

ABSTRACT

Reproductive health is a subject that has been studied among different groups such as women and adolescents by various researchers. These studies have explored reproductive health in various areas ranging from health to language and communication. Men are one group of people who have been shown not to seek health services fast. On communication, delivery of healthcare service depends on how communication will take place between the doctor and patient. Culture puts forth the norms of how language should be used in the context of seeking healthcare service. However, the language used by patients, especially men, while talking to the doctor as they seek reproductive health services is not documented. This study investigated a doctor patient interaction, focusing on the language used to describe reproductive health problems in a reproductive health clinic. The objectives were: to identify and explain linguistic features of men and the doctor as they talk about reproductive health problems at the hospital, to explain the discourse strategies chosen and used by men as they present reproductive health problems to the doctor at the hospital and evaluate the cultural trends in the conversation of men on reproductive health at the hospital. The study was guided by Critical Discourse Analysis, the Discourse-Sociolinguistic perspective, propagated by Wodak and Reisigl. It was a qualitative study, a discourse analysis approach. The target population were men who visited a public hospital seeking services on reproductive health. Data collection methods were ethnography of communication, participant observation and interview. Data collection tools included an observation schedule and voice recorder. The linguistic features of the doctor patient conversation include: specific conversation structure, history taking, question and answer. Discourse strategies used by men to report reproductive health problems were use of dysphemism, borrowing, euphemism, non-verbal, circumlocution, naming and personification. Men used dysphemism, aggression and silence as power tools against the female doctor. Culture informs the use of dysphemism and euphemism. Culture aggravates spread of sexually transmitted infections, scorning of men with erectile dysfunction but provides a means to deal with infertility. The study makes a contribution in sociolinguistics by exploring language use in specific context. The study will enrich and make contribution to discourse analysis by testing its methods and approaches in a hitherto seldom explored area.