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Speech Strategies and Gender Exclusion in a Rural Development Project¹

1. Introduction

Interpersonal communication in structured meetings is a decisive element in the development and growth of institutions and organizations. Exclusion from meetings reflects and causes exclusion from other organizational activities of importance. In the context of development work, people who are mentioned as priority target groups in project descriptions continue to face exclusion on grounds of gender, age and social class. Discourse analysis enables us to evaluate communicative events in one of these project groups: How do women and men take part in discussions, who introduces topics and controls the allocation of turns?

Discourse analysis is widely used in research on institutional and organizational communication. It facilitates the analysis of power relations that are of particular importance for the study of gender-specific differences. In the context of development, discourse analysis is expected to provide insights on participation, gender-specific exclusion and strategic use of power.

The paper is based on data from field studies in development communication carried out in North-Western Tanzania in 1994/95. Research has been done on a project run by a joint Tanzanian and Austrian team of development workers. The project promotes appropriate agricultural techniques and is intended to curb migration from rural to urban areas. At the village level, project groups consist of around 10–20 women and men farmers in a village. The project has a gender-sensitive orientation and aims at including women and men as regular members of the groups.

Field studies combined interviews, participant observation of meetings and project activities, tape-recording and transliteration of meetings and collection of written sources. The analysis is directed towards internal and external organizational communication in development work. Without participation in communicative processes there is no participation in planning, decision-making and implementation.

This article deals with women's and men's verbal contributions in one Steering Committee meeting of a rural project. Differences between women's and men's speech behavior during meetings are significant: Women are silent during large parts of the meetings, if they speak at all, they do so in a quiet voice

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and hesitantly. Men dominate meetings. They do most of the talking. Men are aware of this imbalance in communication and provide an explanation: Women are "traditionally expected" to be shy and silent in public. Yet, men of the group often blame women for not taking an initiative in breaking away from this "traditional" behavior.

Closer analysis of communicative events reveals that in fact the communicative behavior in organized meetings in the context of development work enhance hierarchies and prevalent patterns of social dominance.

- Dominance relations based on age, gender and social class are enacted and reproduced in speech.
- In processes of institutional change, speech strategies are a major instrument in the re-organization of hierarchies.

The data from our corpus of transliterated discourse gives reason to doubt that serious effort is made to offer all members of the target group equal chances in the decision-making and planning of the project. Just as being poor or illiterate can make it difficult to participate, being a woman is an additional problem.

1.1. Gender and Development

In the field of development studies, Gender and Development (GAD) came to replace the Women in Development (WID) approach mainly as a consequence of various initiatives among "Southern" women scientists. DAWN (Development Alternatives of Women for a New Era), an association of "Southern" women scientists, criticized the "Integration of Women in Development" and instead emphasized the concept of "empowerment": As women had always been integrated into economy and development, the point was rather to question the conditions under which women participate. The perspective of poor and powerless women was taken as starting point for developing concepts for all marginalized and disadvantaged groups. Representatives of DAWN emphasized the importance of social class, race and the experience of colonialism in the context of gender issues, as well as the impact of power relations on development.

What happens in development, and how seriously gender is taken on board both in overseas programmes and within institutions' Northern headquarters, depends on relationships of power which are all too often vertical: relations between North and South, management and staff, men and women. (Macdonalds 1994, p. 17)

Exclusion of women is a widespread concern in research work on gender and development. Of particular concern is the fact that even within gender-sensitive programmes, particular groups among women are often ignored and neglected. In East Africa, unmarried and young women are usually not a target group of development initiatives (Bryceson 1995, p. 214). In Kenya, it is poor and young women who contribute most of the productive work but are least organized; membership in Women's Groups is restricted to middle-aged women of the

middle peasantry (Wamwala 1991, p. 250). Thus, women face exclusion on grounds of gender as well as age, social class, ethnicity, etc.

In the context of exclusion of women, the "culture of silence" is referred in order to explain non-participation of poor women unable to articulate interests that may conflict with men or dominant women. Instead of speaking up and voicing their concerns, poor women will often decide to walk out and refrain from any further involvement. This unspectacular and almost invisible refusal often goes unnoticed even in the framework of projects that focus on women or on the "poorest". The "culture of silence" is an obstacle to organizational processes (Mehta 1991, p. 148). Because of the dominance of other participants, it is hard for women to develop views based on their own experiences. Women who decide to persist face resistance from men or other women. It may take long before they make their influence felt or change situations to their own benefit.

Where women take up the challenge and participate with men in development efforts, they are usually in a disadvantaged position because of their lack of experience. Men tend to "develop a paternalistic attitude towards the women and reinforce traditional roles in the community" (Mehta 1991, p. 147). Existing hierarchies are maintained.

1.2. Participation vs. exclusion

The concept of participation gained ground as the exclusion of people from decision-making was recognized as a major obstacle in development work. The shift to a participative approach in development has a large potential for changing existing power relations. While in the past, *things* were at the center of the development process, the focus has now shifted to *people*.

The rhetoric of development now widely favours putting people first, and often putting poor people first of all. (Chambers 1995, p. 32)

Bottom-up communication is given preference over conventional top-down approaches. The empowerment process entails a shift in power to those who are local and poor. Nevertheless, the actual impact of the paradigm shift has been minimal. Chambers gives the following reasons why there was little effect on development practice:

Normal professionalism, bureaucracy, careers and teaching combine in top-down standardisation and pressures for speedy action. Most importantly ... participation as an empowering process implies loss of central control ... (Chambers 1995, p. 33)

The recent popularity of the term participation in the context of development does not mean that there is general agreement as to what participation means or who should participate. Even within the same development organization, the meaning of key words is not necessarily shared by all members. On the contrary: We should expect that management will have a very different idea of participation than fieldworkers or beneficiaries have (Nelson and Wright 1995, p. 7). The

constraints of existing structures perpetuate hierarchies, dependency and prevailing patterns of exclusion. For example, field staff lectured in a top-down manner on how to set up participatory processes are likely to adopt a teacher-pupil relationship to beneficiaries at the village level (Nelson and Wright 1995, p. 13).

