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**GENDER AND CONVERSATIONAL
INTERACTION AMONG NON-NATIVE
SPEAKERS OF ENGLISH**

MASTER'S THESIS

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Indeed, if there is one predictable consequence of a language becoming a global language, it is that nobody owns it any more. (Crystal 2003, 2)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of tables	3
1 Introduction	4
2 Previous research on gender and language	7
3 Methods and materials	10
4 Male and female discourse features	12
4.1 The amount of talk, incomplete causes and reformulations	12
4.2 Interruptions and overlaps	15
4.3 Attitudinal vocabulary	18
5 Conclusions and recommendations for further research	20
6 References	22
7 Bibliography	23
8 Appendix	24

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Conversation codes and details	10
Table 2 Masaitiené's table of the amount of talk, incomplete clauses and reformulations.....	12
Table 3 The amount of talk, incomplete clauses and reformulations among non-native speakers	12
Table 4 Words per minute.....	13
Table 5 Masaitiené's table of interruptions and overlaps in conversations	16
Table 6 Overlaps, cooperative overlaps and interruptions in non-native speakers' conversations.....	17
Table 7 Detailed information on overlaps, cooperative overlaps and interruptions among non-native speakers	17
Table 8 Masaitiené's table of attitudinal vocabulary in conversations.....	18
Table 9 Attitudinal adjectives among non-native speakers	18
Table 10 Distribution of adjectives according to the speech situation	19

1 INTRODUCTION

The second half of the twentieth century saw a rapid spread of English as an international language of communication. Due to complex socio-political and cultural reasons, it quickly gained in importance in business, politics, education, art and other spheres of social and public life. In combination with changes in lifestyle (increased international mobility, greater need for international cooperation in various fields, the emergence of international celebrities) and the fast development of information and communication technologies, English became widely present in the everyday life of many people. Today, English is used extensively and is studied all over the world. It is taught as the primary foreign language in many European countries, it one of the official EU languages, it is the most commonly used language in academic mobility across Europe and it is spoken in a great number of official and unofficial international meetings. In other words, English has become a new *lingua franca*. This causes a greater need to learn the language, as well as more opportunities to do so. People study the language in different ways: mostly in schools, but also from TV, music and the Internet, and as a result have different levels of knowledge. It is estimated that today there are 400 million native speakers of English, and another billion *non-native speakers*¹ in the world (Weiss 2005, xii). This means that roughly one-third of the world's population² uses English for regular or occasional communication (Crystal 2003, 45). This has caused some consequences for the language: simply, it has changed it. Since these changes are happening on such a global level, the question of language ownership has been raised. While some would claim that English belongs exclusively to native speakers, the opposing opinion is becoming more and more popular. English belongs to all of its speakers, and they are entitled to use it in their own way (Jenkins 2001, 3-7). A linguist's task is to describe the changes that occur. It is no wonder then that *global* or *International English* has

¹ Several terms are used to refer to speakers of English whose mother tongue is other than English: L2 speakers or second language speakers refer to English speakers who live in a country that made English an official language. Speakers of English as a foreign language, or SFL, refers to English speakers who learned English as a foreign language, even though it does not have an official status in their home-country (Crystal 2003, 5). The term non-native speakers is used throughout this paper to refer to both of these groups, although the vast majority of analyzed speakers belongs to the latter group.

² These numbers vary depending on what is seen as non-native speakers' "reasonable competence" (Jenkins 2001, 1), i.e. how well they speak English.

been recognized as a language variety by linguists such as David Crystal, Randolph Quirk and Braj Kachru. Although each of them has a different opinion about how to approach this phenomenon and what will the effects of such sudden linguistic expansion be, they all agree that English as a global language is one of many varieties of English and deserves to be studied as such.

This means that International English has the same legitimacy as, for example, British English or American English. As such, it has been researched and analyzed in detail, according to similar criteria as any other variety. Different aspects of this variety have been studied - its origins (Crystal, Kachru); its present state in terms of vocabulary (Weiss); phonology and pronunciation (Jenkins); teaching methods of English as a second language (numerous authors); the style of writing of International English (Weiss); the usage of International English (Todd and Hancock); and finally, predictions for the future of this variety (Crystal, Graddol). This field is developing fast, as the emergence of English as a global language is fairly new. Crystal states that, when he was working on the first edition of his *English as a Global Language* in 1995, there were no other books on the topic; however, several titles were published before the second edition of the same book in 2003 (Crystal 2003, X).

The present study focuses on one aspect of International English that has not yet been fully analyzed: gender-based differences in conversations among non-native speakers of English. A short overview shows that not a lot of research has been done in this field. Gender-based studies of non-native speakers usually focus on second-language acquisition (Arellano) or linguistic replication of what is seen as the masculine discourse tendencies of English (Larchenko). As a result, the present study relies on a similar study among native speakers, especially that of Dalia Masaitienė. It compares results and draws conclusions, keeping in mind linguistic differences between native and non-native speakers, yet acknowledging non-native speakers as a legitimate speech community and International English as a variety in its own right.

Differences in how English is used by women and men have been researched by various linguists, from multiple perspectives and with different results. The development of linguistic research on gender and language is described in more detail in the following chapter. From the early findings that women's language is limited due to lack of education to the most recent ideas that go beyond the framework of dominance and reject power-based explanations of female and male differences in language, all of these studies have one thing in common: they focus on native speakers of English. Information on whether these

differences between males and females exist in the language of non-native speakers is non-existent or at least non-accessible. As English is truly a global language, this seems like a field with many research opportunities. Are gender-based linguistic differences copied from the mother tongues of the speakers? Can they be acquired by acquiring English as a second or foreign language? Could they get lost in this transfer? Are they exhibited differently in spoken and written discourse?

