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*Sociolingvistička analiza rodni razlika na primjerima
savremene američke drame / Sociolinguistic Analysis of
Gender Differences on the Examples of Contemporary
American Drama*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Sociolinguistics is a branch of linguistics which is concerned with the relationship between language and society. In the simplest terms, society is the collective of people living together in a (somewhat) ordered manner. Society has a set of rules for the people who are a part of it; some rules are concerned with the society as a whole, some rules are for individuals and some are for different groups. As the society and its rules are created by humans, it is flawed as humans are, including the different position of different groups and individuals within it.

This final diploma paper will focus on gender and sociolinguistics, the relationship between the two and will seek to analyse two contemporary dramas from the sociolinguistic viewpoint. The dramatic works concerned are *I Dream before I Take the Stand* by Arlene Hutton and *M. Butterfly* by David Henry Hwang.

The aim is to show that a genuine representation in dramatic texts is not possible without consulting the sociolinguistic body of research. The two dramatic texts analysed can be considered successful examples, which is why they were chosen for this paper, since the authors use of language in dialogues is in line with the findings of sociolinguistic research when it comes to the differences in which men and women use language. The authors also used language in such a manner that it emphasized the other layers of societal norms, such as ethnicity and specificities connected with the courtroom setting.

2. AN OVERVIEW OF SOCIOLINGUISTIC THEORIES OF GENDER

Sociolinguistics, a branch of linguistics, studies the relationship between the language and society. The focus on the society is extremely relevant to today's world, since the human interactions and constructs have never been under such scrutiny, as they are today. Sociolinguistics explores the different uses of language in different social contexts and the reasons behind it. Its findings contribute to the better understanding of the way our society works, about the social relationships in a community (formed on any grounds), and about the construction of social identities through the use of language.¹

In particular, sociolinguistics often focuses on the language users through the lens of different social factors influencing the use of different varieties. Some of the aforementioned factors are related to the users of language themselves, while others are related to its uses, i.e. to the social setting and the function of the interaction. There are also other factors of great importance, such as the position of the interlocutors within the social context (*Who is talking? To whom are they talking?*), the setting or the social context of the language use (*Where are they talking?*), the purpose of the interaction and the topic of the interaction (*Why are they talking? and What are they talking about?* respectively). These factors can be observed in the context of speech, as well as in the context of a written exchange.²

There are also four different social dimensions which, in addition to the previous components, need to be noted and considered when analysing different sociolinguistic issues. The aforementioned are:

1. A social distance scale concerned with participant relationships (Intimate/High solidarity vs. Distant/Low solidarity)
2. A status scale concerned with participant relationships (Superior/High status vs. Subordinate/Low status)
3. A formality scale relating to the setting or type of interaction (Formal/High formality vs. Informal/Low formality), and

¹ Holmes, Janet. *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. Routledge (New York, 2013). p. 1. Print.

² *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. pp. 8-9.

4. Two functional scales relating to the purposes or topic of interaction. (Referential scale: High information content vs. Low information contents; Affective scale: Low affective content vs. High affective content).³

This would mean that there is a difference in the use of language depending on the context and interlocutors. There is a difference in the manner we speak with people who are from the same neighbourhood or village and with people who we perceive to be foreigners, we would use certain phrases, word choices and make grammar choices based on this distinction – we may choose to speak some other language or dialect with someone to indicate intimacy or to signal the distance between us. This is referred to as a social distance scale. In the context of gender, for example, women may choose to refer to other women as “girls” when speaking with women, but always refer to women only as “women” when speaking with men, or using some slang words used only in such context. Such a seemingly small word choice makes the difference between the intimate setting and a distant conversation where a speaker makes sure to keep certain distance in conversation.

Speakers also make linguistic choices based on the status scale, i.e. they speak differently with people they perceive to have the same status as them or higher/lower status than them. For example, a speaker will speak in a different manner with a sibling than with their grandmother or father. In the context of gender relations, men often perceive women to be of the lower status than is the case, so a man executive may use the sentence: “Can you type that up and send me an email with it later today? Thanks, by 3 p.m. please, I’m leaving for Vienna at 4?” when speaking with a new female executive, perceiving her to be an assistant, thus of a lower status.

The formality scale is concerned with the social setting in which we have the conversation. For example, we tend to speak differently in a school, office or church than we do in a pub. The law court (as we will see later in the paper) usually influences our linguistic choices so much that we speak in a highly formal manner regardless of the relationship we have with our interlocutors. In the context of gender, we can use the aforementioned example of women using “girls” when speaking about a group of women to other women, claiming that the same speaker would most likely use “women” in the same place if giving a witness account in the law court before

³ *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. pp. 9-10.

lawyers and a judge, all female in this case.

The last scale we introduced, the referential and affective function scale deals with the function of a conversation. We will make different linguistic choices when giving our boss an account of a seminar we attended and when we do the same to a colleague we share a desk with. Though both accounts likely to have high information content (e.g. “We started with a speech from Dr. James who spoke on the issues women migrants face during the trip across the continent, and then Miranda from the Calais University spoke on the work they did on the Greek islands, emphasizing the need for...”), our utterance will probably have a low affective content when we speak to our boss, as is the case in the previous example, and when we speak to a colleague – e.g. “The morning started with that Dr. James speaking about women migrants and the issues they face. I know, such an interesting topic, and he managed to make it a total snooze. Anyway, Miranda, yeah, the tall one, then gave a presentation on the work they did in Greece, yeah her emails are always lovely; so she said we all should organize the ...”

Sociolinguists have been researching the differences in the way men and women use language, and certain characteristics have been identified when it comes to the way women and the way men use language. When it comes to the use of English language, linguists claim that women are more linguistically polite than men are (they use more polite phrases, e.g. women tend to say “Please, could you pass me the newspaper” instead of “Give me the newspaper, thanks”).⁴ Sociolinguists have found in their research that men tend to use more vernacular forms than women, while women tend to use standard form more than men. There are different theories why that is the case, however, it is clear that women tend to be more concerned with the social function their speech has. Linguists have claimed that women use less vernacular forms than men because they are more concerned with saving their face, because they are more receptive to their interlocutors, or because they are aware that social position and power are reflected in the language use, thus as a subordinate group women are more polite, thus formal, to men, and they try to regain some of the power they are lacking by using the standard language form.⁵ At the same time, sociolinguistic research showed that women use more standard (or conservative, in

⁴ *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. p. 159

⁵ *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. p. 163, pp. 166-171

other words) forms, and that women can at the same time be considered to be the innovators of linguistic change, as some of the characteristics observable in their speech will with time become prevalent in the society.⁶ Additionally, research conducted by Bucholtz showed that women (in this case female high school students from California) tend to use more standard forms in order to separate themselves from the traditional view of women (expressed through labels such as: *feminine, sexy, hot*, i.e. with emphasis on their appearance) and subvert their image asserting their position as intelligent (expressed through labels such as *smart and nerdy*).⁷

Some characteristics are present only in speech patterns, and are not obvious from written correspondence. For example, women use more *-ing [ih]* pronunciations than men and fewer *-in' [in]* pronunciations than men in words like *swimming* and *typing*. Men tend to use more consonant cluster simplifications: e.g. *las' [las]* and *tol' [toul]*, rather than standard *last [last]* and *told [tould]*.⁸ In general, women have higher pitch than men and many girls use higher pitch in the pretend play, mimicking the features of adult women.⁹

In the course of our discussion, we need to mention the concept of the so-called “women’s language”. Robin Lakoff outlines the features of such language, primarily in terms of its lexical and pragmatic features. According to Lakoff, women’s language is characterized by, among others:

precise color terms (e.g. *mauve, magenta*), “empty” adjectives (e.g. *divine, cute*), high-rising terminal (question) intonation on declaratives (e.g. *What’s your name? Mary Smith?*), and use of tag questions (e.g. *It’s hot in here, isn’t it?*). She also notes that women tend to use “hypercorrect” grammar, including standard pronunciations such as *going* rather than *goin’* and avoidance of non-standard forms like *ain’t*. Lakoff holds that women’s language as she describes it is “weaker” than men’s, and so she is often characterized as taking a “deficit” approach.¹⁰

Lakoff also states that other characteristics of women’s language include:

- the use of various kinds of hedges (“That’s **kinda** sad” or “it’s **probably**

⁶ Schilling, Natalie. *Language, gender, and sexuality*. in Mesthrie, Rajend. Ed. *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociolinguistics*. Cambridge University Press (Cambridge, 2011). p. 223. E-book.

⁷ *Language, gender, and sexuality*. in *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociolinguistics*. p. 232

⁸ *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. p. 163, p. 166

⁹ *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. p. 175

¹⁰ *Language, gender, and sexuality*. in *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociolinguistics*. p. 221

dinnertime”)

- boosters or amplifiers (“I’m **so** glad you’re here”)
- indirection (saying “Well, I’ve got a dentist appointment then” in order to convey a reluctance to meet at some proposed time and perhaps to request that the other person propose an alternative time)
- diminutives (*panties*)
- euphemism (avoiding profanities by using expressions like *piffle*, *fudge*, or *heck*; using circumlocutions like *go to the bathroom* to avoid “vulgar” or tabooed expressions such as *pee* or *piss*)
- conventional politeness especially forms that mark respect for the addressee.¹¹

According to Lakoff, the main focus of her research on women’s language is on women speaking tentatively, side stepping firm commitment and avoiding appearing as if they have strong opinions. Being constrained to using language we may call “powerless”, women are disempowered in terms of their position in the society.¹²

The language features mentioned should not be taken as absolutes, since the concept of gender is such that it allows us to see feminine or masculine behaviours in terms of a scale, rather than in terms of absolute categories, as we will see in the later part of this paper. Thus, features usually associated with women or men can be best described as relatively feminine or relatively masculine, respectively.¹³ In case that there are certain features that are considered to be gender-exclusive speech forms, we can speak of a society where the roles of men and women are sharply divided along the “gender lines”, i.e. where there are exclusive gender roles, such as, for example, that only women exhibit a certain behaviour such as taking care of infants.¹⁴

The imbalance of men and women in the way they use language cannot be separated from other power dynamics in a certain context or society in general. Thus, the subordinate position of women in the society in general is further amplified in cases in which a woman is a witness in the court procedure (other witnesses particularly vulnerable to this situational control include children, second language speakers, and speakers of non-standard dialects). The existing strong power imbalance

¹¹ Eckert, Penelope and McConnell-Ginnett, Sally. *Language and Gender*. Cambridge University Press (Cambridge, 2003). p.158. E-book.

¹² *Language and Gender*. pp. 158-159

¹³ *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. p. 159

¹⁴ *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. p. 163

between a witness, on the one hand, and a lawyer or a judge, on the other, is a common theme in the research. The discourse features which exemplify it include:

- Witnesses are typically asked a large number of questions requiring a minimal response.
- Witnesses say very little compared to the verbosity of those questioning them.
- The majority of questions put to witnesses contain already completed propositions.
- Witnesses are not in control of telling their own story.