1.3. Exclusion and silencing

Within linguistics, silence has traditionally been ignored except for its boundary-marking function, delimiting the beginning and the end of utterances (Saville-Troike 1985, p. 3). Silence is usually defined negatively, as the absence of speech. In pragmatics, the analysis of silence is limited to the functions of pauses in conversation.

Cross-cultural research has pointed out the various communicative functions that silence can have. Particular attention has been drawn to the fact that positive or negative evaluations of silence are culture-specific.

In many societies, silence or eloquence is ascribed to particular groups as appropriate behavior, with silence often seen as suitable behavior of the younger generation and women. Silence as communicative behavior forced on dominated or powerless groups becomes oppressive, particularly when these groups are not allowed to break their silence of their own accord (Jaworsky 1993, p. 118).

Swilla describes that in official gatherings in rural Tanzania, "men dominate in speaking and women are often reduced to silent listeners" (1995, pp. 27, 28). Traditions and practices that exclude women from participating effectively in the community are widespread and lead to "self-censorship which is born out of fear of being ridiculed, attacked or ignored" (Swilla 1995, p. 28).

In writings on gender and language, the "silencing of women" as a dominated group has been identified as a central concern. Women's experience has been described as that of a "muted group". While any group in a society generates its own ideas about reality, articulation of these ideas is only listened to if expressed in the mode of the dominant group. *The muted groups, in any context, if they wish to communicate, must express themselves in terms of this mode, rather than in ones which they might otherwise have generated independently.* (Ardener 1991, p. 7). Women are not only told to be silent, limits are also set to what they may say and how they may say it. *"The power to silence another is not simply the power to prevent her talk; it is also the power to shape and control her talk,"* (Houston and Kramarae 1991, p. 389). Women are silenced through socialization, social pressure or overt force. Women defying social norms of conduct and acquiescence often experience restrictions and obstacles from others.

Cameron discusses the muted group model referring to the situation in formal meetings. She notes that those who wish to make a contribution in a formal meeting need to use a specific languages suiting the occasion. While contribu-

tions phrased in an informal language are usually understandable, in formal contexts they will still be regarded as unacceptable. It is therefore expedient for the dominated group to respect the rules relevant to the occasion. Nevertheless, *having to translate into a language you are not "at home" with is not a small problem, and that there are many reasons to believe that women are indeed less at home than men in some forms of language.* (Cameron 1992, p. 144)

Studies of interpersonal communication between couples have also analyzed men's silence as a reaction to women's contributions in interaction. By not responding to a considerable part of topics women introduce into conversation, men silence women on a number of issues (DeFrancisco 1991, p. 417). The phenomenon of silencing the communication partner by simply not responding demonstrates the complexity of trade-offs between language use and power, as in such cases the dominated partner talks more and introduces more issues into conversation, however, she is less successful in achieving her interactive aims, i.e. getting a response.

In institutional contexts, such as the courtroom, silence and hesitation in response to questions or invitations to speak are often negatively evaluated. Hesitant or silent witnesses are labeled unconvincing and inconsistent. At worst, *"pausing and lying are equated"* (Walker 1985, p. 57).

Absence, silence and submissiveness of women in important domains of society reinforce their disadvantaged position. We will focus in this paper on such communicative patterns in the public domains. By analyzing concrete examples of spoken discourse in the process of institutional development, we hope to gain insights into the social implications of language use in this domain.

2.1. The project: institutional networks

The project is part of an Tanzanian-Austrian co-operation program that promotes rural development. Young farmers' groups in two villages in North-Western Tanzania form the target group of an agricultural project that offers training in improved organic farming techniques. The groups comprise about 10–20 members in each village. A team of three development workers runs the project; they are partly employed by the local Catholic diocese and partly by the Austrian donor organization. The project is part of the diocese, using its office and transport facilities and supervised by its representative board. Receiving external funding (including salaries and transport facilities) from an Austrian donor gives the project a privileged position within the diocese. Diagram 1 gives an overview over the elements and their position in the network.

The following description focuses on the local target group, the field staff and the donor organization. Information on other elements of the network is only included if considered relevant for the interpretation of the communicative events.

2.1.1. Target Group

Theoretically, women and men alike are eligible as members of the target group. A closer look at actual membership reveals that most male members are former members of the parish Youth Group that initiated the project. In local structures that existed prior to the project – such as the church Youth Group from which group members were recruited – men were already better organized and more experienced. Local social and cultural norms do not approve of women's participation in the public domain. While the project is committed to a "gender approach" that should include equal participation of both women and men, it was nevertheless run for a considerable time without significant participation of women. Men got organized, took over leadership functions as well as administrative tasks (e.g. of organizing and running meetings). Female members of the group joined rather because they happened to be the wives of male members. They participated only marginally in project activities. The Project Team became concerned about the gender imbalance in the target group. As women could hardly be motivated to join the group, the Project Team encouraged them to form their own group and carry out activities of their own choice. These consisted of sewing, knitting and farming. The focus on sewing and knitting had been the women's wish; while the Project Team had been reluctant to have women engage in needlework, it had finally been agreed upon as a way to enhance Women's Group formation and organization. As a result, the target group was at the time of the research divided into three entities. Members who had joined the project from the beginning onwards and had completed a one year training phase constituted the "Follow-Up" Group. Although women had occasionally joined this group, they eventually formed their own group. Finally, the recently started "Training Group", also referred to as Youth Group, consisted of members in their first year of training. While the Follow-up Group and the Training Group had never officially excluded women, they were practically men's groups, especially after the formation of the Women's Group.

The groups had a number of elected functionaries such as Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, with the functionaries of the Follow-up Group having a leading role in the whole target group. In addition, one member of the Follow-up Group was employed as "Instructor" (Mkufunzi) by the project to train first year members in agricultural skills. At the time of our research, all of the functionaries of the Follow-up Group and Training Group were men.

In the common meetings of Follow-up Group, Training Group and Women's group, women were often absent, silent, or hesitant in their contributions. Meetings were usually scheduled in the afternoon, often took several hours and ended with a common meal. These meals were prepared by women of the group, who took turns in the nearby kitchen. This interfered with their participation in the meeting; while a few male members occasionally left the four-hour long meeting for a few minutes, most women missed hours.