The scope of the present study is too small to tackle all of these issues. Its purpose is simply to check in which way non-native speakers' spoken language compares to or differs from native speakers' spoken language in terms of gender-based linguistic differences. This study juxtaposes the results of the study among native speakers of American English (Masaitienė's *Gender and Conversational Interaction: Checking the Stereotypes*) with the results of the study among non-native speakers of English, in order to analyze whether linguistic gender-based differences are or are not acquired by non-native speakers. This is done by replicating Masaitienė's study on differences in spoken language by male and female native speakers and applying it to non-native speakers. The hypothesis is that since non-native speakers from different European countries³ aged 17 to 49 are a younger generation in which gender roles and social differences have been more levelled than ever, which has increased intercultural competences, as well as a different language acquisition process than native speakers, they are less likely to display gender-based differences in linguistic choices than native speakers of the same age group. The linguistic choices analyzed in the present study are the amount of talk, incomplete clauses and reformulations produced by male and female speakers, the distribution of overlaps and interruptions by gender, as well as the use of attitudinal vocabulary in informal situations. The results are compared to the results of Masaitienė's study among native speakers.

The study begins with a brief overview of the most relevant theories on language and gender from the beginning of the twentieth century to the present day. After that, the results of the study among non-native speakers are presented step by step and compared to the results of Masaitienė's study. Finally, it ends with conclusions and recommendations for further research.

³ See the appendix for details

2 PREVIOUS RESEARCH ON GENDER AND LANGUAGE

This chapter offers a brief overview of linguistic interest in gender-based language differences from its beginnings in the early twentieth century to the modern day. This is a relatively new field, but it is very developed. There are numerous supporting and opposing theories, only a few of which are mentioned here. The ones described in this study are here to illustrate the development of gender-based linguistics, as well as to form the basis of the present study on gender-based differences among non-native speakers.

The origins of the thought about differences in the way men and women speak lie in observations of early twentieth-century American anthropologists. In their study on remote non-Western cultures, they noted that female and male tribe members spoke differently from each other (Holmes 1992, 45). Recent findings on this topic suggest that in some tribes, women and men, in fact, speak different languages. Otto Jespersen was probably the first linguist to describe the differences between Western men's and women's language in his book *Language: Its Nature, Development and Origin* (1922). In the chapter called *The Woman*, he notes "women's preference for more polite expression, their supposedly "smaller" vocabulary and less complex sentence structure and men's greater inclination to use stigmatized forms and slang words" (Masaitienė 2012, 91). His observations in that chapter mirror the culture of that era: women were seen as less important than men, and this belief stretched into all aspects of life, including linguistics. Today, such ideas could be called prejudicial and stereotypical, but back then it was progress to include the female into a study at all. However, Jespersen's observations were mainly based on his intuition and personal experience, not on empirical research (Cameron 1992, 38).

In her 1975 book *Language and the Woman's Place*, Robin Lakoff claims that women use language in a distinctive way due to their insecure position in society. By means of introspective research, she examines her own speech and the speech of her friends, and analyzes it (Lakoff 1975, 4). She has found that linguistic strategies women choose reflect their hidden feelings and attitudes. She focuses on two different aspects of what she calls woman's language: on the way women speak, as well as the way women are spoken about (ibid.). When it comes to the way women speak, she notices that "the use of empty adjectives, superpolite expressions, tag questions and hedges, and exaggerated expressiveness in intonation, when used by women in their speech, present them as uncertain, unassertive and powerless" (Lakoff 1975, 18). In the other part of her study, she notices that words related to women are used as euphemisms. She believes this comes from a certain discomfort that arises

when talking about women (ibid. 24). In this study, Lakoff makes strong conclusions about where these linguistic differences come from:

So here we see several important points covering the relationship between men and women illustrated: first, that men are defined in terms of what they do in the world, women in terms of men with whom they are associated; and second, that the notion of power for a man is different from that of power for a woman: it is acquired and manifested in different ways. (Lakoff 1975, 30)

This idea contributed to the feminist outrage against unequal men's and women's social rights, and a new stereotype appeared in gender and language studies, based on the claim that men dominate in all aspects of life, and that language is no exception (Masaitienė 2006, 294). Lakoff's study belongs to the second wave of feminism. Even though its importance is still recognized, it seems somewhat anti-feminist today: "[a]lthough more sympathetic to women, Lakoff's work suggests they are socially and linguistically more disadvantaged relative to men" (Masaitienė 2006, 294). Mary Crawford claims that his kind of analysis actually suggests that women's verbal communication is flawed and needs to change. However, she recognizes the value of the term *conversational dominance* introduced by that book. In language and gender studies, it refers to the conversational strategies (such as, for example, interruptions in speech) used to concentrate upon power and dominance in verbal communication (Crawford 1995, 48).

A need for a new approach to gender-based language differentiation studies arose in the nineties with the development of the third wave of feminism. Daniel Maltz and Ruth Borker (1998) and Deborah Tannen (1990, 1994, 1998) developed a new theoretical framework: the so-called *two-culture approach*. This approach is no longer connected to male linguistic dominance, and it rejects power-based explanations of female and male differences in language use. Tannen (1990) states that women speak and hear a language of connection and intimacy, while men speak and hear a language of status and independence. She concludes that such communication resembles cross-cultural communication where styles differ. Maltz and Borker analyze issues that are relevant for miscommunication. Claiming that different rules exist in the two linguistic subcultures, they illustrate how misunderstandings can arise on the example of minimal responses or cooperative overlaps in speech.