In addition to question structure, researchers have found a number of other linguistic strategies used by lawyers to exercise control over witnesses, including:

- interruptions;
- reformulation of a witness's descriptions of events or people (e.g. from *my friends* to a *group of louts*);
- manipulation of lawyer silence, for example with the use of strategic pauses;
- incorporation of damaging presuppositions in questions, known in the law as "leading questions" (such as *Did you all laugh while the car was being trashed?*);
- metalinguistic directives given to the witness (such as *You must answer this question*);
- management of topics in order to convey a particular impression to the jury.¹⁵

We can conclude from the previous segment of this paper that men and women operate using different communicative conventions and conversational styles. The sociolinguist Deborah Tannen claims that the causes of these differences can be found in the same-sex playgroups women and men engaged with in their early socialization. She believes that the core values emphasized by girls in their same-sex groups are equality, cooperation and friendship. As a consequence, the conversational styles developed by girls are cooperative and highly interactional, and the girls participating in the conversation encourage the others in the group to speak and all of them building the communication with each other on the basis of their previous communication. Girls place great value on close friendships with other girls, and for that reason, according to Tannen, their conversation is focused more on sentiments, rather than facts, and they develop a greater understanding of the social and emotional messages which can be understood from the conversation, and not only of the literal layer of the conversation's meaning. This is not the case for the boys, as the same-sex social groups they are in are based on competition and hierarchy, which in turn leads to the conversational styles which are more competitive and less cooperative than is the case with the conversational styles of girls, and they exhibit domineering behaviour

¹⁵ *Sociolinguistics and the law*. in *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociolinguistics*. p. 380

through manifestations such as taking long turns when speaking, interrupting one another, abruptly changing the topic.¹⁶ The values the society places on boys and girls steer their development in a certain way, and the values placed on girls such as cooperativeness and focus on the needs of others are of the utmost importance for the members of all the subordinate groups in the society when they are communicating with the members of the superordinate groups, in this case boys, as their conversational dominance stems from societal dominance.¹⁷

The conversational dominance of men over women takes another form in what is now known as mansplaining, defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as:

Of a man: to explain (something) needlessly, overbearingly, or condescendingly, esp. (typically when addressing a woman) in a manner thought to reveal a patronizing or chauvinistic attitude.¹⁸

It is often cited that the idea of mansplaining came from an essay published by Rebecca Solnit in 2008 titled *Men Explain Things To Me*.¹⁹ She explained the meaning of the phrase in an opinion piece published in the Los Angeles Times about a man who explained a book she wrote to her, without acknowledging that she was its author. Many women had similar experiences in their lives so the term took on a life of its own, especially when it comes to women in the family sphere, academia and technology.^{20, 21} We mentioned the different spheres in which women face mansplaining, and consequentially this brings us to the many topics on which women are mansplained to. One of the most serious concerns for the equality of sexes in our society is the topic of mansplaining female bodies to women.

To conclude this section, before we deepen our discussion when it comes to

¹⁶ *Language, gender, and sexuality*. in *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociolinguistics*. p. 225

¹⁷ *Language, gender, and sexuality*. in *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociolinguistics*. p. 225

¹⁸ *Oxford English Dictionary*. Accessed on World Wide Web on July 4, 2018:

<http://www.oed.com/viewdictionaryentry/Entry/59997929>

¹⁹ Solnit, Rebecca. *Men who explain things*. Accessed on World Wide Web on July 4, 2018:

<http://articles.latimes.com/2008/apr/13/opinion/op-solnit13>

²⁰ Rothman, Lilly. *A Cultural History of Mansplaining*. Accessed on the World Wide Web on July 4, 2018:

<https://www.theatlantic.com/sexes/archive/2012/11/a-cultural-history-of-mansplaining/264380/>

²¹ Aware that my readership may be limited to people close to me and some members of the academia, I would suggest that those interested in finding more about mansplaining in academia read the tumblr page on mansplaining which can be accessed on World Wide Web: <http://mansplained.tumblr.com/> (I accessed it last on July 4, 2018) which contains many confessions made by women on the mansplaining situations they experienced.

gender and its features, we must mention that gender interacts with other social factors, such as status, class, race, the role of the speaker in an interaction, etc. and that these different aspects of the social identity of an individual are all of different relevance in the specific social context, and even at the different points within the same interaction. These notions will be further explored in the later segments of the paper.²²

2.1. THEORIES OF GENDER

We had a brief chance to mention that there are certain differences in our linguistic choices based on our interlocutors and context. In order to discuss the gender theories and their relationship with sociolinguistics, we must first discuss the concept of gender in its general meaning. Gender cannot be discussed without the consideration of the idea of sex, as the two terms are related. Thus, both terms need to be defined in order for their relationship to be understood. Oxford English Dictionary defines sex as:

1. a. Either of the two main categories (male and female) into which humans and many other living things are divided on the basis of their reproductive functions; (hence) the members of these categories viewed as a group; the males or females of a particular species, esp. the human race, considered collectively.
4. a. The distinction between male and female, esp. in humans; this distinction as a social or cultural phenomenon, and its manifestations or consequences; (in later use esp.) relations and interactions between the sexes; sexual motives, instincts, desires, etc.²³

For the purpose of our further discussion, this would effectively mean that sex is the state ascribed to humans based on their reproductive organs (a biological category); sex can be used as a term for members of the collective of people with the same reproductive organs, especially for making a distinction between male and female humans (so we usually understand sex as either male or female sex), with regards to their mutual relations, interactions and other.

There are certain problems with the claim that sex is a biological category as it is based on the reproductive organs, one might claim that there is the possibility for

²² *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. p. 173, p. 201

²³ *Oxford English Dictionary*. Accessed on World Wide Web on September 16, 2017: <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/176989>

more than one sex in place of either male or female, in that case, or that, for instance, female sex could be based on reproductive organs as anatomical category. If that is true, we may ask ourselves what the biological significance of chromosomes and hormones is, as they may not be in line with the reproductive organs or since they may be altered in different ways (e.g. hormonal levels, number of chromosomes, depletions of chromosomes etc.). We will not go into the depths of this discussion, but it was important to mention this debate, as it may be reintroduced during the analytical part of this work.

Having defined sex, it is necessary for us to also define gender. Gender is defined in Oxford English Dictionary as:

3. b. The state of being male or female as expressed by social or cultural distinctions and differences, rather than biological ones; the collective attributes or traits associated with a particular sex, or determined as a result of one's sex. Also: a (male or female) group characterized in this way. ²⁴

This would mean that gender is, as expressed in Oxford English Dictionary (OED), the state of being male or female (like sex), but on the basis of psychology or sociology, rather than biology as it is the case for sex. From the definition, we can also see that gender is associated or rather expressed through certain characteristics which are associated with the collective identifying with one of the sexes, thus, according to OED, gender can also be male or female.

These definitions are great starting points, but, from the perspectives of scholars researching the areas of gender and/or feminist studies, neither of these two definitions is quite accurate. Historically, the most notable distinction between the two terms indeed is that sex is the state of being male or female, based on biological traits, while gender is the state of being male or female, based on psychological and sociological traits. Yet, today there is a consensus that there is more than this aforementioned simple distinction, and there are many more layers of gender which need to be explored so that discussion of gender roles could be possible. As we will see in the following paragraphs, much of the discussion of the idea of gender is conducted through the discussion or exploration of the idea of female gender,

²⁴ *Oxford English Dictionary*. Accessed on World Wide Web on September 16, 2017: <http://www.oed.com/viewdictionaryentry/Entry/77468>

especially in the early days of gender and/or feminist studies, including the period before they were introduced as separate areas of social sciences, but rather explored through philosophy, sociology and other disciplines.

Simone de Beauvoir, one of the most notable philosophers to have written on this topic, discusses the nature of “woman” in her epochal work *The Second Sex*, and she writes in the chapter titled *Childhood*, that:

One is not born, but rather becomes, woman. No biological, psychic, or economic destiny defines the figure that the human female takes on in society; it is civilization as a whole that elaborates this intermediary product between the male and the eunuch that is called feminine.²⁵

When it comes to gender and its nature, this was one of the first modern writings on the nature of gender as a social construct. De Beauvoir stated that an individual is not born as a woman, nor is she defined as a woman by any biological, psychological and economic facilities, but that it is the civilization as a whole that defines her. This can be considered a ground-breaking change in the perception of what qualities form the understanding of who a woman is, and it will be a historical basis for many of the future works in the area of gender theory, including the sociolinguistic approach to the concept of gender.

In this regards, the work of Judith Butler is also significant. In one of her epochal works titled *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, Butler also explores the idea that “women” as a label cannot be understood or used uniformly to represent each and every woman there is, especially if we consider the intersectional nature of this label, which will further be discussed later in the text.²⁶ If we accept the idea that gender is culturally constructed, it is clear then that:

Gender is neither the causal result of sex nor as seemingly fixed as sex. [...] Taken to its logical limit, the sex/gender distinction suggests a radical discontinuity between sexed bodies and culturally constructed genders. Assuming for the moment the stability of binary sex, it does not follow that the construction of “men” will accrue exclusively to the bodies of males or that “women” will interpret only female bodies. Further, even if the sexes appear to be unproblematically binary in their morphology and constitution [...], there is no reason to assume that genders ought also to remain as two.²⁷

²⁵ De Beauvoir, Simone. *The Second Sex*. Vintage Books (New York, 2011). p. 330. E-book.

²⁶ Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge (New York, 1990). p. 3. Print.

²⁷ *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. p. 6

Though gender is connected with the idea of sex, Butler believes that it would be wrong to simply claim that is the direct result of sex. Simply saying, sexed bodies are just not the same as culturally constructed genders. Even if we do accept that there is a certain stability of binary sex (which would omit the notions of intersexuality, transsexuality, etc.), it would not be possible to claim that the idea of “men” is exclusively connected with bodies of men, as well as that the idea of “women” is not exclusively connected with the bodies of females. We can thus say that gender is not to be seen as an attribute, but rather as an interactional achievement. It is more of a performance, than a “given”. It is exhibited differently in different surrounding: in different cultures, communities, subcommunities, and even individuals. Additionally, it is manifested differently throughout the duration of one’s life span and within everyday interactions an individual has.²⁸ In this respect, following the logical thread, there is still no reason to believe that there are only two genders.