2.1.2. Field Staff

The Project Team is formed by the Project Director, a former teacher and church youth leader, the agricultural Advisor and the Advisor of the Women's Group. Within the project team, there are individual status differences. The position of the Austrian agricultural Advisor is particularly strong because of his type of contract (he is employed by the Austrian donor NGO, whereas his Tanzanian colleagues are employees of the local NGO) and his close contact to the donor organization that results in more information and greater influence on financial decisions. The Tanzanian Project Director is his superior in the Project Team; but this has limited influence on actual communicative patterns and decision-making. The Advisor of the Women's Group, a social worker by training, had joined the group only recently, and her post had been created in order to enhance women's participation in the village group. She had started particular women's activities in order to get women interested into joining the group. Apart from working specifically with women, the Advisor of the Women's Group also engaged in other activities, such as training in agricultural skills for all members of the target group.

2.1.3. Donor Agency

The project is part of a larger program of rural development co-ordinated by the Austrian donor NGO. The donor agency's concept of participation includes that all possible members of the target group should have fair chances to participate in the project group and that no one should be excluded on grounds of gender or poverty. Group members at the local level are expected to participate actively in decision-making in regard to project activities. Projects should be designed and planned in co-operation with beneficiaries and not be imposed from the center. The organization's policy papers emphasize partnership and dialogue as principles in co-operation and distance themselves from being primarily a donor giving aid (IIZ 1994, p. 2).

Planning: target group and local project holders contribute their models, visions and needs and we our possibilities and conditions of funding. This ensures that programmes are negotiated with the people concerned without pressure of time. (IIZ Informationsmappe 1994, Grundbegriffe der IIZ-Arbeit, p. 1, translation by the author)

The Austrian donor agency has clear concepts about principles it wants to see realized in project work. The project is part of a larger program that aims at strengthening existing structures of social organization in the village to prevent the youth from migrating to town. While the project works with young people, their parents and village authorities are regularly invited and included into project activities. The NGO's policy paper voices support for traditional authorities and prevailing patterns of social organization. At the same time, it emphasizes

gender orientation as well as women's participation. The contradiction of supporting existing hierarchies based on gender and age on the one hand while working to overcome them on the other is not explicitly addressed.

The local Project Team is required to report favorably on the implementation of all these concepts in actual project work. The Project Team therefore has a rather pragmatic view of the term "participation": efficient achievement is emphasized rather than time-consuming, lengthy debates on principles.

2.1.4. Local project holder

The Catholic Diocese is the local partner of the Austrian donor NGO. Existing infrastructure and organizational culture of the church influence the work of the Project Team. The Representative Board, a senior council in the diocese, broadly supervises the Project Team's activities, but does not deal with its daily activities.

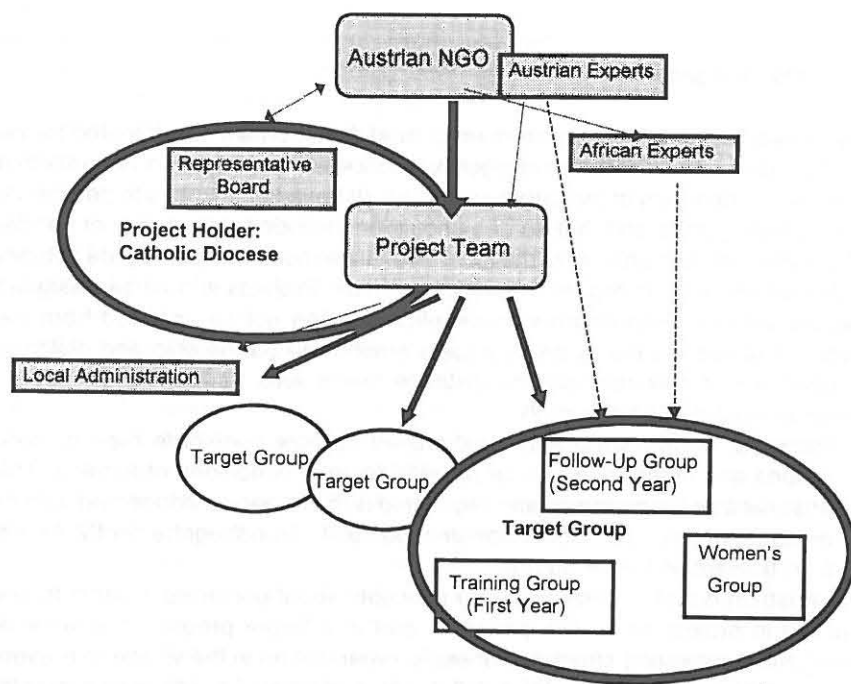


Diagram 1: Organizational network/Flow of information

(Broken lines indicate irregular transfers)

2.2. The Steering Committee Meeting

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss ongoing activities, to have an assessment and evaluation by participants in the presence of the Project Team. Participants of the meeting include functionaries of the village groups, i.e. Follow-up Group, Training Group and the Women's Group, and staff members, i.e. the Project Team. The agenda of the meeting follows plans elaborated in the previous meeting. Turns and topics are allocated according to the agenda and roles of the (FU) group functionaries such as Chairman, Secretary, etc. Diagram 2 gives us an overview over the individuals and groups represented in the meeting.

Project Team Project Director Advisor of the Women's Group	Women's Group Secretary of the Women's Group
Follow-up Group Chairman of the Follow-up Group Secretary of the Follow-up Group Instructor (member of the Follow-up Group)	Training Group Chairman of the Training Group Assistant Chairman of the Training Group
Village Government Chairman of the Village Government	

Diagram 2: Participants and groups represented in the Steering Committee Meeting

Steering Committee meetings facilitate the exchange of information; ideally, village group members and team members co-operate on finding ways and solutions in project work. At the same time, the meeting gives the team members a possibility for supervision and control.

At the level of institutional and group development, meetings of the Steering Committee help to consolidate co-operation between the three groups at grass-root level i.e., the Follow-up Group, the Women's Group and the Training Group. Co-operation of the three groups is monitored by the Project Team, who are the facilitators of the implementing organization. The Follow-up Group has a senior position in the Steering Committee, its functionaries chair the meeting, set the agenda and do most of the talking.