Imagine a male speaker who is receiving repeated nods or "mm hmm"s from the woman he is speaking to. She is merely indicating that she is listening, but he thinks she is agreeing with everything he says. Now imagine a female speaker who is

receiving only occasional nods and "mm hmm"s from the man she is speaking to. He is indicating that he doesn't always agree; she thinks he isn't always listening. (Maltz and Borker 1998, 422)

These linguists think of the existing differences between how women and men speak as a part of the larger phenomenon of cultural differences and miscommunication. "Maltz and Borker put forward an explanation that Western men and women come from different sociolinguistic subcultures which have different conceptions of friendly conversation and different rules for interpreting it. An analogy is drawn between gender and ethnicity: male and female conversational styles are compared with crosscultural talk" (Masaitienė 2012, 92).

Most recent theories, however, stress that the distinction between gender and sex has to be taken into consideration, claiming that "[p]eople do not have pre-fixed, stable gender identities; they perform them continuously" (Talbot 1998, 150). Gender is not a static category; it depends on various factors, primarily the context. So this thought that "the language of both sexes can change and assume different characteristics depending on specific social situations and the roles people perform in those situations" (Masaitienė 2006, 295) should be in the background of any research on gender-based linguistic (and other) differences.

Difference-and-dominance have often been used together. Over two decades of language and gender research has been overwhelmingly preoccupied with gender *differences*. This has sometimes been inflected with a view of those differences embodying, at the level of individual interaction, male dominance over women in the wider social order. Both the dominance and difference approaches rest on a dichotomous conception of gender; neither problematizes the category of gender itself. (Talbot in Holmes and Meyerhoff 2003, 475)

In order to research language and gender without sexism and prejudice, linguists must stop seeing differences in verbal behavior as bipolar and fixed, and allow that these categories are, in fact, changeable.

3 METHODS AND MATERIALS

The present study analyzes gender-related speech differences among female and male non-native speakers of English. It focuses on speech in non-formal situations, such as meetings with friends, casual conversations between lectures and informal discussions at parties. All the materials are from the Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English (VOICE). This is a "computer-readable corpus of English as it is spoken by this non-native speaking majority of users in different contexts" (VOICE – Project, 2014). Recordings for the corpus were obtained over a period of 8 years from various sources. In some conversations, the researcher was present, and in others not. None of the conversations were planned or pre-arranged. All of the speakers gave their permission to be recorded. In total, two hours of conversation are analyzed for the purposes of this study. This includes nine conversations of different length. Some of them are between female speakers only, some between male speakers only, and some between male and female speakers. The number of participants in each conversation varies from two to five. There are 28 speakers in total, 14 of which are male and 14 female. The following table gives an overview of the analyzed conversations:

Conversation code	Duration	F	M	Words spoken
LEcon329	30:08	3	1	4704
PRcon599	16:52	1	3	2482
LEcon573	09:15	1	1	1731
TOTAL F and M	56:15	5	5	8917
LEcon227	15:30	0	2	2538
PRcon531	04:30	0	2	680
LEcon353	09:42	0	5	1877
TOTAL M	29:42	0	9	5095
LEcon417	17:01	5	0	2392
LEcon418	9:34	2	0	1452
LEcon405	13:43	2	0	1933
TOTAL F	40:18	9	0	5777
TOTAL	126:15	14	14	19789

Table 1 Conversation codes and details

All 24 speakers are fluent speakers of English as a foreign or second language. Most of them live in an international setting (semester abroad or working abroad) in Europe and use English for everyday communication. They are between 17 and 49 years old. Most of them are students, while others are scientists and/or lecturers. In each conversation, all the participants are of similar age, social status and educational background, which minimizes the role of these socially relevant variables (Masaitienė 2012, 92). Detailed information about all 24 speakers can be found in the appendix, as well as in the VOICE database.

The present study is designed to be compared to and contrasted with Dalia Masaitienė's study on linguistic gender-based differences among native speakers. She analyzed twelve "naturally occurring conversations of varied length (the total length of the conversations is two hours)" among young native speakers of American English. The number of participants in each conversation ranges from two to four, and there are mixed-gender, as well as single-gender (both male and female) conversations (Masaitienė 2006, 295 - 296). The present study asks similar questions and follows similar principles as Masaitienė's study:

The study employs the method of conversational analysis, which allows to analyse and interpret turn-taking and amount of talk in conversation, placing special emphasis on close examination of individual cases. The methodology involves the analysis of transcribed recorded conversations and provides explanations for the principles of language organisation that lie behind the cohesion of spoken discourse. (Masaitienė 2006, 296)

Several aspects of speech are analyzed: the amount of words produced respectively by female and male speakers, as well as the number of incomplete clauses and reformulations. In addition to that, two aspects of turn taking are studied: interruptions and overlaps. Finally, the paper deals with attitudinal lexis, as produced by female and male speakers. All the results are compared to the results of the research conducted by Dalia Masaitienė among native speakers of English.

4 MALE AND FEMALE DISCOURSE FEATURES

4.1 The amount of talk, incomplete clauses and reformulations

Speaking about the general amount of talk produced by male and female participants, it should be remembered that an often repeated stereotype says that women speak more than men. However, linguistic research has shown that this is not the case. Some researchers have found that men speak more than women. For example, James and Drakish "found that in adult mixed-gender interactions over 60 per cent of cases showed males talking more than females" (Masaitienė 2006, 296). However, their research was mostly done in formal situations with pre-planned conversations (Masaitienė 2012, 93). Masaitienė's study shows that there are no significant differences in the amount of talk between native male and female speakers. The following table shows that men in informal conversations speak only slightly more than women.

