

BAB V

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

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In this chapter, there are two main parts. First, the summary and conclusions of the research findings and discussion in relation to the research questions are presented. Then in the second part, some theoretical and practical implications of the research findings are discussed with the emphasis on the teaching field, which is related to the researcher's profession in the teaching field.

5.1 Summary and Conclusions

Intended to underline the answers to the research problems, this part contains the depiction of mid-twentieth century American male and female poets' views on gender with two specific emphasis. First, based on the findings and analysis presented in the previous chapter, it can be deduced that there are some similarities and differences between the mid-twentieth century American male and female poets' views on gender. Those similarities and differences are reflected by means of the symbols, metaphors, and similes. Those symbols, metaphors, and similes are used to represent the psychological and social characteristics of men and women as viewed by the poets. Secondly, there are influencing factors that are regarded as the underlying principles behind the similarities and differences. Those influencing factors are based on the relationship between language and gender. As men and women inhabit two different cultural worlds, they practice distinct linguistic behaviors. Thus, the

similarities and differences between the mid-twentieth century American male and female poets view toward gender are the manifestation of their gender-specific linguistic behavior. Moreover, the influencing factors are also referred to the bi-directional or interconnected relationship between language and culture. On one hand, the influences of the patriarchal concept along with its rapid changes due to 1960's feminists' struggle are reflected through the symbols, metaphors, and similes used to represent men and women. On the other hand, there is the tendency for both the male and female poets to utilize symbols, metaphors, and similes to express their positive and negative view toward the cultural concept as to influence their society's view toward gender.

From the findings, it can be described that the mid-twentieth century American male poets view men as having psychological characteristics of being aggressive, strong, rational, and dominant. In describing those characteristics, they use symbols, metaphors, and similes that are positive, masculine or powerful either physically or mentally, such as *young horse, an elephant, a sage, a cunning picture, and Archimedes*.

Similar to the above depiction, the mid-twentieth century American female poets also view men as being aggressive, strong, rational, and dominant. Furthermore, those strong characteristics are also represented by powerful, and masculine characteristics presented by the male poets. Nonetheless, rather than using positive symbols, metaphors, and similes employed by the male poets, the female poets utilizes figures that are less positive in nature. They are used by the female poets to criticize the insensitivity of men such as *wild horse, ivory*

needle hard to pull, shoes, a heavy god grown light, a sort of tune, an ugly enough song, the muffled roaring of deafmutes, and a word in grief language. However, there is also a negative symbol used to criticize men by the male poets, such as *an elephant* that is used by Robert Lowell to refer to men's insensitivity. Moreover, Richard Wilbur criticizes men's weakness toward the physical beauty of a woman by means of similes, *a dunce* and *a stock-boy*. Yet, the negative view toward men's insensitivity is mostly found in the poems written by the female poets.

Next regarding the social characteristics of men, the mid-twentieth century American male poets use symbols, metaphors, and similes that indicate men's superiority in status and their extra-domestic roles. They are for example: *young horse, an elephant, the gift, the present of the ages, and the cunning picture.*

Similar to the above depiction by male poets, the mid-twentieth century American female poets also view men as being regarded by their society as being superior and fit for extra-domestic roles. Yet, rather than depicting the social characteristics by means of positive figures as done by male poets, the female poets criticize men through less positive symbols and metaphors such as *ivory needle hard to pull, wild horse, an ugly enough song, the muffled roaring of deafmutes, a word in grief language, and a heavy god grown light.* Those figures are modified by less positive modifiers to express the female poets' dissatisfaction with the unequal treatment.

In comparison to the depiction on men, women are viewed psychologically and socially different by the mid-twentieth century American male poets. Regarding women, the mid-twentieth century American male poets view them as having psychological characteristics of being passive, parental, sensitive in a negative sense as to be easily damaged, emotional, and submissive. Therefore, they utilize symbols, metaphors, and similes, which are less positive, feminine, or weak in nature, such as *a pale plum, the moon, a lizard, a flower stand, a crystal vase, an exploding rose, and well-water.*