A large part of the meeting consists of a report by the Instructor who either provides information about the group's activity himself or passes the turn to those group members who had an important part in organizing or co-ordinating them. Other participants are expected to contribute and ask questions on matters of their concern.

Language use, especially on the part of the Follow-up Group, shows formal characteristics that are relevant to the exercise of power through language (cf. Fowler 1985, pp. 69 ff and Ng and Bradac 1993, p. 65): Modality, use of directive speech acts, role-casting and differences in the choice of pronouns.

- The examples show a particular frequent use of modality of power: Directives in the form of subjunctive and imperative are common and supplemented by expressions of necessity such as *must*, *there is a need to*, etc.
- The boldness of some directive utterances is stressed by explicit speech acts: *I tell you to ... I advise you to ...*. The speakers obviously feel no need to conceal their dominant role as those who can advise and instruct others.
- Casting roles on other participants, such as determining the rights of turn-taking, or ascribing the role of patiently listening to others, negotiating such roles as well as accepting them, usually takes place on an implicit level. Their explicit verbalization of role-castings constitute an additional aspect of the dominance of the members of the Follow-up Group. They are the ones who explicitly insist on making others speak or listen, e.g. by enforcing feedback: e.g. *have you understood, you are asked* etc.
- Choice of pronouns: All except the Secretary of the Women's Group are addressed with their functions or titles within the group. However, the functionaries of the Women's Group, who are recently elected, are not; to address them, other participants consistently use the term "mama", an informal address form for women. While this issue might be trivial, it shares a characteristic with the other ways in which power is exercised through language use: The use of such a strategy by the dominated group seems unlikely and would be met by sanctions of the dominant group.

The dominant position of the representatives of the Follow-up Group relies on their role of controlling turns and topics in the meeting which is opened by the Secretary and Chairman of the Follow-up Group in a very formal way. Official terms of address, greetings and rituals of standing up and sitting down, etc. characterize this section, in which Follow-up Group functionaries habitually take long turns.

The report on activities is monitored by the Chairman of the Follow-up Group who usually starts by allocating the turn to the instructor and subsequently to others.

3. Text analysis

The following quotations are taken from a meeting of the Steering Committee to illustrate various forms of control in interpersonal interaction.

As quotations of natural languages, the examples raise multidimensional and complex issues. For our purpose of analysis here, we focus on the following two aspects:

- Characteristics of the discourse of evaluation and monitoring: How do established members of the network exercise control by criticizing others, confronting them with norms, advising them, etc? How does this shape organizational processes?
- Allocation of turns and interactional role-casting: How are interactional roles of participants negotiated, what are the consequences for those concerned and for the whole network?

In the meeting, members of the Follow-up Group discuss their work as well as those of the other groups with the Project Team. We will give two initial examples to illustrate the exchanges between Follow-up Group and Project Team over their work. The larger part of the examples is taken from discussion on the activities on the Women's Group, in which those concerned hardly participate. One example is from the discussion about the activities of the Training Group is added to allow a comparison of the situation of the two groups. Finally, we quote all the examples of contributions from the representative of the Women's Group. This enables us to see under which circumstances women take a turn and contribute.

3.1.1. Monitoring by the Project Team

In the initial phase, members of the Follow-up Group discuss their work with the Project Team. In a typical exchange, the instructor reports why the planting of hedges has not been carried out. The Project Director responds with a suggestion.

Example 1²

Instructor: The next issue is the planting of hedges which has not been carried out yet because the expert has not yet arrived ...

Project Director: Mr. Chairman I was ... I try to see whether ... is there no Bwana Miti (afforestation officer) in the village / is there no one who can help you to plant trees?

Chairman of the Follow-up Group: No.

Project Director: And if there isn't ... we will plant ourselves, until ...³

The planting of hedges as part of the group's agenda is accounted for by the Instructor. As work has not been done according to plan, the Instructor justifies this failure by referring to conditions beyond his control: the expert has not yet arrived. The Project Director's question aims at resolving the problem by finding an expert locally. The question is only partly a request for information; it implies criticism of the group's behavior and is at the same time an attempt to change it. The Project Director uses several politeness strategies to make his proposal

2 Notes on transliteration: / = begin or end of an utterance; + = inaudible utterance; () = comments on the text; xx = interval of 2 seconds.

3 Original examples in Swahili: Discussing language in use is ideally done with reference to original quotations. In order to have a coherent text, examples are quoted in English translations in the text. The Swahili original Swahili version is added in footnotes.

Example 1:

Mkufunzi: Sehemu inayofuata ni upandikizaji wa vitalu ambao bado haujafanyika kulingana na kwamba mtaalamu hajafika ...

Mratibu: Mwenyekiti mimi nilikuwa ... *najaribu* kuona kama huenda ... hapa kijijini hakuna ... bwana miti / hakuna mtu anayeweza kuwasaidia kupanda miti?

Mwenyekiti wa Follow-Up: Hapana.

Mratibu: Na hakuna ... tukapanda wenyewe, mpaka ...

acceptable: He is indirect by addressing his contribution to the Chairman and not to the Instructor. He starts using the first person singular, hesitates, uses the mitigating form *I am trying to* and finally phrases his contribution as a question, avoiding any statement or assertion. Being indirect, he can exercise his influence by making suggestions, at the same time avoiding an authoritarian image. The Instructor sticks to the easy way out by answering his question to the negative. The Project Director continues with his suggestion, using the first person plural as a strategy of persuasion that expresses solidarity but paternalism as well, as the status differences between group and team members are all too obvious.

Questions by members of the Project Team can assume a more controlling form, as the following example shows. Intonation and volume leave no doubt that an urgent request is made.

Example 2

Agricultural adviser: Are you going to do it or not, will you plant sunflowers or not?⁴

Asymmetry in discourse is due to status and roles of the interactants in the communicative event: The project group, in this case the Follow-up Group, accounts for its activities, whereas the team is free to comment and evaluate.