The question of the very nature of gender seeks further clarification. In that respect, certain authors suggest that there are several fundamental principles when it comes to gender. According to the authors of *Language and Gender*, Penelope Eckert and Sally McConnell-Ginnett, there are four principles which have to be considered.²⁹ The first principle refers to the fact that “gender is learned. And because gender involves a restriction of choice [...] it must be not just learned but taught, and enforced.” This effectively means that someone has to teach gender to the children and enforce it on everyone else in the society, all the adults who have previously learnt what gender is and how they should act, speak and think (as much as anyone but themselves is concerned, or in an ideal case including their perception of their thoughts as well). This element of the sheer nature of gender leads us to the second principle.³⁰

The second principle emphasizes the collaborative nature of gender. While it is common to think that gender is an individual attribute, a singular choice between masculine and feminine features, or between fulfilling the prescribed male or female roles in the best possible manner, this is not the case. Since the focus is put on the

²⁸ *Language, gender, and sexuality*. in *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociolinguistics*. p. 219

²⁹ *Language and Gender*. p.31

³⁰ *Language and Gender*. p. 31

individual we tend to forget that gender is not an individual thing which one can accomplish on their own. Gender is a collaborative affair; it links an individual to the society. (Gender is not singular in this feature: race, ethnicity, and social class would also serve the same purpose of social glue for the individuals; in fact, the collaboration of gender, race, ethnicity, social class, etc. are all just elements contributing to the conscious and subconscious perception, including self-perception, of an individual).³¹

If we took a second to consider the manner in which we raise our children in terms of gender, we would easily see that we are the ones who initially impose gender roles on them. Most of the time we do not do it consciously, but very subtly and naturally, as we do not see our role in it – for us it just simulates the way in which we were raised. For example, studies show that male and female infants spend the same amount of time crying, however, over time boys stop crying as much as girls.³² This directly corresponds to our expectations, both conscious and hidden, both spoken and unspoken. If we applied the second principle to this situation, the unconsciousness of the parents/caretakers, or those who impose gender roles on children would be reflected in the fact that we simply expect male babies to cry less and less often than female babies, and that we, due to that fact, react to their cries in such a manner which enforces this idea. This can, for example, include behaviours such as taking longer time to respond to crying male babies than to female babies, changing our soothing techniques and simply expecting the male babies to learn to self-soothe, while we would not have or do not have the same expectations for the female babies. With time, this subconscious manner of dealing with children often takes a conscious form – we start telling boys not to cry, not to behave like babies or girls, that they need to be tough, or even punishing them for crying in instances we believe they should not cry.

It is also very important to mention that this is a two way process, gender is imposed on both genders and we could easily swap this example for other situations in which the expectations we have of boys and girls are imposed differently.

The example we used for the second principle, crying male and female babies, is a great introduction into the third principle. It states that gender is not something we have, but that it is something we do.³³ Adults mostly perform gender without being

³¹ *Language and Gender*. p. 31

³² *Language and Gender*. p. 18

³³ *Language and Gender*. p. 32

conscious of it, but we can observe children performing it consciously. Boys often playfully swagger while girls mince, it is very clear that this would constitute them being engaged in gendered performances. Children tend to do it less with age, to consciously exhibit gender performances and emphasize them. They become better at masking their performances, but it is important to acknowledge the fact that their need for it disappears as the gender performances become a second nature to them. Aspects of gender which are not consistently performed at all levels of society can wither away, as the society and the norms it imposes in different ways are obvious from the behaviour of members of the aforementioned society. Further, studies which focus on the performative nature of gender demonstrate that all identities are gendered, even those we might refer to as “unmarked”. Gendered identities, i.e. performances, are always coloured by heteronormativity, regardless of their conformism to the gender norms of the society. The impact of heteronormativity can thus be seen in those which closely conform to the gender norms in the society and in those which are perceived to be very nonconformist in their nature, such as “queer” identity and marginalized identities.³⁴

These ideas have also been represented in the works of Judith Butler, one of the most renowned authors and scholars who researched gender and its components. Judith Butler writes about the importance of representation, especially linguistic and political, when it comes to the subject of gender. For her, representation is extremely important, especially because it carries a political meaning of high relevance. For gender/feminist theory, extreme importance was ascribed to the linguistic representation since the political visibility of women is achieved (among other tools) through the development of language which seeks to (and achieves in certain cases) to represent women fully and adequately. Yet, the necessary preconditions for representation have to be preceded by the qualifications for being a subject.³⁵

Linguistic representation, as we have already established, cannot be disregarded when discussing gender itself, gender roles and gender relations. In this regard, the idea of power comes to play. Michel Foucault writes in his work *The Subject and Power* that we have to understand the term power as a term which designates relationship between partners. Between these partners exists certain power relations

³⁴ *Language, gender, and sexuality*. in *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociolinguistics*. p. 235

³⁵ *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. p. 1.

which are exercised through the production and exchange of signs, and they cannot be separated from activities that permit the exercise of power or that call on relations of power.³⁶ If we apply this notion to the current gender relations in our society, we could come to the conclusion that there are certain power relations between the two genders (male and female) which enable the gender in the position of power, i.e. male gender, to exercise power over the female gender.

As previously mentioned, gender cannot be separated from other identities of a person or a group, so a natural continuation of our debate would be the introduction of notions of sexual orientation and the way in which gender and sexual orientation function together in many aspects. First, it needs to be noted that our society is deeply patriarchal and heteronormative.³⁷ The patriarchal structure of our society, plainly said, mean that men are usually in a better position and that they are considered to be the *default setting* of the human kind; that the member of our society mostly thinks of a male individual when thinking of a human being. There is a certain privilege attached to this position, since certain power is gained if one does not have to clarify their position all the time, as the society seems to intuitively understand it and acknowledge it with the due respect. This is a notion we already introduced and which will be reflected on throughout the paper. The heteronormative structure of our society means that hetero (meaning male-female; often called straight) relationships are considered to be the norm in our society. It is the “(usually unnoticed) assumption that the normal gender order comprises heterosexual males and females who behave in normative ways (e.g. men act masculine, women act feminine)”.³⁸ Sexual orientation is closely connected to gender, but they are not to be confused. We have established earlier in the paper that sex is a biological category (and can be either male or female); gender is a psychological or sociological category (and can be male, female or any gender on the gender spectrum). Sexual orientation can be explained in the following manner:

Sexual orientation refers to an enduring pattern of emotional, romantic and/or sexual attractions to men, women or both sexes. Sexual orientation also refers to a person's sense of identity based on those attractions, related behaviors and membership in a community of others who share those attractions. It ranges along a continuum, from exclusive attraction to

³⁶ Foucault, Michel. *The Subject and Power*. Essential Works of Foucault: Power. The New Press (New York, 2000). pp. 337-338. Print.

³⁷ Ames, Melissa and Burcon, Sarah Himsel. *Women and Language: Essays on Gendered Communication across Media*. McFarland (North Carolina, 2011). p. 174. E-book.

³⁸ *Language, gender, and sexuality*. in *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociolinguistics*. p.219

the other sex to exclusive attraction to the same sex. However, sexual orientation is usually discussed in terms of three categories: heterosexual (having emotional, romantic or sexual attractions to members of the other sex), homosexual (having emotional, romantic or sexual attractions to members of one's own sex) and bisexual (having emotional, romantic or sexual attractions to both men and women). Sexual orientation is distinct from other components of sex and gender, including biological sex (the anatomical, physiological and genetic characteristics associated with being male or female), gender identity (the psychological sense of being male or female)* and social gender role (the cultural norms that define feminine and masculine behavior).

Sexual orientation is commonly discussed as if it were solely a characteristic of an individual, like biological sex, gender identity or age. This perspective is incomplete because sexual orientation is defined in terms of relationships with others. People express their sexual orientation through behaviors with others, including such simple actions as holding hands or kissing.³⁹

³⁹ American Psychological Association. *Answers to your questions: For a better understanding of sexual orientation and homosexuality*. (Washington, DC, 2008). Accessed on World Wide Web on November 20, 2017: www.apa.org/topics/orientation.pdf

3. NOTES ON THE CORPUS

The corpus of this paper is consisted of dialogues from dramatic texts, as it was mentioned in the title. This corpus is of great importance since it the dramatic text, in most cases, tries to simulate the spoken language. Since the dramatic texts mostly consist of dialogue, didascalies are used as an additional element of conveying the information about the characters to the actors (apart from the information on the scenes, lights etc.). Didascalies give the information on how a character acts or pronounces a certain sentence, and they often include information such as the sex, age, class, race, occupation, etc. of the character which place the character within the society and its groups as it is clear that each of the characters is being moulded as an individual belonging to certain groups and having certain identities and occupations. The purpose of didascalies is to give these additional pieces of information in order to make the actor's portrayal of a character more believable.

The importance of didascalies is immense, but their importance is limited to the background work of the play, i.e. the setting up of a successful performance. Dialogue, on the other hand, is the backbone of the play as this section of the dramatic text is intended for the audience and a successful dialogue will be believable in the sense that it is written in such a way that it changes according to the interlocutors, context, emotions in a certain scene, etc. As we have previously mentioned, this would be precisely the thing that the sociolinguistics seeks to explore, describe and analyse, and because of that, our analysis will go precisely in that direction.

Literature relies on linguistics to achieve its purpose; both of them focus on the language used and on what such use of language wants to achieve. In this regard, we can see that:

Linguistics helps ensure a proper foundation for analysis by enabling the literary critic to recognize the systematic regularities in the language of a text. In this sense, we can use linguistics to construct a theory about the language of a text in the form of a "grammar of the text". In this way, linguistics forms an integral component of literary criticism. [...] Choices of form are primarily determined by the social characteristics of participants and setting.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Ajtony, Zsuzsanna. *Approaching Literature with Linguistic Means: a Few Conclusions*. Originally

The dramatic texts which are going to be analysed are American contemporary dramas written 1988 and 1998, which offer us an opportunity to discuss very relevant social issues for today's global society, especially if we consider our own society and this is the reason for their choice. The dramas to be discussed are: *I Dream before I Take the Stand* by Arlene Hutton and *M. Butterfly* by David Henry Hwang.

The theoretical background for their analysis will be chosen based on the relevance of the themes discussed in each work, thus the discourse will guide the analysis. The variety of sociolinguistic body of research dealing with gender will be used in the analysis in the way which corresponds to each of the texts, as well as theories of pragmatic discourse in the courtroom, politeness theory and theories concerning neo-colonialism and its linguistic implications (including linguistic imperialism).

4. ANALYSIS

4.1. ANALYSIS OF *I DREAM BEFORE I TAKE THE STAND*

Drama *I Dream before I Take the Stand* was published in 1995. This short one-act play was written by the playwright Arlene Hutton. Its significance lies in the fact that the central theme is sexual harassment and the unfair treatment of the victim/survivor in the court and due to the short form it is very powerful for the performance.⁴¹ The play consists only of dialogue between the two characters: a woman only described as petite, and a man, a lawyer or a defence attorney. The opening of the drama sets the manner in which the dialogue will take place, as it is clear from the first few lines that the woman will present her account of events, while the attorney will ask her additional questions for clarification, often following a very thin thread of logic between the preceding and following questions.⁴²

A large number of sociolinguistic studies looking into the courtroom language have relied on court transcripts. Since the purpose of such transcripts is the official use for the legal processes, they provide us with the record of information, not interactions. These transcripts often do not include such features as:

[...] pauses and overlapping talk, and they only sometimes record prosodic features, such as raised volume, and increased speed of utterance. Non-verbal features, such as averting the gaze, and paralinguistic features, such as trembling voice or laughter, are also generally not recorded.⁴³

For the aforementioned reason, the manner in which the drama in question was written fits perfectly within this description, i.e. it has the characteristics of the official court transcripts, as it mostly serves as a record of the dialogue between the defence attorney and the survivor, although it includes the notes on a few pauses between the utterances as well as on the raised voice of the speaker at the end of the play (these notes are presented in the didascalies, as is usual in dramatic texts).