In contrast to the male poets' description, the mid-twentieth century American female poets view women as having distinct psychological characteristics of being aggressive, strong, sensitive in a positive sense as being aware of the feeling of others, and rational. Those traits are expressed by means of positive, powerful and even some of them are also masculine in nature such as *a fine-tooth comb, tigers, bright topaz denizens of a world of green, an elephant, a cypress, curry, pineapple, a handgrenade set to explode, and a rattlesnake.* Nonetheless, there are some female poets such as Plath, Clifton, and Sexton who cannot deny the unequal treatment of their society toward women in accordance with the patriarchal concept. They describe women as having psychological characteristics of being passive, parental, sensitive in a negative way as being easily hurt, emotional, and submissive. As done by the male poets, they describe those characteristics by means of less positive symbols, metaphors, and similes such as *a thin-brown mouse, a riddle in nine syllables, a ponderous house, a melon, a means, a stage, a cow in calf, his*

habit, honey bunch, garbage, next week grocery, wet-brown bag, and an isolated lake. Those figures can be regarded as the female poets' effort to reflect their dissatisfaction with the society's unequal treatment toward women as to gain support from the society.

Moreover on women' social characteristics, the findings show that American male poets present women as having inferior social status. Thus, they utilize symbols, metaphors, and similes that have less positive, feminine and lack of power such as: *a pale plum, the moon, a lively writher, a lizard, a flower stand, an exploding rose, a long-necked crystal vase, curves, well water, bruised violets, and daffodils.* Furthermore, there are no significant changes in their view toward women in which instead of admitting women's equal potentialities especially in extra-domestic field, they only regard their domestic capacities as an earth mother, and men's sexual object. It can be noticed from symbols, metaphors, and similes such as *my love, my moon or more, a lizard, a lively writher, one glossy page, a flower stand, an exploding rose, a long-necked crystal vase, curves, a uniform, and a pale plum.* Even, they criticize the issue of equality proposed by the 1960's feminism. By means of metaphors, *left-handed* and *a bohemian*, LeRoi Jones criticizes women's insubordination that is regarded as a diversion to the expected social nature of a woman.

In contrast to the above depiction, women are described by the mid-twentieth century American female poets as deserving equal social status and having extra-domestic capacities as men. It can be seen from the symbols, metaphors, and similes that are positive in nature and indicate power to reveal

their possession of equal capacities such as *a fine-tooth comb, tigers, bright topaz denizens of a world of green, an elephant, a cypress, curry, pineapple, a handgrenade set to explode, and a rattlesnake*. Even the less positive ones such as *a thin-brown mouse, a riddle in nine syllables, a ponderous house, a melon, a means, a stage, a cow in calf, his habit, honey bunch, garbage, next week grocery, wet-brown bag, and an isolated lake*, are intended to criticize indirectly the unequal treatment toward women.

In conclusion, the similarities and differences in the depiction of the psychological and social characteristics of men and women can be regarded as the manifestation of the poets' gender-specific linguistic behavior as reflected by the use of different symbols, metaphors, and similes to represent men and women. First, the male poets tend to exercise power, domination in their linguistic behavior to maintain their superiority by utilizing symbols, metaphors, and similes, which indicate men's superiority and women's inferiority. Then the second finding is that female poets tend to exercise solidarity in their linguistic behavior to seek equality and maintain closeness by utilizing symbols, metaphors, and similes, which promote equality between men and women. These findings show that in expressing their thought by means of symbols, metaphors, and similes, men and women bring their own cultural world into their linguistic behavior.