3.1.2. Women and youth: constructing junior partners

In the following examples, members of the Follow-up Group shift topics from their own activities to those of the Women's Group and Training Group. While the discourse of reporting and evaluating continues, the members of the Follow-up Group change role from those who are monitored to evaluating others. The subsequently share this role with the members of the Project Team and the representative of the Village Government. Giving advice, expressing necessity and establishing norms are frequent strategies in this context.

In example 3, the Chairman of the Village Government addresses advice to the representative of the Women's Group. The contribution is about a member of the group who still has a key to the groups locker, but does not work with the group any more. The directive takes the form of an imperative.

Example 3:

Chairman of the Village Government: ... / now you what I ask from you if you see that a person has become lazy at work / then *try* to call her / him / bring this property of the group / because nowadays you are lazy /⁵

4 Example 2:

Mshauri wa kilimo: Mtaifanya sasa au hapana, mtapanda alizeti au hapana?

5 Example 3:

Mshauri wa serikali ya kijiji: ... / sasa ninyi ninachowaomba mtu anapokuwa mnaona kwamba wenda amekuwa mzembe kazini / basi *jaribuni* kumwita / lete hii mali ya kikundi / maana wewe siku hizi ni mzembe /

In example 4, the Chairman of the Follow-up Group sets the procedures established by the Follow-up Group as binding standard. He uses two expressions of necessity and subjunctive to express his opinion.

Example 4:

Chairman of the Follow-up: this question has to be explained / *they have to remember that they should use* the procedures which are there in the group / and without that now there will be completely different things that we do / that means that the group is run by the people themselves and not by the Advisors ...⁶

The next example again is about leadership and organizational procedures. The confident assertion that the group of the speaker is able to help the women reveals a paternalistic attitude; the exemplary quotation of a directive is again expressed in subjunctive.

Example 5:

Instructor: We can help them to become smarter / we can help them with leadership issues, whom *they should see*.⁷

Example 6 is part of a discussion about a bag of sunflower seeds that is owned by the Women's Group and kept to be planted. However, it was stored in an inadequate place as rats have destroyed some of it. In this contribution criticism is voiced by quoting an earlier directive. The use of imperative and subjunctive in a quotation of direct speech is underlined by the assertion that the directive was repeated every day.

Example 6:

Chairman of the Follow-Up: ... every day I tell them / *take* this seed and keep it in a nice way / but you still keep it here / ...⁸

In a further contribution to the discussion on sunflowers, the use of the phrase "I ask you to" in example 7 does not actually mitigate the request as it is again combined with a directive. An ironic threat is followed by a request for feedback that casts a passive and subordinate role on the hearer.

Example 7:

Instructor: ... I ask you that *they should take away* these sunflowers from

6 Example 4:

Mwenyekiti wa Follow-up: Hili swala ni la kueleza / lazima wazingatie watumie taratibu zilizopo hapa kwenye kikundi / na bila hivyo sasa itakuwa ni mambo mengine tofauti kabisa ambayo tunayafanya / ina maana kwamba kikundi kinaendeshwa na watu wenyewe wale siyo washauri ...

7 Example 5:

Mkufunzi: Tunaweza tukawasaidia kuwa wajanja zaidi / tunaweza tukawasaidia mambo ya uongozi kwamba wamuone nani.

8 Example 6:

Mwenyekiti wa Follow-up: ... kila siku mimi nawaambia / *toeni* hii mbegu mkaitunze kwa utaratibu mzuri / lakini bado wameweka hapa / ...

there / otherwise we will roast them, man / "mama" have you heard? this seed should not finish another week here / ...⁹

Members of the Women's Group share their junior position with the Training Group whom members of the Follow-up Group deal with in a similar way. Laziness is discussed as if it was the major problem of the Training Group, just as we will see later that the problem of the Women's Group is defined as lack of cleanliness. One of the issues of this context is a store that the Training Group constructs. In example 8, members of the Training Group receive the following instructions:

Example 8:

Chairman of the Follow-Up: ... / that's why I tell you / try to advise these youths / at the next meeting we should find that this store is finished / ...¹⁰

The particular assertiveness inherent in the act of directing a third person to instruct others is repeated in the context of the women's activities. The Advisor of the Women's Group had earlier complained about members of the Follow-up Group. The following contribution comes as a reaction to this complaint:

Example 9:

Instructor: Thank you Mr. Chairman I would like to advise the Advisor of the Women's Group / I ask you to continue to advise these women / that they should work with their hearts / because if they work by problems and by insulting people / in my opinion they will fail to work /¹¹

3.2.1. Absence, representation, replacement: The problems of speaking for others

The last example raises another aspect: Whenever issues concerning members of the Women's Group are raised, the Advisor of the Women's Group takes the turn to speak in their name. As a consequence, other participants address her when issues of the Women's Group are discussed. This has two implications: First, the women of the group are not fully recognized as partners. Secondly, the Advisor of the Women's Group takes up multiple and occasionally contradictory roles: she frequently acts as a leader of the Women's Group, at the same time,

9 Example 7:

Mkufunzi: ... Miye naomba ile alizeti waitoe pale / vinginevyo siye tutaikaanga bwana. Mama umesikia? Hiyo mbegu isimalize tena hapo wiki / ...

10 Example 8:

Mwenyekiti wa Follow-Up: ... / kwa hiyo mimi nakwambia / jaribu kuwashauri hawa vijana / kwenye kikao kingine tukute ghala hilo limemalizika / ...

11 Example 9:

Mkufunzi: Asante Mwenyekiti napenda kutoa ushauri kwa Ndugu Mshauri wa akina mama / nakuomba labda uendelee kuwashauri hawa wanawake / wafanye kazi kwa moyo / maana wakifanya kazi kwa matatizo ya kulaumu watu / mimi naona walashindwa kufanya kazi /

she also speaks in her function as a member of the Project Team. The following example is typical: The question about the work of the members of the Women's Group is not addressed to them, but to the Advisor. While it is likely that the Advisor is informed about the progress of work, the examples leave us wondering whether she would actually understand the problems of those who could not finish their part.

Example 10:

Instructor: B have you finished work?