Speakers	Total words spoken	Incomplete clauses	Reformulations
Male	3282	121	70
Female	3195	133	68

Table 2 Masaitienė's table of the amount of talk, incomplete clauses and reformulations (Masaitienė 2006, 297)

In the present study among non-native speakers, the general amount of talk for each person was determined by counting the total number of words spoken by that person and adding up women's and men's results. The findings show that women contributed to conversations slightly more than men did. So the results are similar to Masaitienė's.

Speakers	Total Words	Incomplete clauses	Reformulations
Female	10983	4	18
Male	8806	11	19

Table 3 The amount of talk, incomplete clauses and reformulations among non-native speakers

In order to look at the results from another perspective, the number of words per speaker per minute was calculated. This was done by dividing the number of words spoken per female and male speakers respectively by the number of minutes they were speaking. The results are slightly different than above. They show that men uttered more words per minute in all-male conversations than in mixed-gender conversations, while women on average spoke more in mixed-gender conversations than in single-gender conversations.

Speaker	Words per min/speaker in single-gender conversations	Words per min/speaker in mixed-gender conversations
Female	16	18
Male	19	13

Table 4 Words per minute

The analysis was supplemented by an analysis of *incomplete clauses* and *reformulations*. Incomplete clauses are unfinished sentences on both the level of meaning and grammar. They occur when the speaker stops himself or herself, not when the speaker is interrupted by somebody else (interruptions are dealt with in the following chapter). Below is an example of an incomplete clause from LEcon227:127⁴.

S1: you can do that but then you're never yeah you have to have a mino- i don't know a min- you have a minority government you can have that

In this example, S1 started expressing one thought but didn't complete it. She stopped in the middle of the sentence, skipped a part of it and moved on with the following thought. Instances like this one were counted as incomplete clauses in the present study.

Reformulations are instances in which a speaker starts saying something, but then stops and starts in a new way. In the case of reformulations, the initial intention of the topic stays the same and is eventually fully expressed. Here is an example of a reformulations form LEcon573:43.

S1: it looked like an old hotel of- but very grand with old mirrors and chandeliers and

Here S1 started describing a hotel, stopped in the middle of the sentence and continued in a way different than originally intended. Cases like this one were counted as reformulations in the present study.

While incomplete clauses and reformulations are a fairly common occurrence in spontaneous informal speech, they can be quite telling of various characteristics of a given conversation. Depending on how many incomplete clauses and reformulations a speaker produces, conclusions can be drawn about the speaker's attitude towards the group, the speaker's level of confidence and the speaker's ability to present herself or himself verbally. In gender studies, these instances have a deeper meaning:

⁴ The number 127 is the line number in the conversation.

Unfinished sentences and reformulations are known to be elements of spontaneous spoken discourse in general, yet one of the claims of gender studies is that women leave more unfinished sentences as a demonstration of their indecisive and non-assertive mode of speaking. It was found out, however, that the distribution of these patterns among men and women is very similar: the women used slightly more unfinished sentences while the men used more reformulations. (Masaitienė 2012, 92)

The study among non-native speakers, however, shows contradictory results. While the number of reformulations is similar in both the female and male speaker groups, the number of unfinished clauses is significantly higher amongst male speakers. This also deviates from Masaitienė's findings among native speakers. In her study, both the female and male speakers uttered approximately similar amounts of interrupted clauses.

Finally, it should be noted that there is a significant difference between the amount of incomplete clauses and reformulations in the two studies. It seems that native speakers tend to produce many more incomplete clauses and reformulations than non-native speakers.

4.2 Interruptions and overlaps

This part of the study deals with the mechanism of turn-taking. In most cases, speaker change takes place "only at the end of turn constructional units which may be words, phrases, clauses and sentences", and are called transition-relevance places (Sachs, Schegloff and Jefferson 1974 in Masaitienė 2012, 94). It can, however, happen that the new speaker misjudges this point when she or he can start speaking, thus *overlapping* with the person speaking at the moment. In multi-speaker conversations, it can also happen that more than one speaker uses this opportunity. In this case, the speakers overlap each other for a brief period of time, and finally one takes over (or is given the chance to speak by other speakers). Since the norms of conversation do not tolerate substantive simultaneous talk, these overlaps usually last for a few seconds only (Masaitienė 2012, 94). Here is an example of two overlaps caused by a misjudged transition-relevance place from LEcon329:162 - 164.

S2: <5>as a nation</5>

S1: <5>no but</5> this ti- but this year <6>we are not going to do well</6> for sure because we don't have a good song

S4: <6>we are not going to do well i think</6>

S2 and S1 both start speaking at the same time, after another speaker has finished her or his sentence. S2 realizes what is happening and gives the floor to S1. The beginning of this overlap is marked by <5>, and the end of this overlap is marked by </5>. In the second instance, S4 starts speaking in a place other than a transition-relevance place, but with the intention to confirm what S1 is saying. S4 allows S1 to finish the sentence. In this case, the overlap is quite long and therefore somewhat obtrusive. However, overlaps that help further conversations do exist and are described below.

