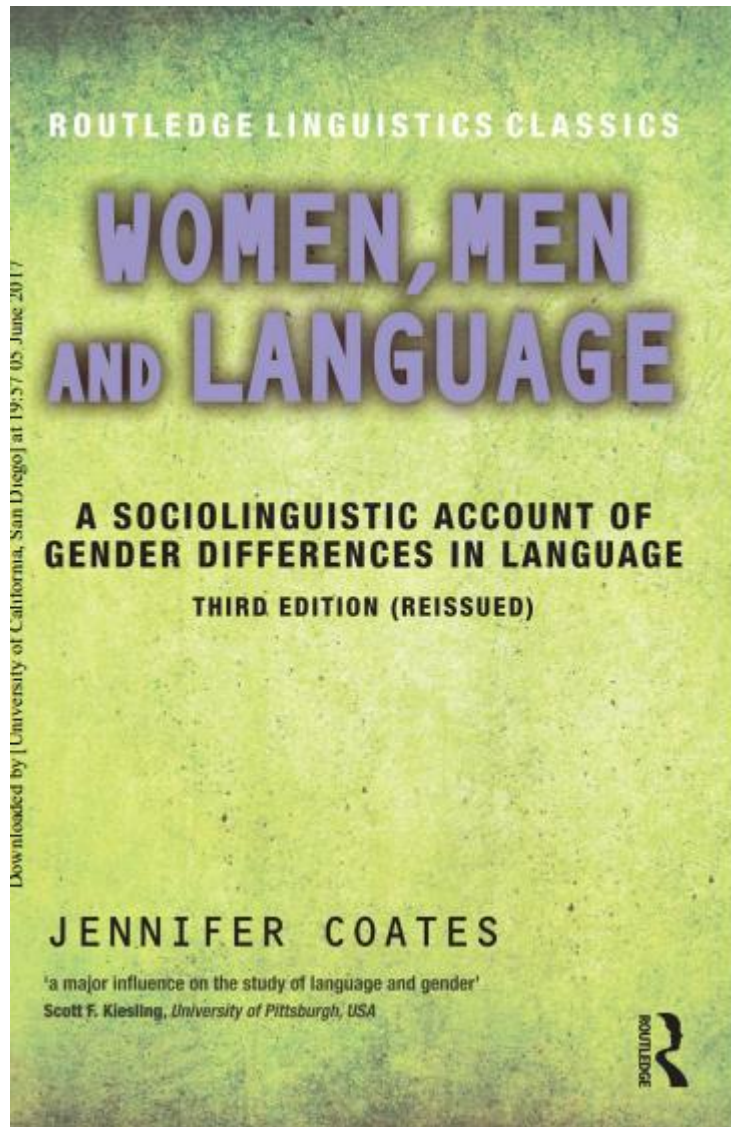


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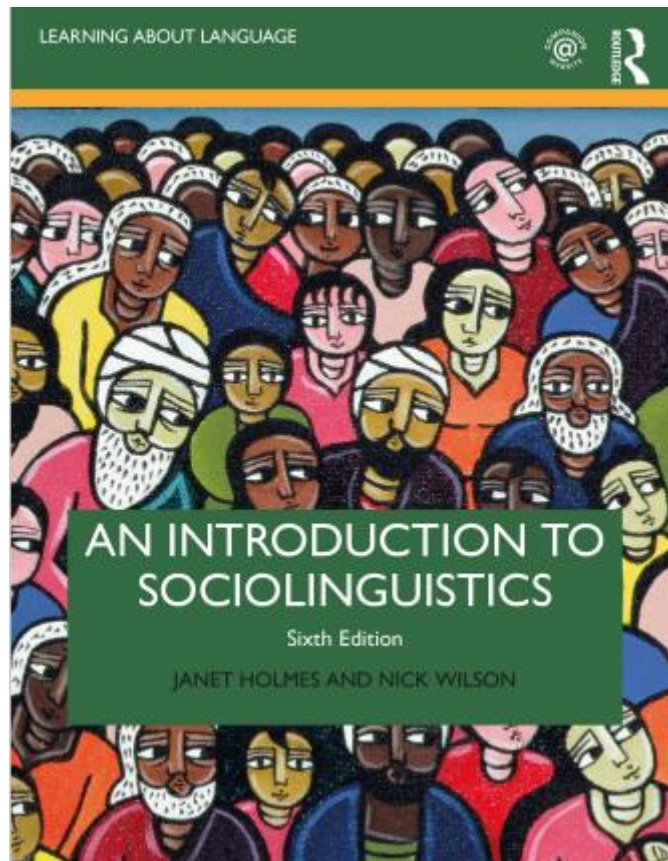
WOMEN, MEN AND LANGUAGE

This book, then, is primarily a sociolinguistic account of the co-variation of language and gender. It is not about the relationship between language and sexism, except in a very general sense; that is, it is not about language which denigrates, or is believed to denigrate, women. It will describe language *use*, in particular the differing usage of women and men as speakers.