Advisor of the Women's Group: With this needlework ... if anyone isn't finished by now / it is because of her own timing / but she has no problem.¹²

Similarly, in example 11, the instructor again addresses the Advisor of the Women's Group in a question that concerns the Women's Group. The Project Director, who is obviously conscious of the pattern and attempting to change it, rephrases the question and addresses it to the Secretary of the Women's Group. After the short contribution of the Secretary, the turn is again taken by the Advisor of the Women's Group who adds her further plans on the topic.

Example 11:

Instructor: We move to the women's issues / to continue with the teaching of sewing / to finish with the problematic issues for example / there were some parts which were problematic and we can put them right / the way B. (the Advisor of the Women's Group) was giving them at least – I ask that we listen to her.

Project Director: I don't know "mama" which step have you reached +++ have you finished or do some remain.

Secretary of the Women's group: +++

Project Director: So that means that the work is finished – or it is as if it is finished.

Advisor of the Women's Group: If they have finished / then I think that it is a good opportunity to start the second step / for the coming week I promise that on Tuesday Tuesday I will start / ...¹³

12 Example 10:

Mkufunzi: B kazi mmemaliza?

Mshauri wa akina mama: Katika kuangalia ile kazi ya mikono ... kwa sababu kama mtu hajamaliza mpaka sasa hivi / ni kwa sababu ya muda wake / lakini hana tatizo.

13 Example 11:

Mkufunzi: Tunakwenda kwenye sehemu ya akina mama / kuendelea na mafunzo ya ushonaji / ili kumalizia sehemu zilizo na matatizo kwa mfano / kuna sehemu nyingine ambazo zilikuwa na matatizo tunaweza kuziweka sawasawa / kama jinsi B. (Mshauri wa akina mama) alikuwa amewapa angalao moja – naomba tumsikilize –

Mratibu: Sijui vipi mama mlifikia hatua gani +++ mmemaliza wote au wamebaki.

Katibu wa akina Mama: +++

Mratibu: Kwa hiyo ina maana hiyo kazi imeisha – ni kama imeisha.

Mshauri wa akina mama: Kama wamemaliza / basi naona ni nafasi nzuri ya kuanza hatua ya pili / kwa wiki ijao mimi naahidi kwamba Juma Jumanne nitaanza / ...

The Advisor of the Women's Group does not consequently stick to the role of practically acting as a leader of the Women's Group, she also uses her position to criticize members of the Women's Group. In the next example, the Instructor introduces the topic of cleanliness around the women's chicken project and deals with it in a rather casual way. The women's Advisor takes a turn that starts a longer discussion. She strongly condemns the women's neglect of their project and argues that the topic of cleanliness does not deserve to be part of the agenda.

Example 12:

Chairman of the Follow-Up Group: Let's continue with another point.

Instructor: We move to the women's domain. Cleaning around the hen-house – let's say it was done but it still continues.

Advisor of the Women's group: Thank you Mr. Chairman / I / this work around the house and the yard is work that is mentioned every day in the Steering Committee / now in my opinion cleanliness is a usual thing / I mean every day you wake up you have to clean / now I suggest if you agree that we do not plan it like work / it should be a routine / I think that even here you can not plan the work of sweeping the TC building and plan it / it is an everyday thing / now I think we should consider this an everyday thing / if it is more than that / it can be apart / but every day it is not / this is my opinion I don't know what others say?¹⁴

The representative of the Village Government joins the Advisor or the Women's group in her criticism. In his contribution, he refers to alleged necessities (we must ...) and to norms which are labeled as usual procedures. The inappropriateness of this topic on the agenda is emphasized, participants complain about the time it has taken already and the importance of cleanliness and discipline as part of the work routine. Direct criticism of the Women's Group is not voiced at this point, the problem is treated as one of the group.

Example 13:

Chairman of the Village Government: ... This work of cleaning *should be every day's routine work* / so that it should not be put on the plan after this / it is an obstacle to certain other work which would have been put on the

agenda / in my opinion / it *should just be removed* / in a certain time they could finish that it should not come up here time and again / it has already taken a lot of time.¹⁵

After the contribution of the representative of the Village Government, the Chairman of the Follow-up Group is about to close the debate. At this point, the Project Director opposes the dismissal of the topic from discussion and demands an explanation for the shortcomings of the group from the Instructor.

Example 14:

Project Director: What do we say? Do we leave it and it will not be written down and the work will not be done / I think the Instructor should tell us why the work is not finished or done.¹⁶

We therefore have several members who all have an opinion about the point being on the agenda and about the way it should be dealt with. Ironically, those who deplore the loss of time and the unworthiness of the topic do not really hesitate to add their share to the discussion. The representative of the Women's Group up to this point neither takes a turn nor is she asked by anyone to do so, until the Instructor finally passes the topic on to her.

Example 15:

Instructor: Thank you Mr. Chairman maybe before I explain maybe those concerned could explain to us / because / I could speak while those concerned ... and the way they have planned it / ... we can add our thoughts after they have explained.

Secretary of the Women's Group: [extremely quiet voice] According to the explanations you have given / I could still understand that people were waiting for the leaders to announce their decision and give an opportunity to finish and complete this work.

Chairman of the Follow-up: It is as if maybe you were a housewife and the husband is the one who has the plan / that means that she has claimed that there was no leadership that is why she has not cleaned / that is why I ask her that if her husband is around / whether he can help her with guidance / if he goes out / does she fail to sweep her house or homestead? ...

Secretary of the Women's Group: [slow, with a quiet voice] This is not like husband and wife because husband and wife live together / but here we don't live together / everybody lives at her place / a leader can not just go to a

¹⁴ *Example 12:*

Menyekiti wa Follow-Up: Tuendelea na sehemu nyingine.

Mkufunzi: Tunaenda kwenye sehemu ya akina mama / usafi kuzungukia nyumba ya kuku / tunasema kwamba umefanyika lakini bado unaendelea.