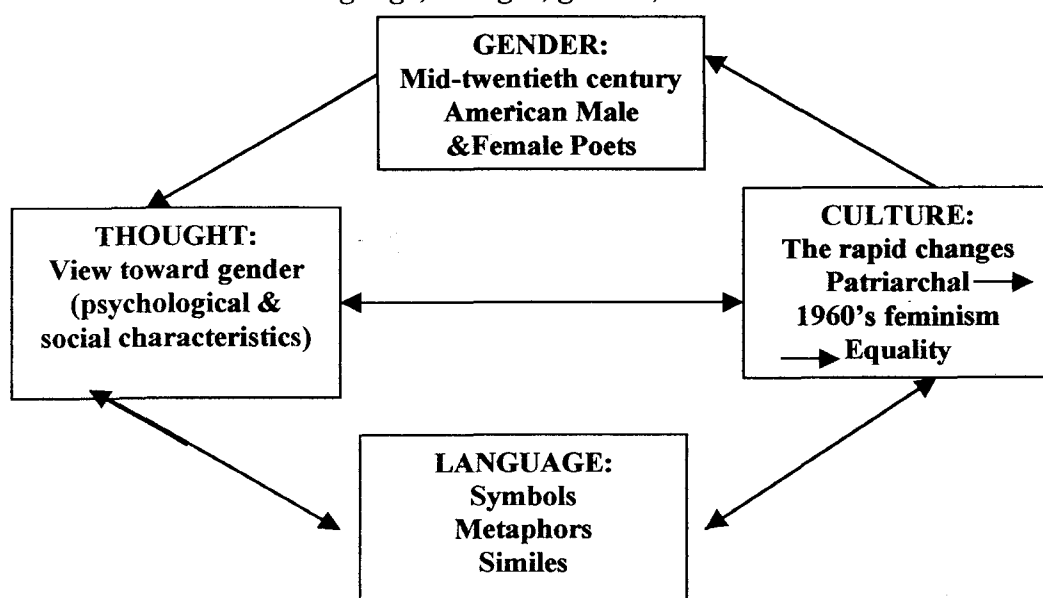
Since the influence of the cultural concept of a society cannot be denied in discussing men and women's linguistic behaviors, the next factor behind the similarities and differences of the American male and female poets' views on

gender is related to the relationship between language, thought, and culture. On one hand, the similarities and differences are viewed as a reflection of the patriarchal concept held by American society during the mid-twentieth century period. Despite their dissatisfaction, even the female poets cannot deny the social reality that men and women are viewed differently and treated unequally by their society. Nonetheless, due to the influence of industrialism and 1960's rebirth of feminism, the American society experienced rapid changes to the status and roles of women and other social aspects in the society. These rapid changes also commonly found in other societies invited pro-contra arguments among the members of the society. On one hand, the figures are utilized by the male poets as their contra-argument against the feminists' struggle for equality in the 1960's. On the other hand, the symbols, metaphors, and similes are also utilized by the female poets to criticize and state their dissatisfaction with men's insensitivity due to their superior status and women's passivity due to their inferior social status. By means of the figures, the female poets attempt to change the unequal treatment of the society toward women and to encourage women to strive for equality as part of the feminists' struggle in the 1960s.

In short, there is a strong correlation between thought, culture, gender, and figures of speech, specifically symbols, metaphors, and similes. In which the expressions of thought of the poets are manifested through the symbols, metaphors, and similes that vary in their characteristics. Furthermore, those similarities and differences in the manifestation of the poets' views on gender are due to the fact that the male and female poets bring their own cultural world

into their linguistic behavior. The gender-specific linguistic behaviors are also a result of the innately predisposed roles of men and women based on the society's cultural concept. Thus, the influence of culture is inevitable in discussing a certain linguistic expression. Here it can also be concluded that the poets' views have some similarities and differences, since on one hand they reflect the cultural concept of the poets' society and its dynamic nature. On the other hand, by means of their linguistic behavior, the male and female poets express their thought and influence the society to support their arguments on the changes in the cultural concept. The relationship between language, thought, gender, and culture as described by the findings and discussion of this study is illustrated in figure 5.

Figure 5: The diagram of the relationship between language, thought, gender, and culture



5.2 Theoretical and Practical Implications of the Research Findings

This study provides theoretical and practical insights for linguists and students of English Language Department who are taking Sociolinguistics, Discourse Analysis, Literary Appreciation, and Cross-Cultural Understanding. Furthermore as for the society in general, this study benefits them in terms of cross-gender communication education. At last, this study also contributes some benefits for EFL teachers.

First, this study provides further theoretical insights on Sociolinguistics for linguists and English Department students, especially on the existing bondage between language, thought, culture, and gender. It is achieved by analyzing the symbols, metaphors, and similes within the context of literature, in this case poetry as a mirror image of the cultural values of its society specifically the concept of gender among mid-twentieth century American society. Furthermore, this study also enriches the issue of language and gender especially concerning the differences in the diction between male and female poets. In this research, it is focused on the choice of symbols, metaphors, and similes employed by the mid-twentieth century American male and female poets in their poems to represent their view toward gender.