Another possible kind of overlap is friendly support to the speakers, or the so-called *cooperative overlap* (James and Clark in Tannen 1993, 238). In this case one or more speakers briefly interrupt the speaker who is currently speaking in order to agree with her or him, to express surprise, disbelief or some other reaction. A cooperative overlap occurs when one speaker briefly interrupts another speaker in order to show her or his interest in the conversation. It can be in the form of a non-verbal approval, short exclamation or repetition of some words or phrases. James and Clarke also note that some evidence does exist to suggest that women are more likely to produce cooperative overlapping talk than men – at least in all-female interaction (Tannen 1993, 10). Here is an example from LEcon329:24 – 26.

S4: and the fact they got them on <7>tv as well</7>

S3: <7>yeah</7>

S1: <7>yeah celebrating</7>

Here S3 and S1 interrupt S4 at the same time, but not with the intention to stop her sentence, but with the exact opposite intention – to show that they are paying attention and that they had noticed the same thing. As Masaitienė hasn't specifically marked this kind of overlap in her study, there are no results to compare in this subcategory. Nevertheless, there is a column in each table listing this kind of overlapping in non-native speakers' conversations.

On the other hand, if one speaker interrupts another speaker in a place other than a transition-relevance place with the purpose of taking over, this is considered an *interruption*. Interruptions are seen as major violations of turn taking and typical signs of dominance. According to the research, they are more common among male speakers (Masaitienė 2012, 94). Below is an example of an interruption from LEcon329:567 - 568.

S2: we have just <6>go through</6>

S3: <6>i am</6> beginning to believe that er there is more than in vienna

In this example, S2 is finishing a thought on one topic, while S3 interrupts with a new one. S3 does not allow S2 to finish, but continues with the second topic, thus depriving S2 of the right to speak. This is considered an interruption in the present study.

The results of Masaitienė's study show that neither male nor female speakers interrupt each other often during spontaneous friendly conversations (in both same-gender and mixed-gender conversations). However, there is a significant difference between the amount of overlaps made by female and male speakers: women overlap the current speaker six times more often than men.

Speaker	Overlaps ⁵	Interruptions
Male	11	4
Female	68	2

Table 5 Masaitienė's table of interruptions and overlaps in conversations (Masaitienė's 2006, 298)

The study of non-native speaker conversations shows different results. There is a difference in how often female and male speakers interrupt each other: in general, male speakers interrupt 100% more often than female speakers. At the same time, the number of

⁵ Masaitienė included cooperative overlaps here with the following observation: "In the conversations where only women participated the overlaps often turned out to be instances of cooperative topic development." (Masaitienė 2006, 299)

overlaps does not differ significantly between female and male speakers. As mentioned before, the subcategory of cooperative overlaps has been calculated separately here (unlike in Masaitienė's study). In the following two tables, it stands independently; the amount of cooperative overlaps has been subtracted from the amount of other overlaps.

Speaker	Overlaps	Cooperative overlaps	Interruptions
F tot	123	123	35
M tot	114	63	73

Table 6 Overlaps, cooperative overlaps and interruptions in non-native speakers' conversations

In the next table, the information from above is analyzed in more detail. It shows that the amount of overlaps, cooperative overlaps and interruptions depends on whether the conversation happened among a single or mixed-gender group of speakers. So when it comes to overlaps, men tend to overlap each other much more than women in single-gender conversations, while in mixed conversations they overlap women more often than each other. On the other hand, women tend to overlap both men and women equally in mixed-gender conversations, while they overlap significantly less in single-gender conversations. When it comes to cooperative overlaps, men use them just a little less often than women in same gender conversations. However, in mixed-gender conversations, men overlap women more often than other men in a cooperative way. In the same way, in mixed-gender conversations women overlap men more often than other women. In all-female conversations, women overlap each other approximately as often as in mixed-gender conversations. And finally, interruptions are used most often by men in single-gender conversations and in mixed-gender conversations. In both single and mixed-gender conversations, women interrupt other female and male speakers less often than men interrupt other speakers.

	Overlaps	Cooperative overlaps	Interruptions
F to F in single-gender	24	36	10
M to M in single-gender	65	28	36
M to F in mixed-gender	35	22	28
F to M in mixed-gender	44	51	13
M to M in mixed-gender	14	13	9
F to F in mixed-gender	55	36	12

Table 7 Detailed information on overlaps, cooperative overlaps and interruptions among non-native speakers

4.3 Attitudinal vocabulary

"Attitudinal colouring of talk through the choice of vocabulary items occurs in descriptive evaluations of the appearance, social values and behaviour of people" (Masaitienė 2006, 297). These evaluations are made by the choice of adjectives and adverbs. Adjectives and adverbs expressing appreciations, judgment and evaluation are called *attitudinal* or *evaluative vocabulary*.

Speaker	Positive evaluation	Negative evaluation
Male	7	4
Female	33	29

Table 8 Masaitienė's table of attitudinal vocabulary in conversations (Masaitienė 2006, 300)

This table shows that female native speakers express evaluation, both positive and negative, approximately four to six times more often than male native speakers. In addition to that, Masaitienė has found "that the most frequently used positive evaluation words both in men's and women's speech are the adjectives *good* and *nice*" (Masaitienė 2006, 299), but that women show more variety in word choice than men. For example, men will use the same adjectives and adverbs in different contexts (most things, situations and people are *good* or *OK*), while women use different ones in different situations (a dress can be *pretty*, *simple* and *elegant*) (ibid., 300).