⁴¹ The term *victim* is often replaced by the term *survivor* in the relevant literature, as it helps to change the perception of the people who sexual crimes were committed against. The term survivor is considered to be more empowering and it also helps to escape further victimisation and to put an end to the victim-blaming.

⁴² Hutton, Arlene. *I Dream before I Take the Stand*. Playscripts, Inc. E-book.

⁴³ Eades, Diana. *Sociolinguistics and the law*. in Mesthrie, Rajend. Ed. *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociolinguistics*. Cambridge University Press (Cambridge, 2011). p. 378. E-book.

Various studies looking into the courtroom language, especially from a sociolinguistic perspective, found that the witnesses usually use one of the two styles, very different in nature to one another. These styles were labelled as “powerful” style and “powerless” styles by the researchers. Powerless style shares features with the language usually used by the members of subordinate social groups; consequentially, it shares some of the characteristics with women’s speech, as considered by Robin Lakoff, as we have mentioned earlier in the text. Those shared features include a high frequency of intensifiers, such as *very* and *really*, the use of hedges, including *sort of* and *like*. The characteristic of the powerful style would then be the lack of such literary features, which has a consequence that the utterances are understood to be more precise and confident, as is the speaker too. The linguistic research conducted on jurors and their perceptions of the witnesses found that the labels jurors ascribed to the witnesses using the powerful style were: *(more) convincing, truthful, competent, intelligent, trustworthy, etc.* These labels were not used for the witnesses who spoke using the powerless style. [...] Other linguistic studies were more concerned with the exchange occurring between the attorneys and witnesses. Apart from the introductory and final statements, the majority of utterances made by attorneys during court procedures, more specifically when questioning a witness, are in the form of the questions, which is clear from the name of this part of the court procedure itself. That would mean that the role the witnesses have is answering these questions. As we already mentioned the two styles the witnesses use when speaking, we must also mention the different styles of the questions asked by the attorneys. The manner, in which the aforementioned questions are phrased, can influence the perception of witnesses too. The studies researching that “all found that the most controlling or coercive questions are *yes/no* questions with tags (such as *You were there, weren’t you?*), while the least controlling or coercive questions are broad *wh*-questions (e.g. *What happened then?*).”⁴⁴

As we have already mentioned in the introductory segment of this paper, the discourse features exemplifying the strong power imbalance between a witness and a judge or a lawyer includes the following features:

⁴⁴ *Sociolinguistics and the law*. in *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociolinguistics*. p. 379

- Witnesses are typically asked a large number of questions requiring a minimal response.
- Witnesses say very little compared to the verbosity of those questioning them.
- The majority of questions put to witnesses contain already completed propositions.
- Witnesses are not in control of telling their own story.

In addition to question structure, researchers have found a number of other linguistic strategies used by lawyers to exercise control over witnesses, including:

- interruptions;
- reformulation of a witness's descriptions of events or people (e.g. from *my friends* to *a group of louts*);
- manipulation of lawyer silence, for example with the use of strategic pauses;
- incorporation of damaging presuppositions in questions, known in the law as "leading questions" (such as *Did you all laugh while the car was being trashed?*);
- metalinguistic directives given to the witness (such as *You must answer this question*);
- management of topics in order to convey a particular impression to the jury.⁴⁵

The woman passed through a park on her way to work, a man was sitting on a bench and he smiled at her; later, she was sexually assaulted by the aforementioned man. The defence attorney uses repetition in order to confuse the survivor and to add additional elements to the original statement in order to subtly get the survivor to agree with them. In the following excerpt, the original statement is underlined, as well as the element which is repeated in the following segments.

SHE: I was walking through the park.

HE: Why were you in the park?

SHE: I was on my way to work.

HE: Do you have to walk through the park to get to work?

SHE: No.

HE: Do you always walk through the park to work?

SHE: No.

HE: Why did you walk through the park that day?

SHE: It was a beautiful day. I like to walk to work through the park when the weather's good.

(Pause.)

HE: Were you in a hurry?

SHE: I was on my way to work.

HE: Were you late?

SHE: No, I would have been on time.

HE: Were you strolling or walking fast?

SHE: I always walk fairly quickly.

⁴⁵ *Sociolinguistics and the law*. in *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociolinguistics*. p. 380

HE: Why? The park is not safe?
SHE: I guess not.
HE: Yet you walk through it to get to work.
SHE: There are lots of people around.
HE: But you walk quickly through the park.
SHE: Yes.⁴⁶

Out of the 10 utterances in the excerpt made by the attorney, eight of them explicitly mention the survivor walking through the park. This is because the attorney uses some of the aforementioned strategies: he asks the woman questions which contain already completed propositions and reformulates the witness' description of the place and action.⁴⁷ In the original statement the survivor states that she was walking through the park, and when asked for the reason, she states that she did it in order to get to work. After two additional questions, the attorney proceeds to ask her for the reason of her walking through the park and he manages to get her to answer differently, as she clarifies that she likes to walk through the park when the weather is nice. The further explanation in the previously discussed utterance that she only likes to walk through the park when the weather is nice (compared with: I like to walk through the park.) is an example of the use of hedges, one of the characteristics of women's language according to Lakoff.⁴⁸ The insisting of the attorney shows us how the dialogues in the court of law include more repetition than the general conversation. The reason for this is the sheer importance of the legal procedures for the lives of participants in them. For this reason, we can say that "Adherence of legal texts to standard formulae dates back to ancient times, when 'largely illiterate, the populace believed that only word-for-word repetition of the formulae would produce the desired effect'."⁴⁹ Repetition in discourse can occur in many different ways: the same string of words can take different meanings depending on the circumstances; the same statement can be achieved by the use of different words or it can produce a similar effect; and there are also certain words the use of which is standardized in specific situations (also called stock statements). The repetition of discourse is not exhausted

⁴⁶ *I Dream before I Take the Stand*. pp. 3-4.

⁴⁷ *Sociolinguistics and the law*. in *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociolinguistics*. p. 380

⁴⁸ *Language and Gender*. p.158

⁴⁹ Šarčević, Susan. *New Approach to Legal Translation*. The Hague: Kluwer Law International (The Hague, 1997). as quoted in Lisina, Natalia. *Stylistic Features of Legal Discourse: A Comparative Study of English and Norwegian Legal Vocabulary*. MA Thesis. Oslo (University of Oslo, 2013). Accessed on World Wide Web on May 16, 2018: https://www.duo.uio.no/bitstream/handle/10852/37033/Lisina_master.pdf?sequence=3

in the aforementioned ways.⁵⁰ Practically, when it comes to the text we are analysing, we can see the different devices the attorney uses to get the survivor to state what she wants and feels is true, in such a manner which would suit the point he is trying to make.

The attorney asks the survivor if she was in hurry, which is another example of a question which contains an already completed propositions⁵¹, but the woman does not comply with such treatment in this case as she disagrees by saying that she would have arrived at work on time. Three additional questions ensue asking for the details on her speed, she answers each of them. Then, the attorney uses a positive sentence expressing surprise or wonder (“But you walk quickly through the park.”), which is clear to us by the use of coordinating conjunction *but* in the first place in a positive sentence. This time, the survivor agrees with him. This serves us a clear indication of the success of his method, i.e. that we can get our interlocutor to agree with us by repeating what is previously said and adding additional elements, by which he/she is compelled to agree, as the original statement is true. Persuasion is very effective strategy for manipulation and showing that the power in the conversation is in your hands. For this reason, this strategy is often suggested to managers,⁵² employed by religious personnel⁵³ and by politicians.⁵⁴

The lawyer’s strategy to confuse his interlocutor, or in this case the woman who survived a sexual assault and is currently being questioned in the position of the witness is obvious in the following excerpts too. (Please, refer to the Appendices A and B to see the whole segments from which the excerpts were taken). The theme of the exchange between the lawyer and the survivor of the crime deals with the theme

⁵⁰ Hartland, Nick. *System and Repetition in Legal Discourse: A Critical Account of Discourse Analysis of the Law*. Accessed on World Wide Web on May 16, 2018: <http://www5.austlii.edu.au/au/journals/AUJILawSoc/1993/2.pdf>

⁵¹ *Sociolinguistics and the law*. in *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociolinguistics*. p. 380

⁵² Cain, Áine. *9 tricks for getting people to do what you want*. Accessed on World Wide Web on May 16, 2018: <http://www.businessinsider.com/tricks-for-getting-people-to-do-what-you-want-2016-11>; Zwillling, Martin. *7 Steps to Master the Art of Persuasion*. Accessed on World Wide Web on May 16, 2018:

<https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/269932>

⁵³ Dreher, Rod. *Religion & The Power Of Repetition*. Accessed on World Wide Web on May 16, 2018: <http://www.theamericanconservative.com/dreher/the-power-of-repetition-religion/>

⁵⁴ Adams, Scott. *The creator of Dilbert explains Trump's persuasion style and reminds us why people stopped caring about facts*. Accessed on World Wide Web on May 16, 2018: <http://www.businessinsider.com/dilbert-creator-scott-adams-explains-trumps-persuasion-style-2017-10>

of woman's physical appearance on the day the crime took place. This exchange follows the general pattern when discussing conversations about women: a conversation about women often strays and becomes a conversation about women's bodies instead, no matter what the context is.⁵⁵

The attorney uses 21 sentences to ask the woman about her hair, out of which 14 are interrogative sentences, often following an affirmative sentence. The attorney goes into great details concerning the woman's hair – he needs to establish if it was up or down on the said day, wet or dry, coloured or not, if the woman feels she is more attractive with coloured hair, etc. Outside of the courtroom setting, one person rarely asks another so many questions about the state of their hair on a particular day. In the courtroom setting, different seemingly unimportant and irrelevant details come into the spotlight and seem to be of great importance. The attorney employs a series of linguistic and other devices to make the woman feel (or come across as) insecure. The aforementioned power imbalance can be clearly observed in the following excerpt:

HE: Do you always wear make-up to the park?

SHE: No.

HE: They why were you wearing it that day?

SHE: I was on my way to work.

HE: What sort of make-up were you wearing?

SHE: What brand?

HE: Which items of make-up had you put on? Lipstick?

SHE: Yes.

HE: What color?

SHE: The actual name?

HE: What color would you call the lipstick you wore?

SHE: A sort of peach, maybe, with a darker—

HE: You were wearing two colors on your lips?