Mshauri wa akina mama: Asante Mwenyekiti / mimi / hiyo kazi ya kuzunguka nyumba na kurekebisha ua ni kazi ambayo inakuja kila siku ni Kamati Kuu / sasa kitu cha usafi mimi naona ni kama kitu cha kawaida / yaani kila siku unapoamka lazima ufanye usafi / sasa nilikuwa napendekeza kama itakubalika ile *tusiipange* kama kazi / *Ikae kama kawaida* / Nafikiri hata hapa hamwezi mkapanga kwamba kazi ya kufagia ndani humu kwenye jengo la TC na kupanga / ni kitu cha kila siku / sasa nafikiri hiyo *tuiweke* kama kitu cha kila siku kama ni zaidi ya hapo labda iwe maalumu lakini kila siku si / ni mawazo yangu sijui wengine wanasemaje?

¹⁵ *Example 13:*

Mwenyekiti wa serikali ya kijiji: ... Hii kazi ya usafi iwe kazi ya kawaida ya kila siku kusudi / isiwewe kwenye mpango baada ya hapo / inazuia kazi nyingine maalum ambayo ingewekwa kwenye mpango / naona itafutiwe tu muda maalumu waweze kumaliza isiwe inaingia mara kwa mara hapa / imeshachukua muda mrefu.

¹⁶ *Example 14:*

Mratibu: Tunasemaje? Tunaliacha au basi halitaandikwa na kazi haitafanyika / nafikiri wenda mkufunzi angetueleza kwa nini kazi hiyo haijamalizika au kufanyika.

person's home / arrive and take her along that *we should go and you should do this and that*.¹⁷

The Instructor is obviously relieved to pass the turn on to the only representative of the Women's Group who is present. The Secretary of the Women's Group is irritated by the situation; her contribution comes in an almost inaudible voice. Her explanation mentions organizational problems within the Women's Group who did not have an elected leadership when that problem occurred. Her argument is dismissed and ridiculed by the Chairman: In his view, cleanliness needs no organization. He draws a paternalistic parallel, arguing that a housewife is able to keep her home clean even in the absence of the husband who is the one who makes plans and guides the home. This argument is revealing of the Chairman's view of women's role in the group, especially as most women of the group are wives of male members. The Chairwoman patiently defends herself against this example, explaining the difficulties of getting group members organized in a common effort.

The Chairman of the Follow-up Group rejects her explanation, claiming that a plan had actually been organized by the Follow-up Group, only that the women had not acted accordingly. The Secretary of the Women's Group is personally criticized twice very directly for shortcomings of the group. Her arguments are not accepted. There are no polite suggestions by the others, no ways out to save her face. The discussion continues with members of the Project Team and of the Follow-up Group engage in a general debate without arriving at any concrete solutions.

Men and the female member of the Project Team have little restraint in discussing problems of the Women's Group while hardly consulting them. The ambivalence towards the subject is revealing: on one hand, the issue is treated with contempt, on the other hand many participants feel compelled to say something about it. The need for a plan and organizing of cleaning work is denied and at the same time there are claims that work schedules actually exist. When the topic is finally closed, this contradiction is left unresolved and no decision is

17 Example 15:

Mkufunzi: Asante Mwenyekiti / labda kabla sijaweza kueleza labda wale wanaohusika wanaweza wakataeleza / kwani naweza nikaongea kumbe wahusika ... na wao jinsi walivyopanga / ... sasa tunaweza tukaongezea mawazo baada ya wao kuwa wameeleza. *Katibu wa akina mama:* [extremely quiet voice] Kulingana na maelezo yenu mliyoyatoa bado / nimeweza kuelewa kwamba watu walikuwa wanasubiri uongozi uweze kutoa maamuzi yao na kutupa nafasi ili tuweze kumalizia na kukamilisha shughuli hizo.

Mwenyekiti wa Follow-up: Ni kwamba kama labda wewe ni mama ndani ya nyumba na inawezekana kwamba bwana ndiye mwenye mpango / ina maana kwamba yeye amedai kwamba uongozi haufanyi nini haukuwepo ndiyo maana hawakufanya usafi / ndiyo maana namwuliza kwamba bwana yupo ni kama awezaye kumsaidia uongozi / je akitoka anaweza kuwa anashindwa kufagia nyumba au mji? ...

Katibu wa akina mama: [slow, with a quiet voice] Hivi si kama mume na mke uongozi ni kitu tofauti / sababu mume na mke wanaishi pamoja / lakini hapa sisi hatuishi pamoja / kila mtu anaishi sehemu yake / kiongozi hawezi kuja nyumbani kwa mtu kufika na kumchukua eti *twende sijui ukafanye hiki na hiki.*

taken. There is no constructive discussion about why the Women's Group is unable to organize its activities properly. The attitude of women towards the chicken project and other income-generating projects had been very positive. However, in the discussion there was no consideration of other possible obstacles such as women's excessive workload, or other possible problems.

Criticizing the members of the Women's Group does not deter the Advisor of the Women's Group from identifying with the Women's Group again at a later stage. Her varying degrees of distance and identification are frequently reflected in her choice of pronouns: In the following quotation, she initially uses the third person plural when referring to members of the Women's Group, latter on switching to the first person. While speaking in the name of the women in the project, she develops a paternalistic image, portraying the newly elected leadership of the Women's Group as inexperienced and in need of help from the men in the senior position.

Example 16:

Advisor of the Women's Group: I don't know whether this is an addition I have a suggestion concerning those who were elected they are still complete strangers / they don't know how to go yet / we don't know it at all / but I as we are lucky enough to be with you who have experience we ask for your help / they should help us to lead /¹⁸

3.2.2. Being made to speak or speaking for oneself

With one exception that will be quoted at the end of this section, the Secretary of the Women's Group does not take a turn except when explicitly requested to do so by others. Even when personally addressed, she usually hesitates to speak.

In such instances, the Chairman of the Follow-up Group repeatedly insists on an answer.

Example 17:

Advisor of the Village Government: I have a question for the Women's Group / whether after going there and finding that the price was higher than the amount agreed on with the owner / now which plan do they have? Are they just sitting or do they get it somewhere else?