Speaker	Positive evaluation	Negative evaluation
Female	80	5
Male	29	2

Table 9 Attitudinal adjectives among non-native speakers

The present study reveals similar results. Female speakers are almost three times as likely to use evaluative words as male speakers. Female speakers also show a much greater variety in the choice of words. Right after *nice* and *good*, they often used *interesting*, *cool*, *amazing* and *best*.

As the following table shows, the amount of evaluative vocabulary use is connected to the speech situation: there is a difference in adjective and adverb use between all-male, all-female and mixed-gender conversations.

Speech situation	Positive evaluation	Negative evaluation
F single-gender	48	2
M single-gender	23	2
F mixed-gender	32	3
M mixed-gender	6	0

Table 10 Distribution of adjectives among non-native speakers according to the speech situation

Female non-native speakers use a substantially greater amount of evaluations in both single and mixed-gender conversations, while male non-native speakers use attitudinal vocabulary much more often in single-gender conversations. On the other hand, Masaitienè has found that native female speakers use many more evaluative words in all-female conversations (Masaitienè 2006, 300). Negative evaluations are low in both cases, but it stands out that male speakers used zero negative evaluations in mixed-gender conversations.

When it comes to evaluation, both female and male speakers usually evaluate situations and things, rather than people. When it comes to evaluating people, Masaitienè has found that usually it is the appearance that is evaluated, and almost never character traits (Masaitienè 2006, 300). The study among non-native speakers shows similar results. However, there are occasional, and mostly positive, evaluations of people's character. Here is an example from LEcon329:616.

S1: she is very sweet [speaking of a singer]

Except for the appearance, people's skills and achievements are sometimes evaluated. This is an example of a negative evaluation of somebody's skills from LEcon418:85.

S1: n-n she was like i asked her do you speak english and she was like ah no no just a little bit she was really really bad so yeah but i did my best understanding the german

However, negative evaluations are by far outnumbered by positive evaluations in both studies, no matter whether the speaker is male or female or what the object of evaluation is.

According to Masaitienè, "[t]he use of attitudinal vocabulary is an indicator of high involvement and a rather strong emotional reaction to the topics discussed" (Masaitienè 2006, 300). The present study shows that, in general, female non-native speakers tend to express their stands or emotions towards situations and people much more often than men. Male non-native speakers, on the other hand, use attitudinal vocabulary more often when in single-gender groups.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The results of the study among non-native speakers show that the differences between how male and female speakers use spoken language in non-formal situations are not very great, but that they do exist. Each gender group produces an almost equal amount of words, reformulations and overlaps while talking in both single- and mixed-gender conversations. However, when it comes to the amount of incomplete clauses, interruptions, cooperative overlaps and attitudinal vocabulary, these differences are more obvious. While female speakers are half as likely to leave their sentences unfinished or to interrupt another speaker than male speakers, they are two times as likely to use attitudinal vocabulary (especially in all-female conversations) and cooperative overlaps (especially in mixed-gender conversations). Certain carefulness in front of "the other" can be detected here. What Masaitienė says about the result of her study applies to this study as well:

Still, the main claim of gender and language researchers - that women use language to minimise distance and create alignment more than men do - remains true. This is most strongly felt in the collaborative overlapping in dialogue among women in single-sex conversations. (Masaitienė 2006, 300 - 301)

When it comes to confirming stereotypes about male speakers, the results go in two directions. As claimed by earlier language and gender researchers (Lakoff), male non-native speakers in this study tend to assert dominance by interrupting other speakers twice as often as female speakers. However, male non-native speakers also produce almost three times more incomplete causes than female non-native speakers. This is an unexpected occurrence, as these are usually connected with female uncertainty in conversations. In this case it could be attributed to the speaker's confidence in his speaking skills.

The next step is to compare Masaitienė's study to this one. The present study among non-native speakers of English shows similarities, as well as differences, in comparison to the study among native speakers of English. One of the main differences is a big numerical difference between the two studies. For example, in the same time frame of two hours, non-native speakers (both female and male) produced almost three times more words than native speakers (both female and male), almost ten times less incomplete clauses and between two (female speakers) and ten times (male speakers) more overlaps. These numerical differences could be caused by a number of factors ranging from different cultural approaches to speech to nuances in the level of language proficiency. Further research into these topics should shed some light on such differences in speech among native and non-native speakers. Similarities

between the two speech groups are, on the other hand, more obvious when expressed in ratios. For example, while there is a great numerical difference in how many reformulations were made by native and non-native speakers in each study (70 by native male speakers, 68 by female native speakers; 18 by non-native male speakers, 19 by non-native female speakers), the proportion of how many were made by male or female members of each group is similar (in each study, non-native and native female speakers uttered only slightly fewer reformulations than their male counterparts).

It can be concluded that the hypothesis of this study is only partly confirmed: gender-based differences in conversational interaction exist among both native and non-native speakers but are exhibited in different aspects of speech. Further research into the topic might reveal the reasons behind this occurrence.

As theories on gender and language develop, so will develop the need to confirm the new findings. In the same way, the number of non-native speakers of English is likely to increase in the coming years, and more and more studies of International English will be necessary. Due to so many changes, as well as the speed at which they are occurring, it would not be surprising that results of a similar study would show different results in five or ten years. This is why it would be interesting to analyze the processes in the background to understand what causes these changes and in which way, whether these factors depend on each other, and possibly to predict whether differences between linguistic choices of native and non-native speakers will increase or decrease. Finally, at this point it can be safely concluded that gender-based linguistic differences among both speech groups are diminishing in comparison to studies done just a few years earlier, and it is likely that this trend will continue in the future.