SHE: Well, yes.⁵⁶

In the previous excerpt we can see that the attorney asks a series of questions requiring minimal response (such as *Do you always wear make-up to the park?* and *Which items of make-up had you put on? Lipstick?*)⁵⁷, in other words, he asks the questions to which a yes or no is a sufficient answer, or which require a short, precise

⁵⁵ *Language and Gender*. p. 97

⁵⁶ *I Dream before I Take the Stand*. p. 9

⁵⁷ *Sociolinguistics and the law*. in *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociolinguistics*. p. 380

answer. This leads to the situation that the witnesses say very little in comparisons with those who are questioning them (e.g. *Do you always wear make-up to the park?* vs. *No.*; or *Which items of make-up had you put on? Lipstick?* vs. *Yes.*). By dominating the conversation, the attorney or a judge asking the questions demonstrates his overall domination. The main concern of the paper is the sociolinguistic analysis, but in this case we must also consider the psycholinguistic position. We have all been in a situation in which we were conversing with someone who says a lot more than we do, in terms of quantity. After some time, it starts causing irritation, at best, that we are not able to contribute more to the conversation, or it even makes us start questioning the things we are saying and doubting the worth of our utterances, at worst. Even when the woman is answering the questions with certainty and to great details, the attorney seeks to change their positions in terms of the power. There are many tools to achieve that. For example, when asked to name the shade of lipstick she was wearing, or at least describe it in her own words, the woman speaks with certainty (after all, she *is* describing the shade of lipstick she choose, bought, applied and wore on the said day). She begins describing the shade (*A sort of peach, maybe, with a darker—*) before she is interrupted by the attorney, who changes the focal point of his interest from the shade of her lipstick to the number of the colours she wore on her lips. The sentence in which the woman describes her lipstick colour has two features of women's language, as described by Lakoff: the use of hedges⁵⁸ (*a sort of*) and the use of precise colour terms⁵⁹ (*A sort of peach, maybe, with a darker-*) By interrupting the witness⁶⁰, the attorney once again exercise control over her, and shows her their relative power: he is the one to choose the topic of their exchange, and he will choose the time limit for her utterances.

The following excerpt (please refer to Appendix B for the entire excerpt) continues in the similar tone:

HE: You are considered a petite woman, then.

SHE: I guess so.

HE: But thirty-four B or C is a fairly large bra size for a small woman.

SHE: It's average.

HE: Not for a petite woman. You wouldn't say your breasts were small.

⁵⁸ *Language and Gender*. p.158

⁵⁹ *Language, gender, and sexuality*. in *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociolinguistics*. p. 221

⁶⁰ *Sociolinguistics and the law*. in *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociolinguistics*. p. 380

SHE: My....
HE: Your breasts. They are not small breasts.
SHE: I don't know.
HE: You don't know you have large breasts?
SHE: They're average.
HE: Do you always wear a bra?
[...]
SHE: I feel more comfortable.
HE: Because you have large breasts.
SHE: (*No answer.*)
HE: You would not say that you have small breasts.
SHE: No...
HE: You have a large bust. But you were wearing a tank top.
SHE: It was hot.⁶¹

The questioning is dominated by the attorney, as it was the case in the previous excerpt discussed. One of the linguistic strategies employed by the attorney is that he incorporates the damaging presuppositions in the questions he asks (in the legal register this is referred to as “leading questions”). For example, the attorney uses an affirmative sentence “But thirty-four B or C is a fairly large bra size for a small woman” to convey the message to everyone present in the courtroom that the woman has a large bust for her stature. Asking the question in this way, that is by stating the wanted answer, does not leave the woman being questioned with many options when it comes to the answer. This clearly puts her in the position of a powerless witness, as discussed previously. The attorney could have chosen to ask an open-ended question, such as “What is your perception of the proportions of your bust in reference to your body?”, if his interest was in making this exchange more equal, and allowing the woman to gain some power in the courtroom. The attorney is “in charge” of the woman’s perception of her own body. She reluctantly agrees with the attorney that her body type is petite, upon which he insists that her breasts would be considered large. If we take another, closer look at the following few sentences from the previous excerpt, we can see the manner in which the attorney insists on convincing the woman that her breasts are large:

HE: Not for a petite woman. You wouldn't say your breasts were small.
SHE: My....

⁶¹ *I Dream before I Take the Stand.* pp. 18-19

HE: Your breasts. They are not small breasts.

SHE: I don't know.

HE: You don't know you have large breasts?⁶²

The attorney asks the woman if it is the case that she does not know that she has large breasts, expressing his surprise or shock, depending on how we accentuate the words in the sentence. With that it is conveyed that woman's breasts are indeed large, and that the woman herself is not aware of their size; consequentially, it also conveys the message that, by not being aware of their size, the woman is also not aware of the effect her breasts and her entire body have on other people, namely the accused. The woman who survived a sexual assault is thus stripped of advocacy on her own body, as she appears as somewhat oblivious and naïve.

This excerpt is very interesting for our discussion because it brings many interesting things into discussion when it comes to gender, sex, female bodies, and the ideas of femininity and power relations. First, it needs to be underlined that female body is often the matter of discussion in conversations between men, in particular, and in conversations between almost everyone in the society in general. Although this is not a novel idea, in terms of sociolinguistics, we need to mention that there is simply no parallel when it comes to the discussion of male bodies. For example, research conducted by Laurel Sutton in 1992 found that there are many slang terms referring to the body size and attractiveness of female subjects (although objects might be a more appropriate term in this case), while there are almost no terms for the same when men are being discussed. These comment include women being referred to as animals (*cow*, for example), being rated on a(n imaginary) scale from one to ten for their bodies in general, and then additionally for certain parts of their bodies (usually breasts, legs, behinds and, lastly, faces), and women being referenced to only in terms of their marital status (e.g. Jane Smith can be politely referred as Mrs. Smith or Miss Smith depending on the fact if she is married or not, which seems to be of much greater importance for women in the society than men, and she can also be referred to as Mrs. Brown in reference to her husband John Brown; in contrast, John would never be referred as Mr. Smith, unless it was in a very intimate setting in a joking manner). There is an alternative to this system of referencing; the title Ms. used in situations when one does not know a woman's marital status, when it is not important to the

⁶² *I Dream before I Take the Stand*. p. 19

speakers or when the speakers respect the decision of a woman to use that title. Still, Ms. is not simply a form parallel to Mr. as it was originally intended, since it has a somewhat negative connotation in the society; women who chose to use Ms. are often perceived as subversive and less feminine, and it has a negative connotation (the extent of which depends of the individual and social groups the individual belongs to).⁶³ Secondly, our discussion must again mention the notion of *mansplaining* we introduced earlier in the paper in order for us to be able to discuss the previous excerpt in its full meaning. The attorney expresses his shock that the woman who survived the sexual assault was not aware of the fact that she has large breasts. She does not agree with him, but that is not of great importance as his position (the defence attorney) comes with a certain power on its own, the dynamics of the questioning adds to it, as we have discussed so far, and his male identity gives him the societal position of someone who is of greater intelligence, competence and understanding of the world.⁶⁴ His power is amplified by the fact that he can tell her that her body looks in a certain way with authority, although she is a human being (thus someone whose mind resides in their body).

The focus on the physical appearance of women we mentioned earlier in the text is especially noticeable when it comes to the cases of sexual nature in the courtroom (and all the previous stages of the legal procedure from the moment a crime is reported, but we will keep our focus on the courtroom context). Apart from women's bodies which are often scrutinized and judged, the clothes women wore during the sexual assault become very relevant for the course of the trials to their perpetrators. The statements heard in the courtroom about the women's clothing:

[...] reflect the stereotypical belief that women invite their own rapes, sexual assaults, and sexual harassment by the manner in which they dress. Courts have held that a woman's clothing may signify her implied consent to be sexually assaulted or her implied welcome of sexual harassment. Because consent to sex is a defence to rape and welcoming sexual advances is a defence to sexual harassment, courts consider clothing to be probative, and thus relevant, evidence. The belief that clothing can indicate consent to sexual assault or can invite sexual harassment stems from the empirically proven fact that people infer intent and attitude

⁶³ *Language and Gender*. pp. 248-249

⁶⁴ *Language and Gender*. p. 206

of others based on their clothes.⁶⁵

The attorney makes 115 statements (including both affirmative and interrogative sentences; in this context we use statements as referring to an utterance by the attorney, thus the number of sentences in each of the utterances is not necessarily one) about the clothes and accessories the woman who was assaulted was wearing on the day the crime took place. The number of statements is shockingly large, and from the sheer number of statements we can deduce that the clothes the survivor was wearing is considered by the attorney to be of the utmost importance for the case. The woman answers a series of questions about it the first time she is asked (HE: What were you wearing? / SHE: A skirt and a top.⁶⁶), and after some time and a change of the conversation topic, the attorney comes back to it:

HE: [...] What were you wearing?

SHE: What?

HE: What were you wearing?

SHE: I told you.

HE: You have to answer. What were you wearing?

SHE: A skirt and a top.

HE: To go to work?

SHE: I had a jacket in the office.⁶⁷

The woman's answer is consistent with her previous answer. She hesitates with her answer as the question is repeated, possibly because she is not certain what the intention of the attorney is when asking that question repeatedly, and possibly because she is aware that her physical appearance is under great scrutiny because of the nature of the crime she survived. The woman asks for addition clarification on the question, upon which the attorney simply repeats his question, without making any changes to it. She states that she had already answered that question, which can be understood as the conscientious use of a more polite phrase *I told you* in place of a phrase which would convey more frustration and helplessness the woman would have felt by this point of the questioning, and that reservedness and the need to always be aware and collected

⁶⁵ Lennon, Theresa L., Lennon, Sharron J., Johnson, Kim K.P. *Is Clothing Probative of Attitude or Intent - Implications for Rape and Sexual Harassment Cases*, Law & Inequality. Volume 11, Issue 2, Article 3 (1993). E-journal.

Accessed on World Wide Web on July 5, 2018: <http://scholarship.law.umn.edu/lawineq/vol11/iss2/3>

⁶⁶ *I Dream before I Take the Stand*. p. 5

⁶⁷ *I Dream before I Take the Stand*. p. 14

is a characteristic of women and women's language⁶⁸. The woman's statement that she had answered the question previously causes the attorney to exhort his power over her, by using the metalinguistic directive⁶⁹: "You have to answer."

The play comes to an end with a very quick succession of questions and answers. Please refer to Appendix C for the excerpt. The attorney follows a very thin string of logic, and the logic followed is very circular. He focuses on woman's manner of walking and her clothes, presenting it as if the woman's body was moving in a seductive and sexual manner and as if her behaviour invited the behaviour of the man who committed the crime ("You walked quickly through the park wearing sexy clothes with your breasts bouncing and your thighs damp and you smiled and nodded at a stranger."). The woman disagrees, upon which the lawyer changes his strategy and compartmentalizes his statement in a manner which allows him to lead the woman to agree with his statement (The attorney's statements show that: "You were walking through the park."; "It was a hot day."; "You smiled at stranger. And he followed you.") At that point the woman stops agreeing with the short sentences and contradicts the attorney, stating that she had not known that the man followed her. The attorney then questions every statement she makes, he dominates the conversation by seeking additional clarification when it is not needed⁷⁰ (as we can presume a sentence spoken by woman could be understood by an average adult); expressing his surprise, which makes the woman's statements appear as somehow not the expected behaviour in the situation she faced. When the woman makes it clear that the circumstances were such that she could not have possibly heard the man approaching her from behind, the attorney abandons his strategy and changes the subject of the questioning back to the woman's clothes and behaviour:

HE: You went into the park.

SHE: To walk to work.

HE: You were wearing suggestive clothing.

SHE: No.