Then, this study is dedicated to students of the English Department who are taking Discourse Analysis subject. Especially, the students will acquire input regarding the use of the written forms in serving the function of language as a means of expressing the writer's view and even influencing the society's gender concept. On one hand, American male and female poets as artists capture their

society's concept of gender and depict it in their works by the utilization of symbols, metaphors, and similes representing male and female psychological and social characteristics. On the other hand, the poets also attempt to influence and even change the society's concept of gender by means of those figures.

Moreover, this study enriches the study of Literary Appreciation especially in the use of symbols, metaphors, and similes as a means of reflecting the perception of the poets on a certain issue and the culture of a society. In appreciating those figures, students of literature are also informed on the necessities of considering the poets' cultural background and gender, as to get a maximal interpretation on their poems.

Next, EFL students may improve their cross-cultural understanding on American gender concept especially during the mid-twentieth century as represented by the symbols, metaphors, and similes used in the mid-twentieth century American poems.

Society or laymen can also put the findings of this research into a practical use for the sake of the improvement of humanity values. Through the uncovering of the existing differences between gender in terms of their language, people especially parents can be informed of the importance of educating their children to tolerate and appreciate the gender differences. Through a positive view toward the gender differences, children can be led to establish a better communication across gender.

5.3 Implications of the Findings for EFL Teaching

For teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), this study contributes some theoretical input and suggested techniques to teach Cross Cultural Understanding, Sociolinguistics, Discourse Analysis, and literary appreciation based on the findings of this study.

Nowadays, learning English especially American English has become the necessity not only for educational purposes, but also for business professionals who want to compete in the global market. In learning the language, not only should the EFL students be familiar with English structures or vocabularies, but they also need to know the target language culture, especially American culture. It is because in using the target language, the students should not only be able to produce the language, but they also should be able to use the language in appropriate way both culturally and socially as asserted by Gerdi Quist (2000). With the result of this study, EFL teachers can acquire input on American cultural concept toward gender. Furthermore, they can also develop a learning activity for Cross-Cultural Understanding subject. EFL teachers can introduce American cultural concept toward gender by asking the students to analyze the symbols, metaphors, or similes that are used to represent men and women. The figures can be found not only in poems as done by the researcher in this study, but EFL teachers can also use songs. As the students can do their own mini-research in obtaining the cultural concept, the transmission of the knowledge can encourage them to be active and cooperative with other students. The students can compare the result of their analysis with the other students and draw their

own conclusion on American cultural concept toward gender. Here, EFL teachers can act as the facilitator of the students' learning instead of being the only source of information. In short through this learning activity, the students can learn to think logically and develop an aesthetic appreciation of the target language as suggested to be done in language teaching by Gerdi Quist in his article entitled *Language Teaching at University: A Clash of Cultures* (2000)

Moreover, the findings of this research can be used by EFL teachers as a means of introducing the concept of language, thought, gender, and culture in a more interesting way for Sociolinguistics and Discourse Analysis students. EFL teachers can ask the students to analyze the symbols, metaphors, and similes that are used to represent a certain issue. By doing the analysis, the students can know the poets' views on the issue and learn the relationship between language and thought. They can also do a comparison between the characteristics of the figures that are used by male and female poets. By doing this activity, the students can be familiarized with the gender-specific language behavior. Finally, the students can also be introduced to the bi-directional relationship between language and culture through this activity.

At last, based on the findings of this research on the relationship between figures of speech, thought, culture, and gender, EFL teachers can lead their students to a better understanding and appreciation of the literary works especially poems. In facilitating the students in appreciating a poem, EFL teachers can assign them to do a mini-research. First, the students can be asked to look for references and historical documents on the poet's social and cultural

background. The students can also learn about the setting of the poem through the references. Afterward, EFL teachers can ask the students to present their findings in the classroom and then summarize them. Referring to the findings, the students can acquire a better understanding of the poem, and the accuracy of their interpretation can also be improved. Besides the above activity, students of Literary Appreciation can also be introduced to the existence of the differences between male and female poets in the way they express their view by means of symbols, metaphors, and similes. EFL teachers can ask the students to do a comparative analysis on the symbols, metaphors, and similes that are used by male and female poets in expressing their views.

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