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8 APPENDIX

All the recording information in the Appendix is taken from the VOICE - Project.

Recording LEcon329

Duration: 00:30:08

Date: 2006-05-20

Equipment: Portable minidisc recorder with electret condenser stereo microphone

Recorded by: R11

Text Classification

Domain: leisure

Speech Event Type: conversation

Setting

Country-Code: MT

City: -

Locale: car

Activity: driving around, taking pictures, looking at sights

Speaker Information

Speakers: 4

Interactants: 4

Identified

ID	Sex	Age	L1	Role	Occupation
S1	female	35-49	mlt-MT	participant	
S2	male	35-49	mlt-MT	participant	
S3	female	17-24	scc-RS	participant	student
S4	female	17-24	mlt-MT, eng-MT	participant	student

Speakers Not Identified

SS

Power relations: fairly symmetrical

Acquaintedness: acquainted

Creation History

conversion to XML:

SM

proof-reading: MLP

checking: TK

transcription: ABa

Event Description

Words: 4704

This conversation takes place when a Maltese family shows a Serbian student parts of Malta. They are driving around by car and stop at several places to take pictures or to explain something. The conversation about Maltese sights and places is interspersed with short exchanges about other topics such as sports or the university. Sometimes noises of other cars can be heard.

Recording PRcon599

Duration: 00:16:52

Date: 2004-05-11

Equipment: Portable minidisc recorder with electret condenser stereo microphone

Recorded by: R9

Text Classification

Domain: professional research/science

Speech Event Type: Conversation

Setting

Country-Code: AT

City: Vienna

Locale: assembly hall at university

Activity: drinking coffee

Speaker Information

Speakers: 4

Interactants: 4

Identified

ID	Sex	Age	L1	Role	Occupation
S1	female	17-24	ger-IT	participant	student
S5	male	25-34	kor-KR	participant	computer scientist
S6	male	Unknown	ger-DE	participant	computer scientist
S7	male	Unknown	ger-DE	participant	computer scientist

Speakers Not Identified

SX-7, SX-f, SX-m, SX-5, SS

Power relations: fairly symmetrical

Acquaintedness: predominantly unacquainted

Creation History

conversion to XML:

SM

proof-reading: MLP

transcription: JH

checking: AB

Event Description

Words: 2482

This conversation takes place at a reception at an international conference on distributed computing. S5, S6 and S7 are approached by S1. After S1 has asked for permission to record the conversation, S5, S6 and S7 continue their conversation. They talk about differences between national university systems as regards PhD positions and professorial positions. After a couple of minutes, S5 turns to S1 and asks her how she knew about the conference. S1 is now actively involved in the conversation with S5, S6 and S7. The topic shifts towards English as an international language, the language of immigrants in Germany and the (un)importance people's accents.

Recording LEcon573

Duration: 00:09:15
Date: 2007-11-05
Equipment: Portable minidisc recorder with electret condenser stereo microphone
Recorded by: R23

Text Classification

Domain: leisure
Speech Event Type: conversation

Setting

Country-Code: GB
City: London
Locale: kitchen in private home
Activity: eating

Speaker Information

Speakers: 2
Interactants: 2

Identified

ID	Sex	Age	L1	Role	Occupation
S1	Male	35-49	ger-DE	participant	
S2	female	25-34	ita-IT	participant	university lecturer

Speakers Not Identified

SS

Power relations: fairly symmetrical
Acquaintedness: acquainted

Creation History

changes for VOICE 1.1: RO
conversion to XML: SM
proof-reading: TK

checking: RO

transcription: AW

Event Description

Words: 1731

This conversation takes place in the morning, in the couple's flat. The style is very informal. The topics are S1's visits to Liverpool and Bristol in the past. S2 also talks about a number of times when she went to Bristol. The conversation ends when S1 has to leave.

Recording LEcon353

Duration: 00:09:42

Date: 2004-11-26

Equipment: Portable minidisc recorder with electret condenser stereo microphone

Recorded by: R15

Text Classification

Domain: leisure

Speech Event Type: conversation

Setting

Country-Code: ES

City: unknown

Locale: private home

Activity: playing with dog

Speaker Information

Speakers: 5

Interactants: 5

Identified

ID	Sex	Age	L1	Role	Occupation
S1	male	17-24	ger-AT	participant	student
S2	male	25-34	spa-AR	participant	student
S3	male	25-34	ger-AT	participant	student

S4 male 25-34 spa-AR participant student

S5 male 25-34 spa-ES participant

Speakers Not Identified

SS

Power relations: fairly symmetrical

Acquaintedness: predominantly acquainted

Creation History

changes for VOICE 1.1: RO

conversion to XML: SM

proof-reading: TK

checking: TK

transcription: AW

Event Description

Words: 1877

This conversation takes place at a party in a private home in Spain. The 5 students from Austria, Spain and Argentina work and live in Spain. The party is held at S4's house. His friends S2 and S5 know the location, whereas S1 and S3, who are friends as well, are here for the first time. S2 and S3 know each other, whereas S1, S4 and S5 meet for the first time. The fact that S2 and S4 are from Argentina triggers a discussion about the Spanish language in Argentina. S4 owns a dog which becomes the subject of the conversation later on. As the party has already been going on for quite some time, the speakers - also those who have met this very evening for the first time - seem to be quite familiar with each other. The atmosphere is relaxed and there is a lot of joking. There is a lot of background noise too, as at times parallel conversations take place.