HE: You signaled to a man.

SHE: No.

HE: You enticed him.

⁶⁸ *Language and Gender*. p.158

⁶⁹ *Sociolinguistics and the law*. in *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociolinguistics*. p. 380

⁷⁰ *Sociolinguistics and the law*. in *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociolinguistics*. p. 380

SHE: No.
HE: You led him on.
SHE: No.
HE: You acknowledged him.
SHE: (No answer.)
HE: You smiled at him.
SHE: Yes.⁷¹

The woman initially tries to gain some power by disagreeing with him, suggesting that the only reason she was in the park (as the attorney suggested that it is a dangerous location) was to get to work. The attorney then comes back to her clothes and behaviour, ignoring the woman's repeated and growing protest, continuing as if she did not say anything and thus clearly establishing his dominance – he is so dominant that the woman may as well not be there. She senses his attitude and omits her answer to the last statement, as her protests did not lead any results. He continues none the less and he makes his final point by stating that the woman had smiled at her attacker. The woman agrees. For the attorney, this agreement to a short sentence about smiling is enough to motivate him for delivering his final blow. He begins being very aggressive, to such extent that the author of the play uses the statement *He verbally rapes her* in the didascalies to describe it. He uses his words as his tool, he paints an image of the situation for the woman, the judge and everyone else present in the courtroom. He accuses the woman that she did the following, which to him is enough to get his client acquitted:

HE: (He verbally rapes her.) You left your glasses off. Your dyed hair was bobbing in the breeze. You had painted nails and wore rouge. Your body was scented. You were wearing a revealing outfit, you were feeling sexy in your dainty black lacy undies and your tight shirt and your sheer skirt, and you were shaking your breasts and rolling your hips at this man.⁷²

His attack is powerful: the short sentences are accusatory, they all begin with *you*, and have a formulaic nature, to some extent. The formula might be presented, in the shortest terms, as “You did this. You did that”. The short attacks are like jabs, only his words serve as a weapon. The woman hears it all and produces the only response she could have, she screams: “No!” The woman's no in this segment, especially following the didascaly where the author described the man's utterances as verbal rape serve the

⁷¹ *I Dream before I Take the Stand*. pp. 28-29

⁷² *I Dream before I Take the Stand*. p. 29

purpose of raising the awareness of the audience (primarily, as the dramatic texts are written for the stage) and the readership (which is limited) to the crimes of sexual assault and rape, the courtroom dynamics is such that the survivors of sexualized crimes are left powerless, to the mercy of the attorneys who try to revictimize them by blaming the survivors for what has happened to them. In some cases, as the plays shows, the survivors still manage to muster enough strength to scream: “*No!*”

Hopefully, such behaviour at court will change, as the studies of language began focusing on the role the use of language has on the positions within the courtroom, and we can hope that the judges and attorneys will come in contact with them and subsequently change their behaviour, bringing some hope to the lives of survivors:

[A] particular concern arises from detailed discourse analysis of sexual assault cases: the courtroom hearing may be so controlling and manipulative of the witness and so traumatic that the process of giving evidence actually amounts to revictimization of the victim-witness. ... All of these studies mentioned so far deal with situational power in the courtroom: typically the power which lawyers or members of the judiciary exercise over witnesses, and in the case of Harris’ work, the power which defendants exercise in resistance. [...] But sociolinguistics can play an important role in exposing the actual mechanisms by which the legal system often fails to deliver justice, as several studies of language and power in the last decade or so have demonstrated.⁷³

⁷³ *Sociolinguistics and the law*. in *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociolinguistics*. p. 381

4.2. ANALYSIS OF *M. BUTTERFLY*

Drama *M. Butterfly* premiered in 1998. It was written by David Henry Hwang and it is a twist on the opera *Madama Butterfly* by Giacomo Puccini. The play is very significant because of the manner in which it explores, or more precisely, deconstructs and reconstructs the issue of Otherness, including the metalinguistic level. The three-act play was written in English, and the playwright found the inspiration for the play in a casual conversation with a friend who asked him if he had heard about the French diplomat whose lover, a Chinese actress, turned out to be a spy and a man. The diplomat had never seen her naked, and he believed that it was because she was extremely modest, because of her Chinese origin.⁷⁴ Thus, the plot of the drama is somewhat parallel to the libretto of *Madama Butterfly*, in terms of the treatment of the theme of a love story between an Oriental woman and a man who is a Westerner. Yet, Hwang clearly states that he did not want to learn more about what has happened, but that he wanted to construct the storyline which will present a tale of a French diplomat, Gallimard, who imagined he was Pinkerton and his partner, Song, was Butterfly.

The language used in the play is very layered, as the action is too. Gender is of great importance for the play, as Gallimard is a man, while Song portrays a woman throughout their relationship. Additionally, Gallimard is French, a man from the West, while Song is a Chinese singer and actor. Power relations in the drama are very complex, as all of the identities of the speakers must be taken into consideration, including the point in the play when they are spoken out (as we are led to believe that Song is a woman for the first part of the play). Similar to the drama *I Dream before I Take the Stand*, a part of the play (Act Three) takes place in a courthouse in Paris, so the courtroom language is used.

The main premise of the play is that the attitude Gallimard had towards Song is what enabled him to be deceived for all those years. That attitude is mostly a consequence of Gallimard questioning his positions: that of a man (i.e. questioning his masculinity, especially his sexual orientation is brought into question in the last part of the play) and of a Frenchman in the East (or Orient would be more accurate, as will

⁷⁴ David Henry Hwang. *M. Butterfly*. Dramatist Play Service Inc. (New York, 1988). p. 85. Print.

be clarified later in the text) primarily.

Hwang included his notes with the text of the drama, and in this *Afterword* he introduces the concepts of prejudice and different fantasies which exist about the Other, in this case the Orientals (as he differentiates between the terms Oriental and Asian, the former being used to denote "an exotic or imperialistic views of the East" as opposed to a more objective point of view which supposes that Asians are people who inhabit Asia and who are originally from the continent).⁷⁵

The construction of ethnic identity is closely connected with the use of language. Sociolinguistic research into the matter mostly focused on different ethnicities living in the same society and sharing some cultural space. According to Carmen Fought, a sociolinguist researching language and ethnicity, we can define the following types of language use:

- **A “heritage” language.** A language other than that of the dominant group can play an important role in defining a minority ethnic group. [...]
- **Specific sociolinguistic features (used within the dominant language or variety).** The use of particular linguistic features within a variety can be a key element in the performance and recognition of ethnic identity, just as with any other aspect of identity, such as gender or social class. [...]
- **Code-switching.** For those who speak both the majority language and a heritage language, code-switching can be an effective way to signal ethnic identity. In particular, code-switching allows the speaker to index multiple identities, for example an affiliation with a minority ethnic heritage, but also with the wider community. [...]
- **Suprasegmental features.** For many ethnically related language varieties, suprasegmental features play a salient role, either in conjunction with segmental linguistic features or independently. [...]
- **Discourse features and language use.** In addition to the structural elements of language, ways of using language may be part of the indexing and reproduction of ethnic identity, even though the more subtle pragmatic aspects may not be consciously recognized by in-group or out-group members. Elements such as turn-taking patterns or directness/indirectness in making requests may differ significantly between ethnic groups who are using the same (or a very similar) dialect. [...]
- **Using a “borrowed” variety.** Many ethnically diverse communities may encompass a wide range of languages and varieties in a relatively small space, especially in large urban centers. Sociolinguistic research has found that sometimes individuals or communities

⁷⁵ M. Butterfly. p. 85.

appropriate a code that originates outside the ethnic group for use in constructing their ethnic identity. [...]⁷⁶

The language use is just one of the elements which differentiate between the members of different communities. There are many elements which allow for a dichotomy between *us* and *them* to be formed, especially if *they* are considered to be an outsider, a foreign element or the Other.

In the play, Gallimard sometimes seems oblivious to the relations and power struggles between the Chinese and foreign diplomats from the West. Yet, the people whom he meets are more aware of that fact. The French ambassador to China, Toulon, tells Gallimard that his perception of the way things are is wrong:

GALLIMARD: The Orient simply want to be associated with whoever shows the most strength and power. You live with the Chinese, sir. Do you think they like Communism?

TOULON: I live in China. Not with the Chinese.

GALLIMARD: Well, I --

TOULON: You live with the Chinese.⁷⁷

The norms a society (or to be more precise, social groups) follows are defined are not the median values of the norms the different groups have, as we have seen in our analysis of the male-female dichotomy in *I Dream before I Take the Stand*, but these norms mostly reflect the values of the majority in a certain society. As human brain tends to group things to allow for faster and more successive processes, human beings also tend to form groups according to shared characteristics (what we can call *the Sameness*). We form groups according to different criteria, such as common interests, similar education, sharing the same environment, etc.; and we usually perceive these criteria as less permanent or as more prone to change than it is the case with the following criteria. Groups are also formed according to our belonging to any number of social groups according to our age, sex, gender, religious affiliation, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc.; and these criteria often reflect different social norms and roles, and thus we tend to perceive them as less prone to change. The fact that the majority of society forms a group according to a certain criterion implies that there is a minority which does not belong in this group. This minority is actually a deviation from the norm, meaning that they differ in at least one aspect from the rest of society

⁷⁶ Fought, Carmen. *Language and ethnicity*. in Mesthrie, Rajend. Ed. *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociolinguistics*. Cambridge University Press (Cambridge, 2011). pp. 241-242. E-book.

⁷⁷ *M. Butterfly*. p. 37

(*the Otherness*). This manner of the group formation is somewhat different if we consider a (neo)colonial society, as the norms are simply pushed upon the people native to the colony. Power is in the hand of the West, as the Western powers are colonizers, yet, we cannot see one without the other: power is also in the hands of men, as we live in patriarchy. Edward Said, the author of *Orientalism*, writes the following about power and Orient:

The Orient was Orientalized not only because it was discovered to be “Oriental” in all those ways considered commonplace by an average nineteenth-century European, but also because it *could be* – that is, submitted to being – *made* Oriental.⁷⁸

Thus, Gallimard gains certain power from his relationship with Song, his co-workers begin to see him in a different light due to the fact that he has a lover (Toulon wants Gallimard to replace a French vice-consul in China, when he explains his decision to Gallimard, he tells him that: “Humility won't be part of the job. You're going to coordinate the revamped intelligence division. Want to know a secret? A year ago, you would've been out. But the past few months, I don't know how it happened, you've become this new aggressive confident . . . thing. And they also tell me you get along with the Chinese.”⁷⁹).

Gallimard's power over Song can be seen in their conversations. In some cases, there is an explicit mention of the fact that Gallimard is a Western man, and that Song is a Chinese woman. This can clearly be seen in the following two quotes:

SONG: There's something wrong about this.

GALLIMARD: I don't see what.

SONG: I feel . . . I am not myself.

GALLIMARD: No. You're nervous.

SONG: Please. Hard as I try to be modern, to speak like a man, to hold a Western woman's strong face up to my own . . . in the end, I fail. A small, frightened heart beats too quickly and gives me away. Monsieur Gallimard, I'm a Chinese girl. I've never . . . never invited a man up to my flat before. The forwardness of my actions makes my skin burn.

