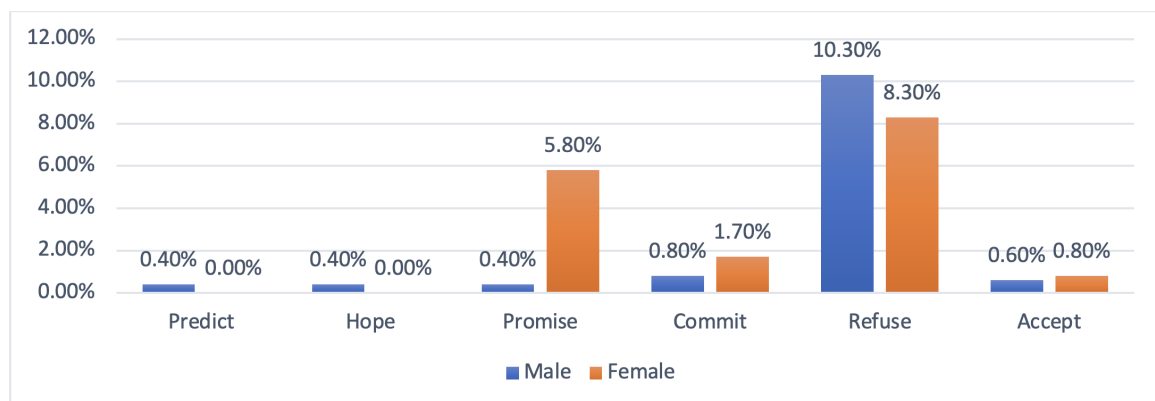


Figure 6: Distribution of commissives in sharks' speech by gender in the negotiating phase. Source: Author's work.

5.5 Gender differences in expressive speech acts in negotiations

5.5.1 For players

The p value of the χ^2 test is .174 meaning there is no statistically significant gender difference in expressive speech acts in the players' utterances.

5.5.2 For investors

The p value of the χ^2 test, .006, indicates gender differences in expressives in sharks' speech. Figure 7 shows that sharks use expressions such as complimenting, criticizing, wishing, and thanking during this stage. When we compare and contrast male and female speech, there are several features that are similar to common gender stereotypes:

- Male sharks criticize much more than females.
- Female sharks express more compliments, desires, and both positive and negative feelings than males.

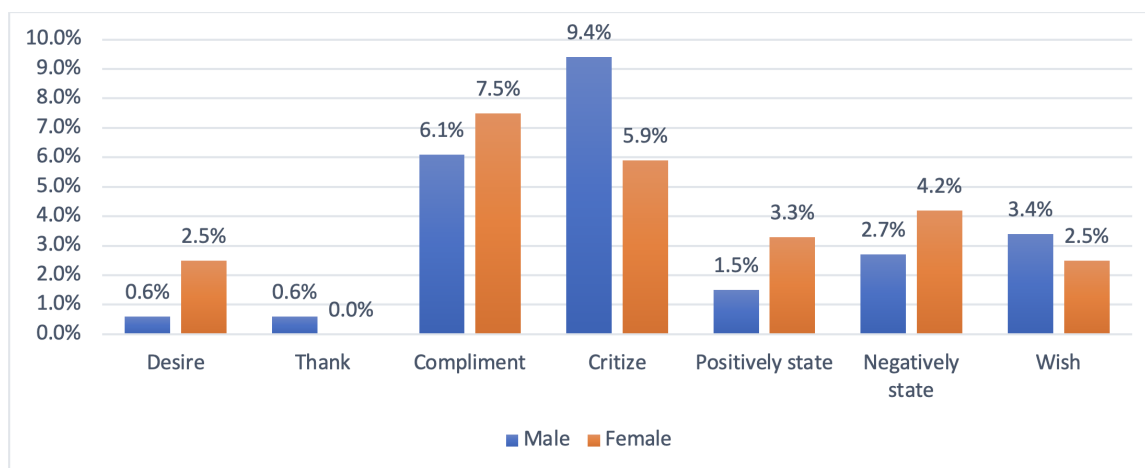


Figure 7: Distribution of expressives in sharks' speech by gender in the negotiating phase Source: Author's work.

6 Discussion

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of the role of gender for negotiations through speech acts analysis in Shark Tank Vietnam. The results provide supporting evidence that male and female negotiators in different roles (sharks and players) applied assertive, directive, commissive, expressive and declarative speech acts differently to achieve their aims during the negotiating phase. In general analysis, some of the results are similar to common gender stereotypes/norms and previous findings as in Rahayu and Fauziah (2021), which indicate that females use more tentative, emotional, commissive language while males use more assertive and direct language.

However, in detailed analysis there are a number of significant findings which we assume may reflect the change of gender roles at work. Male sharks, who are considered to be more powerful than females in decision making, tend to use more assertive speech acts than female sharks. However, male players who ask for investment tend to use fewer assertives than do females. In deeper investigation into assertives, male sharks are more lecturing and give more comments, presentations and negative statements than females, while females state more descriptions, agreements, boasting and reports. One interpretation of these findings is that males in a position of power more often use assertives purposefully in their speech with the aim of giving lectures or showing their power in an effort to influence the player's decisions. In the meanwhile, females still use more gentle and descriptive speech as their norm.

For directive speech acts, male sharks and players both use more directives than females, supporting the view of males' speech as dominant and authoritative. However, for each speech act in directives, female sharks seem to be more dominant in the use of more offers, threats/ warnings than males, but they also use various speech acts to mitigate their language like motivating, showing their wants, and compromising in negotiations. These findings, which are consistent with Farrell (1979), imply that in some cases females at work could employ a male mode of argumentation to achieve their aims in conversations. Still, there remains the question of whether it is indeed power that affects the differences in language styles between men and women in negotiations.

7 Conclusion

The negotiation phase of the examined TV program is a dramatic and competitive period in which the investors and the players use a variety of speech acts to achieve the final goal of the negotiations. To identify significant gender differences in speech acts of negotiating conversations from the positions of sharks and players, the linguistic features of speech acts in the conversations are categorized and analyzed. The results indicate that there are similarities of the gender differences in language use by either investors or players to the norms or stereotypes identified in previous studies. However, there are also novel results

which describe how male and female speech changes in different positions in negotiations. These we can tentatively attribute to negotiators' social position or effort in negotiating.

This study has provided a descriptive and empirical study of gender language in negotiations from the theory of speech acts. Such data are needed to develop a more comprehensive understanding of social changes from the view of language. The findings can help negotiators and teachers to build up knowledge about gender language and styles in negotiations and adjust their negotiating speech appropriately. However, data which are limited in the scope of a reality TV program need to be confirmed on a larger corpus. In the future, the research hopes to be able to expand the scope and volume of the investigation to yield more reliable and valuable findings in the field of socio-pragmatics. From that, the further study can examine the social or cultural effects on gender speech features in Vietnam specifically as well as worldwide.

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