Chairman of the Follow-Up: "Mama" you are asked a question whether +++ ... *Secretary of the Women's Group:* I have the plan to look for it somewhere else.¹⁹

18 Example 16:

Mshauri wa akina mama: Sijui kama ni nyongeza mimi nina pendekezo kutokana na waliochaguliwa bado ni wageni kabisa / hawajui kabisa namna ya kwenda / kabi: sa hatujui / lakini mimi kwa vile tuna bahati tuko na nyinyi mna uzoefu tunaomba msaada wenu / watusaidie tuongoze /

As in other instances, the contribution from the Secretary of the Women's Group presents a sound argument, however, it is pronounced hesitantly and in a quiet voice. In the following example, other participants respond with laughter as the contribution becomes almost inaudible.

Example 18:

Advisor of the Village Government: now I just ask the question that since we started to raise these chicken / how many chicks have we produced and do we know / how many chicken there are?

Chairman of the Follow-Up: "Mama" you are asked how many chicken are there?

Secretary of the Women's Group: Sixteen chicks and four female chicken and one cock / [her voice is getting more and more quiet while there is laughter from the others]²⁰

Towards the end of the 3,5 hour long meeting, the Secretary finally picks up the courage to verbalize a short contribution on her own initiative. She identifies herself and other group members through their work of keeping chicken. She uses the strategy of reproducing the paternalistic images introduced by the others – suggesting that she is in need of help. Her contribution again refers to the problem of cleaning, explaining the women's situation.

Example 19:

Secretary of the Women's Group: I have an addition concerning leadership / we the women (chicken) keepers ask to be helped / ...²¹

While this meeting reflects a stage in the process of institutional growth, the following statement illustrates how members of the Follow-up Group try to finalize the discussion and decisions.

Example 20:

Chairman of the Follow-Up: now the thing I ask you / here we are people from the VTC, the follow -up and the Women's Group / I ask that we co-operate / so that all that we have discussed / can be implemented early /

19 *Example 17:*

Mshauri wa serikali ya kijiji: Mimi nina swala ya kwa akina mama / kwamba baada ya kwenda pale wamekuta bei imeshakuwa juu zaidi kile kiasi ambacho alikuwa amepatana na mwenye mali / sasa wao wana mpango gani? Ni kukaa tu au wameshapata mahala pengine?

Mwenyekiti wa Follow-up: Mama unaulizwa wewe kama una +++ ...

Katibu wa akina Mama: Nina mpango wa kutafuta mahala pengine.

20 *Example 18:*

Mshauri wa serikali ya kijiji: Sasa mimi nauliza tu swali kwamba tangu tuanze kufuga hawa kuku / tumeshazalisha vifaranga wangapi na tunajua ni kuku wangapi?

Mwenyekiti wa Follow-up: Mama unaulizwa wewe / wako kuku wangapi?

Katibu akina mama: Vifaranga kumi na sita na kuku majike wanne jogoo mmoja na mdogo mmoja.

21 *Example 19:*

Katibu akina mama: Mimi nina nyongeza upande wa uongozi / wafugaji wa kike tunaomba tusaidiwe / ...

it is not good that when we go to the meetings or to the Steering Committee / that we start to discuss things we have discussed three months ago / ...²²

4. Conclusion

In our analysis of a Steering Committee meeting we found that team members as well as members of the Follow-up Group use directives to control and dominate weaker groups. By controlling others through directives, the senior project group establishes its dominant position within the network. Paternalistic ideology correlates with linguistic forms used to exercise power through language: Women are portrayed as those who are subordinate and in need of help, and their work is not valued or even regarded worthy of discussion. On a formal linguistic level, we found that directives, explicit speech acts, role-casting and choice of pronouns were of particular importance in the exercise of power.

Women's absence or silence during large parts of the meeting has further aspects: Overprotection and ambivalence from the adviser of the Women's Group results in a confusion of roles. Women's contributions are rare and short. They occur in a context where dominant interactants are not challenged. Women are made to speak rather than taking initiatives on their own.

Women of the project group described here used the last two years to strengthen their position and to voice their concerns within the group. In the dynamics of communicative processes, "empowerment" is a time-consuming and laborious process accomplished by disadvantaged people through long-term commitment against obstacles and odds.

On a larger scale, our findings confirm that the gender-approach in research enables us to analyze the asymmetric relations between women and men, facilitators and target group, in a given network. Development work aiming at equal participation of women and men must direct particular attention to the needs of women. Gender-blind orientation in a patriarchal society favors men. By the time women are encouraged to participate, men already dominate decision-making bodies and are equipped with important experiences. If women challenge existing structures – even by their mere presence – conflicts are to be expected. Women, just as other disadvantaged groups, have to face the dominant group's refusal to share whichever small privilege or power they dispose of.

22 *Example 20:*

Mwenyekiti wa Follow-up: ... sasa kitu ambacho nawaomba / tuko watu wa VTC humu wa Follow up na wa upande wa akina mama / naomba tushirikiane / yale yote tuliyojadili / yaweze kukamilika mapema / siyo vyema tunapokwenda kwenye vikao au mkutano wa kamati kuu / tuanze kujadili mambo ambayo tumeyajadili karibu miezi mitatu iliyopita / ...

Abstracts

Der Artikel analysiert das sprachliche Verhalten von Frauen und Männern in einer Vorstandssitzung eines ländlichen Projektes in Nordwesttanzania. Diskursanalyse einer formellen Sitzung im Rahmen der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit ermöglicht Einblicke in die Prozesse institutioneller Veränderung. Ungleichere Teilnahme am Kommunikationsprozess spiegelt asymmetrische Beziehungen und Ausschluß von Entscheidungsprozessen wider. Diskriminierung aufgrund von Alter, Geschlecht und Schicht wird sprachlich realisiert und reproduziert. Im Prozess institutioneller Veränderung erweisen sich sprachliche Strategien als wesentliches Instrument der Reorganisation von Hierarchien.

The article analyses women's and men's verbal contributions in one Steering Committee meeting of a rural project in North-Western Tanzania: Discourse analysis of a formal meeting in the context of development co-operation allows insights on processes of institutional change. Imbalances in participation in the communicative event reflect asymmetric power relations and exclusion from decision-making. Discrimination based on age, gender and social class is enacted and reproduced in speech. In processes of institutional change, speech strategies are a major instrument in the re-organization of hierarchies.

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