GALLIMARD: What are you afraid of? Certainly not me, I hope.

SONG: I'm a modest girl.⁸⁰

and:

SONG: No . . . no . . . gently . . . please, I've never . . . [...]

⁷⁸ Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. First Vintage Books (New York, 1979). pp. 5-6. Print.

⁷⁹ *M. Butterfly*. p.32

⁸⁰ *M. Butterfly*. p. 27

SONG: No . . . let me . . . keep my clothes . . .

GALLIMARD: But . . .

SONG: Please . . . it all frightens me. I'm a modest Chinese girl.

GALLIMARD: My poor little treasure.

SONG: I am your treasure. Though inexperienced, I am not . . . ignorant. They teach us things, our mothers, about pleasing a man.

GALLIMARD: Yes?

SONG: I'll do my best to make you happy. Turn off the lights.⁸¹

In the previous analysis we have introduced the notion of mansplaining. Song tells Gallimard that she feels uncomfortable in a certain situation and that it seems wrong to her. Gallimard does not agree with her, upon which Song states that she is not feeling herself. Gallimard tells her that she is not correct when it comes to identifying her emotion, that she is feeling nervous. This would constitute a clear case of mansplaining and Gallimard acknowledging the power he has over Song, which is increased by this exchange. Song then turns to the other dichotomy: West-East dichotomy, and tells Gallimard that she is trying to be modern and strong like the Western women (an ideal she should strive for), but that she is only a modest Chinese girl. Song resorts to using a diminutive (*small heart*) and calling herself a girl, instead of calling herself a woman, as we might expect from an adult female. As a consequence, Gallimard feels greater than he had felt just moments ago, his newly gained power makes him someone scary and he proceeds to ask Song if she is afraid, further telling her that she should not feel that way (as he will assume the traditional male gender role of a protector).⁸²

In the second excerpt we see Song telling Gallimard that she is not ready to take her clothes off and engage in sexual activities after he tells her he loves her and kisses her. Gallimard protests, but Song begs him to keep her clothes on, saying that she is a *modest Chinese girl*, again using the term girl to refer to herself. Gallimard assumes the protective role, telling her that she is *[his] poor little treasure*. Song accepts his advance and proceeds to repeat the previous phrase, telling him that the Chinese mothers teach their daughters the proper way to please a man. Gallimard is slightly

⁸¹ *M. Butterfly*. p. 34

⁸² Glick, P., Lameiras, M., Fiske, S. T., Eckes, T., Masser, B., Volpato, C., et al. *Bad but bold: Ambivalent attitudes toward men predict gender inequality in 16 nations*. 2004. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 86, pp. 713–728

taken by surprise, as he possibly expected that he will need to do more convincing. The excerpt closes with Song telling Gallimard to turn off the lights as she will do *[her] best to please him*.

The role Song assumes here is clearly in line with the East-West dichotomy we have mentioned previously. Gallimard is a white/Western male protector, while Song is seen as a hesitant, uncertain Oriental girl. Gallimard is the one who needs to win Song over, who needs to persuade her to let go and allow him access to her body. The attitude the author is trying to underline here is the dominance of the West over the East, in sexual terms, quite similar to the prevailing dominance of men over women, and in the play, as in life, the two layers of dominance work together. All women are seen as fragile (and have been for a long period of time, as we know from Shakespeare), but Oriental women are smaller, more submissive and need more protection than the Western women, as Song previously noted that she simply cannot assume such a powerful role as Western women can, even when she tries. Since Song wants to be successful in pretending to be a woman so that she could spy on Gallimard, she emphasizes her feminine characteristics and does everything she thinks Gallimard would expect from an Oriental woman.

In the following excerpt, we can see that difference between Western women and Oriental women more clearly:

GALLIMARD (To us): And so, I embarked on my first extra-extramarital affair. Renee was picture perfect. With a body like those girls in the magazines. If I put a tissue paper over my eyes, I wouldn't have been able to tell the difference. And it was exciting to be with someone who wasn't afraid to be seen completely naked. But is it possible for a woman to be *too* uninhibited, *too* willing, so as to seem almost too . . . masculine?

RENEE: You have a nice weenie.

GALLIMARD: What?

RENEE: Penis. You have a nice penis.

GALLIMARD: Oh. Well, thank you. That's very . . .

RENEE: What – can't take a compliment?

GALLIMARD: No, it's very . . . reassuring.

RENEE: But most girls don't come out and say it, huh?

GALLIMARD: And also . . . what did you call it?

RENEE: Oh. Most girls don't call it a "weenie," huh?

GALLIMARD: It sounds very –

RENEE: Small, I know.

GALLIMARD: I was going to say, "young."

RENEE: Yeah. Young, small, same thing. Most guys are pretty, uh, sensitive about that. Like you know, I had a boyfriend back home in Denmark. I got mad at him once and called him a little weeniehead. He got so mad! He said at least I should call him a great big weeniehead.

GALLIMARD: I suppose I just say "penis."

RENEE: Yeah. That's pretty clinical. There's "cock," but that sounds like a chicken. And "prick" is painful, and "dick" is like you're talking about someone who's not in the room.

GALLIMARD: Yes. It's a . . . bigger problem than I imagined. [...]

GALLIMARD: But I kept up our affair, wildly, for several months. Why? I believe because of Butterfly. She knew the secret I was trying to hide. But, unlike a Western woman, she didn't confront me, threaten, even pout.⁸³

Renee, Gallimard's lover is very uninhibited, meaning that she is very free and open both with both her body and her speech. Renee uses slang, as we could see in the previous excerpt. In the body of sociolinguistic research conducted so far, there has been more evidence for men using slang than women. Women are considered to be more polite (i.e. a characteristic of women's language would be trying to avoid the use of slang terms, profanities and obscenities in general, but more so in mixed groups in terms of gender).⁸⁴ One of the possible explanations for Renee's use of slang terms to refer to men's genitalia is that she is young, as research has shown that young people tend to use more slang than members of other generations.⁸⁵ However, using slang terms carries a certain power, meaning that the members of subordinate groups tend to avoid using slang, especially in communication with members of superordinate groups (not just women when speaking with men). For this reason, we can assume that Renee consciously chooses to use the slang terms in bedroom to refer to Gallimard's genitalia, in an effort to make sure that she keeps some power in her hands. Gallimard was both impressed and frightened by Renee's behaviour: as he notes, it was exciting for him to be with someone who wasn't afraid of being naked (but readily accepted it and enjoyed it), but Renee's behaviour left an impression that she was too masculine for him, unlike his Butterfly who was always modest, whose speech was conservative and who did avoided being naked.

Eventually in the course of play it is revealed that Song is a man and that he was a

⁸³ *M. Butterfly*. pp. 43-44

⁸⁴ Haas, Adelaide. *Male and Female Spoken Language Differences: Stereotypes and Evidence*. 1979. *Psychological Bulletin*, Vol. 86, pp. 616-626

⁸⁵ *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. p.176

spy, getting his information from Gallimard. Gallimard appears before the court so the judge can determine if he was collaborating with Song and the judge questions them about the nature of their relationship. During the Song's questioning, the judge asks him how it was possible for him to assume the female identity for so long (twenty years), given that their relation was also sexual. Song maintains that it was not that difficult, as Gallimard never saw him naked, and since he managed to satisfy his Western urges because of the knowledge he got from his mother, who was a former prostitute who *learned a few things about Western men*.⁸⁶

The judge asks Song to reveal this secret knowledge to the court and Song delivers it:

SONG: Okay, Rule One is: Men always believe what they want to hear. So a girl can tell the most obnoxious lies and the guys will believe them every time – "This is my first time" – "That's the biggest I've ever seen" – or *both*, which, if you really think about it, is not possible in a single lifetime. [...]

SONG: Rule Two: As soon as a Western man comes into contact with the East – he's already confused. The West has sort of an international rape mentality towards the East. Do you know rape mentality?

JUDGE: Give us your definition, please.

SONG: Basically, "Her mouth says no, but her eyes say yes." The West thinks of itself as masculine – big guns, big industry, big money – so the East is feminine – weak, delicate, poor . . . but good at art, and full of inscrutable wisdom – the feminine mystique. "Her mouth says no, but her eyes say yes." The West believes the East, deep down, *wants* to be dominated – because a woman can't think for herself.

JUDGE: What does this have to do with my question?

SONG: You expect Oriental countries to submit to your guns, and you expect Oriental women to be submissive to your men. That's why you say they make the best wives.

JUDGE: But why would that make it possible for you to fool Monsieur Gallimard? Please – get to the point.

SONG: One, because when he finally met his fantasy woman, he wanted more than anything to believe that she was, in fact, a woman. And second, I am an Oriental. And being an Oriental, I could never be completely a man.

JUDGE: Just answer my question: did he know you were a man?

SONG: You know, Your Honor, I never asked.⁸⁷

We can see that Song speaks differently as a man in the courtroom than he did to Gallimard in all those years when he pretended to be a woman. He is more direct (*Put*

⁸⁶ *M. Butterfly*. p. 61

⁸⁷ *M. Butterfly*. pp. 61-62

it however you like. I'm not shy.)⁸⁸, he makes jokes while speaking (*You've maybe heard those phrases a few times in your own life, yes, Your Honor?*)⁸⁹, and ignores the judges requests to continue with his explanation (*Okay, okay, just trying to lighten up the proceedings. Tough room.*)⁹⁰ He explains the societal norms which enabled him to continue assuming a woman's role for a number of years, meaning both gender norms and East vs. West societal norms. In the first place, men see women as something to be conquered and won; they see themselves as dominant by nature when in engaged with women. In the case of Song and Gallimard this is further amplified by the fact that Song is Oriental, as the West has the same attitude towards the East. Song explains to the judge that the West has a rape mentality towards the East, believing that the East deep down wants to be dominated. At the beginning of the play, Gallimard was a French diplomat who was somewhat shy and not very successful or powerful in either his professional life or private life. His relationship with Song changed that, he began seeing himself as a man, a man of power, someone's protector and dominant lover; his colleagues and supervisors saw that he was beginning to change, to exude power and knowledge, so professional success followed. The play thus emulates and represents the power relations in the society, at all layers, and the use of language enables the author in the play in the manner in which it is used in the society by the members of different groups enables the author to be successful in this portrayal and to make his point. The point Hwang was trying to make can maybe be summarized by Said's claim that:

These contemporary Orientalist attitudes flood the press and the popular mind. [...] Always there lurks the assumption that although the Western consumer belongs to a numerical minority, he is entitled either to own or to expend (or both) the majority of the world resources.⁹¹

⁸⁸ *M. Butterfly*. p. 61

⁸⁹ *M. Butterfly*. p. 61

⁹⁰ *M. Butterfly*. p. 61

⁹¹ *Orientalism*. p.108

5. CONCLUSION

As we have stated in the first part of the paper, this paper used the sociolinguistic body of research into the language use and gender in order to analyse the manner in which language was used in dialogues in two dramatic works – *I Dream before I Take the Stand* by Arlene Hutton and *M. Butterfly* by David Henry Hwang.