Recording LEcon227

Duration: 00:15:30

Date: 2005-09-20

Equipment: Portable minidisc recorder with electret condenser stereo microphone

Recorded by: R14

Text Classification

Domain: leisure

Speech Event Type: conversation

Setting

Country-Code: AT

City: Vienna

Locale: pub

Activity: drinking

Speaker Information

Speakers: 2

Interactants: 2

Identified

ID	Sex	Age	L1	Role	Occupation
S1	male	17-24	dut-BE	participant	student
S2	male	17-24	dan-DK	participant	student

Power relations: fairly symmetrical

Acquaintedness: acquainted

Creation History

conversion to XML: SM

proof-reading: MLP

checking: TK

transcription: CHu

Event Description

Words: 2538

This casual conversation between two students takes place in a pub in Vienna. At the beginning, the speakers talk about using English in intercultural situations and share their opinions and perceptions of this matter. They continue their conversation on cultural and particularly political aspects of S1's home country and then compare the political systems and parties in their respective home countries.

Recording PRcon531

Duration: 00:04:30

Date: 2005-10-27

Equipment: Portable minidisc recorder with electret condenser stereo microphone

Recorded by: R19

Text Classification

Domain: professional research/science

Speech Event Type: conversation

Setting

Country-Code: AT

City: Vienna

Locale: room at Vienna University of Technology

Activity: drinking coffee

Speaker Information

Speakers: 3

Interactants: 2

Identified

ID	Sex	Age	L1	Role	Occupation
S2	male	25-34	tur-TR	participant	mathematician
S8	male	35-49	ice-IS	participant	mathematician
S9	female	17-24	ger-AT	researcher	student

Speakers Not Identified

SX-8, SX-2

Power relations: unknown

Acquaintedness: acquainted

Creation History

conversion to XML: SM

proof-reading: TK

checking: RO

transcription: UF

Event Description

Words: 680

This conversation takes place during a break of a mathematics conference. The speakers discuss a mathematical theorem. The speakers are acquainted.

Recording LEcon417

Duration: 00:17:01

Date: 2005-10-05

Equipment: Portable minidisc recorder with electret condenser stereo microphone

Recorded by: R14

Text Classification

Domain: leisure

Speech Event Type: conversation

Setting

Country-Code: AT

City: Vienna

Locale: traditional local restaurant

Activity: drinking

Speaker Information

Speakers: 5

Interactants: 4

Identified

ID	Sex	Age	L1	Role	Occupation
S1	female	17-24	ger-DE	participant	student
S2	female	17-24	nor-NO	participant	student

S3	female	17-24	ita-IT	participant	student of archeology
S4	female	17-24	ger-AT	participant	student
S5	female	17-24	ger-AT	researcher	student

Speakers Not Identified

SX-f, SS

Power relations: fairly symmetrical

Acquaintedness: predominantly unacquainted

Creation History

changes for VOICE 1.1: RO

conversion to XML: SM

proof-reading: MLP

checking: TK

transcription: CH

Event Description

Words: 2392

This informal conversation among female exchange students takes place in a traditional Austrian restaurant at a local winery. Some of the four students (S1, S2, S3, S4) meet for the first time and the speakers are just getting to know each other. They talk about activities and public events in Vienna, their hometowns, traveling plans, tastes in wine and all kinds of leisure activities. Occasionally, the researcher (S5) is asked something and briefly participates in the conversation. There is a rather high level of background noise because many conversations take place at the other tables in the restaurant.

Recording LEcon418

Duration: 00:09:34

Date: 2005-10-05

Equipment: Portable minidisc recorder with electret condenser stereo microphone

Recorded by: R14

Text Classification

Domain: leisure

Speech Event Type: conversation

Setting

Country-Code: AT

City: Vienna

Locale: traditional local restaurant

Activity: drinking, eating

Speaker Information

Speakers: 2

Interactants: 2

Identified

ID	Sex	Age	L1	Role	Occupation
S1	female	17-24	nor-NO	participant	student
S2	female	17-24	ger-DE	participant	student

Speakers Not Identified

SS

Power relations: fairly symmetrical

Acquaintedness: acquainted

Creation History

conversion to XML: SM

proof-reading: MLP

checking: TK

transcription: CH

Event Description

Words: 1452

This conversation between two international students takes place in a traditional Austrian restaurant at a local winery. S1 and S2 talk about different kinds of festival in different countries and cultures. S2 relates a personal festival anecdote. Then the speakers change the subject and talk about their current accommodation in Vienna and local sights they have or

have not visited. There is a rather high level of background noise because many conversations take place at the other tables in the restaurant.

Recording LEcon405

Duration: 00:13:43

Date: 2005-10-02

Equipment: Portable minidisc recorder with electret condenser stereo microphone

Recorded by: R14

Text Classification

Domain: leisure

Speech Event Type: conversation

Setting

Country-Code: AT

City: Vienna

Locale: pub

Activity: looking at leaflets

Speaker Information

Speakers: 3

Interactants: 2

Identified

ID	Sex	Age	L1	Role	Occupation
S1	female	17-24	ita-IT	participant	student of archeology
S2	female	17-24	ger-AT	participant	student
S3	male	35-49	ger-AT	non-participant	waiter

Power relations: fairly symmetrical

Acquaintedness: unacquainted

Creation History

changes for VOICE 1.1: RO

conversion to XML:	SM
proof-reading:	MLP
checking:	TK
transcription:	CH

Event Description

Words: 1933

This conversation between two exchange students takes place at a pub. The two students have just met and talk about a miscellany of topics such as tourism in S1's hometown, settling into a new city, and reasons for coming to study in Vienna.