The theoretical framework relied on the differences in the use of language in respect to the social dimensions between the speakers, to some extent to politeness theory and differences in speech patterns between male and female English speakers, and, mostly, on the work of linguists when it comes to the use of language by women – *women's language*, as described by Lakoff and subsequent researchers. Additionally, the theoretical framework also included various theories from the area of gender studies, introducing the notion of gender and its' difference in theory in use to the term sex, using the findings of different sociologists, psychologists and philosophers to explain the significance and role of sexual orientation and sexual identity in today's world in relation to the dramatic works analysed.

Because of that, the paper is not purely sociolinguistic, but interdisciplinary, as language use by different societal groups can never be studied in isolation from the theories of society and power in the aforementioned society.

The analyses also included the linguistic and legal research into the language which is used in courtrooms and its effects on the people who have survived sexualized crimes, as both plays are set in the courtroom setting, at least partially. Additionally, the analysis of the play *M. Butterfly* included the theoretical findings of the relationship between the East and the West, since the power relations in the drama are firmly rooted in the said dichotomy.

The paper finds that the language female characters use reveals the social injustice when it comes to the treatment of women, i.e. that the features of women's language (indecisiveness, politeness, hesitance to interrupt the speaker, etc.) play a role in the power women have when it comes to their representation, especially in the court of law. Additionally, the paper showed that gender cannot be studied in isolation and used alone to describe the language features used by certain characters, as we

necessarily need to consider other social groups they belong to (such as Chinese or gay, for example) to adequately explain the force their words have.

Lastly, representation of subordinate social groups is of great importance for the change of social relations, as was presented in the findings of studies used for the theoretical framework, and for this reason we hope that the choice of the dramatic texts analysed will contribute to such a change

6. APPENDIX

APPENDIX A: EXCERPT FROM *I DREAM BEFORE I TAKE THE STAND*, PAGES 7-11

HE: Your hair is up today. Were you wearing it that way in the park?

SHE: No. I was wearing it down.

HE: Why?

SHE: It probably wasn't quite dry.

HE: You go out with wet hair? Why?

SHE: In nice weather.

HE: Why?

SHE: It feels good.

HE: And you color your hair.

SHE: Yes.

HE: And why is that?

SHE: I like it.

HE: Why? What is your natural color?

SHE: Like this when I was in college.

HE: But now?

SHE: I don't know.

HE: You don't know what color your hair is?

SHE: It's been a while—

HE: What color do you think it is?

SHE: I imagine it's sort of a dirty blonde with a little gray.

[note: "dirty blonde" can be "mousy brown," depending on the hair color of the actress.

"With a little gray" can be omitted]

HE: But you don't really know.

SHE: Not really.

HE: (*Optional pause.*) Do you think you are more attractive with colored hair?

SHE: I don't know.

HE: Then why do you color it?

SHE: I guess so.

HE: What?

SHE: I guess I think I'm—

HE: So you color your hair to be more attractive.

SHE: I guess.

HE: But your fingernails are not painted.

SHE: No.

HE: Do you sometimes paint your fingernails?
SHE: Sometimes I wear nail polish.
HE: Were your fingernails painted that day?
SHE: I think so.
HE: What nail color did you use?
SHE: A pink polish.
HE: Not red.
SHE: No. Just pink.
HE: Why?
SHE: To match my make-up.
HE: You were wearing make-up?
SHE: Yes.
HE: Do you always wear make-up to the park?
SHE: No.
HE: They why were you wearing it that day?
SHE: I was on my way to work.
HE: What sort of make-up were you wearing?
SHE: What brand?
HE: Which items of make-up had you put on? Lipstick?
SHE: Yes.
HE: What color?
SHE: The actual name?
HE: What color would you call the lipstick you wore?
SHE: A sort of peach, maybe, with a darker—
HE: You were wearing two colors on your lips?
SHE: Well, yes.
HE: How does one do that?
SHE: It's a lip liner with a brush and then a tube lipstick.
HE: You outline your lips before you put on your lipstick.
SHE: Yes. It's—
HE: You add definition to your lips.
SHE: Sort of.
HE: To emphasize them. You emphasize your lips.
SHE: It's just the way you put on make-up.
(Possibly a pause.)
HE: What other make-up were you wearing?
SHE: A little powder.
HE: Why?
SHE: So my nose wouldn't be shiny.
HE: And why would it?

SHE: It was a fairly warm day.

HE: You might have perspired a little.

SHE: Maybe.

HE: And was there color on your cheeks?

SHE: Yes. I use a little blush.

HE: Color on the eyes?

SHE: Eyeliner. Maybe a little eye shadow.

HE: Mascara.

SHE: No.

HE: Are you sure?

SHE: Yes. I don't use mascara.

HE: Why not?

SHE: It bothers my contact lenses.

HE: Were you wearing contact lenses in the park?

SHE: Yes.

HE: You weren't wearing glasses?

SHE: No.

HE: But you are wearing glasses now.

SHE: Sometimes I wear contact lenses.

HE: You were wearing contact lenses in the park.

SHE: I already said that.

HE: Your hair was down and you were wearing make-up and contact lenses.

SHE: I already said that.

HE: Your hair was down and you were wearing make-up and contact lenses.

SHE: Yes.

(Pause.)

HE: Were you wearing perfume?

SHE: Cologne.

HE: Do you always wear perfume?

SHE: Cologne. I was wearing cologne.

HE: Do you always wear cologne?

SHE: Usually.

HE: In the park?

SHE: To work.

HE: And it was a warm day.

SHE: Yes. But what does that—

HE: You were walking through the park on your way to work dressed in your skirt and top. Your hair was down and you were wearing make-up and perfume.

SHE: Cologne.

(A long pause. She has won this round, and he must regroup.)

**APPENDIX B: EXCERPT FROM *I DREAM BEFORE I TAKE THE STAND*,
PAGES 18-25**

HE: Were you wearing a bra?

SHE: What?

HE: Were you wearing a bra?

SHE: Yes.

HE: What size?

SHE: Thirty-four.

HE: Thirty-four what?

SHE: Just thirty-four.

HE: What cup size are you?

SHE: Um, uh, B or C.

HE: You don't know?

SHE: It depends on the bra. What brand.

HE: What was the cup size of the bra you had on that day?

SHE: It didn't have a cup size. It was just a 34.

HE: Why didn't it have a cup size? Don't most bras have a cup size?

SHE: It wasn't sized that way. It didn't have an underwire.

HE: So it was an elastic sort of bra.

SHE: I don't know. Maybe.

(A slight pause.)

[...]

HE: But thirty-four B or C is a fairly large bra size for a small woman.

SHE: It's average.

HE: Not for a petite woman. You wouldn't say your breasts were small.

SHE: My....

HE: Your breasts. They are not small breasts.

SHE: I don't know.

HE: You don't know you have large breasts?

SHE: They're average.

HE: Do you always wear a bra?

SHE: When?

HE: When you walk through the park, do you always wear a bra?

SHE: Yes.

HE: Why?

SHE: I feel more comfortable.

HE: Because you have large breasts.

SHE: (No answer.)

HE: You would not say that you have small breasts.

SHE: No...

HE: You have a large bust. But you were wearing a tank top.

[...]

HE: How were you carrying your purse?

SHE: On my shoulder. The strap was on my shoulder.

HE: Could it cause your tank top strap to shift?

SHE: What?

HE: The strap on your tank top. Could your purse strap have caused it to shift?

SHE: I guess.

HE: Revealing your bra strap.

SHE: Maybe.

HE: So your bra straps could have been showing as you walked through the park.

SHE: I don't know.

(Pause.)

[...]

HE: What color was your underwear?

SHE: What does it matter?

HE: What color was your underwear?

SHE: *(Overlapping.)* Black.

HE: The bra or the panties?

SHE: Both.

HE: They matched?

SHE: Yes.

HE: Did they have lace?

SHE: Yes.

HE: You were wearing a black lacy bra and panties?

SHE: That's right.

[...]

HE: The underwear. The bra and panties

SHE: In case it... in case the tank strap...

HE: So you expected the bra strap to be seen.

SHE: Not necessarily.

HE: But you thought it might.

SHE: I didn't really think about it. It's just what I put on that morning.

HE: Black lacy underwear is considered sexy.

SHE: I guess.

HE: It is sexier than white or beige.

SHE: I guess so.

HE: Black is considered a sexy color. So is red.

SHE: I don't know.

[...]

HE: Your clothes were warm and sticky. The shape of your body was revealed. Have your breasts been artificially enlarged?

SHE: No.

HE: Or reduced?

SHE: No.

HE: They have not been altered in any way.

SHE: No.

HE: So your breasts are not, shall we say, unnaturally firm.

SHE: I guess not.

HE: And your bra had no underwire.

SHE: We've been through that.

HE: So your breasts had little support.

SHE: I was wearing a bra.

HE: You were walking quickly.

SHE: Yes.

HE: Your breasts were bouncing.

SHE: I don't know.

HE: Your strap might have slipped. Your breasts had no support.

SHE: I was wearing a bra.

HE: You were swinging your arms.

SHE: You said that.

HE: You were either swinging your arms or your arms were folded holding up your breasts.

SHE: I don't know.

HE: Tank tops are low cut.

SHE: It wasn't really—

HE: You folded your arms under your breasts to show your cleavage.

SHE: No.

**APPENDIX C: EXCERPT FROM *I DREAM BEFORE I TAKE THE STAND*,
PAGES 27-29**

HE: It was a very hot day. You walked quickly through the park wearing sexy clothes with your breasts bouncing and your thighs damp and you smiled and nodded at a stranger.

SHE: That's not it.

HE: You were walking through the park.

SHE: Yes.

HE: It was a hot day.

SHE: Yes.

HE: You smiled at stranger. And he followed you.

SHE: I didn't know.

HE: What?

SHE: I didn't know that he had followed me.

HE: When did you notice that he followed you?

SHE: When he grabbed me.

HE: Not before?

SHE: He grabbed me from behind. I didn't see him.

HE: You didn't turn when you heard someone behind you?

SHE: There was loud music. I didn't hear anything.

HE: The music was so loud you didn't hear someone behind you?

SHE: There was a machine...

HE: A lawnmower?

SHE: Louder. An edger. There was loud music and loud noise. I didn't hear him.

HE: You went into the park.

SHE: To walk to work.

HE: You were wearing suggestive clothing.

SHE: No.

HE: You signaled to a man.

SHE: No.

HE: You enticed him.

SHE: No.

HE: You led him on.

SHE: No.

HE: You acknowledged him.

SHE: *(No answer.)*

HE: You smiled at him.

SHE: Yes.

[...]

HE: *(He verbally rapes her.)* You left your glasses off. Your dyed hair was bobbing in the breeze. You had painted nails and wore rouge. Your body was scented. You were wearing a

revealing outfit, you were feeling sexy in your dainty black lacy undies and your tight shirt and your sheer skirt, and you were shaking your breasts and rolling your hips at this man.

SHE: *(Quite possibly a scream.)* No!

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