As far as terminology is concerned, **gender** rather than **sex** will be the key category under discussion. 'Sex' refers to a biological distinction, while 'gender' is the term used to describe socially constructed categories based on sex. Most societies operate in terms of two genders, **masculine** and **feminine**, and it is tempting to treat the category of gender as a simple binary opposition. Until recently, much of the research carried out on language and gender did so. But more recent theorising challenges this binary thinking. Gender is instead conceptualised as plural, with a range of femininities and masculinities available to speakers at any point in time. (These new conceptualisations will be explored in Chapter 8.)

In this introductory chapter, I shall begin with an overview of the way language and gender studies have developed within sociolinguistics. I shall

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instance, a younger person should not address a superior by first name. Similarly, a wife, being subordinate to her husband, is not permitted to use his name. She addresses him with a term such as *suncho* (*do you hear?*). When she refers to him, she uses a circumlocution. One nice example of this practice is provided by the Bengali wife whose husband's name was *tara*, which also means *star*. Since she could not call him *tara*, his wife used the term *nokkhotro* or *heavenly body* to refer to him. This point – the interrelationship of gender with other social factors – is illustrated even more clearly in the next section.

The fact that there are identifiable differences between women's and men's speech in the communities discussed in this section reflects the clearly demarcated gender roles in these communities. Gender-exclusive speech forms (i.e. some forms are used *only* by women and others are used *only* by men) reflect gender-exclusive social roles. The responsibilities of women and men are different in such communities, and everyone knows that fact, and knows what the rules are. There are no arguments over who prepares the dinner and who puts the children to bed.

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"Troubles Talk": Effects of Gender and Gender-Typing

Susan A. Basow^{1,2} and Kimberly Rubenfeld¹

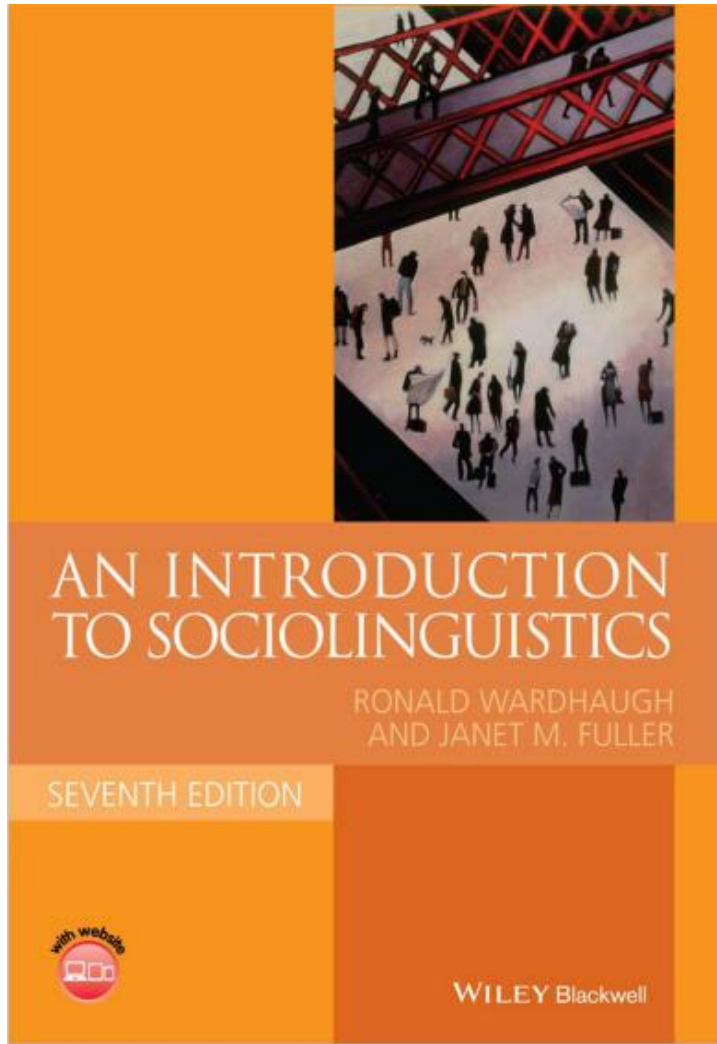
Effects of gender and gender-typing on communication styles were examined in 62 male and 110 female college students. Participants were asked to rate the likelihood of giving certain responses to a friend's problems as well as the likelihood of feeling certain emotions when a friend gives them advice or sympathy for their own problems. Men and masculine people were expected to be more likely to respond to a friend in a way that reduces interpersonal intimacy; women and feminine people were expected to respond in a way that enhances interpersonal intimacy. Although a few gender differences were found, participants' level of expressive/nurturing traits ("femininity") was related to more responses than was gender. The importance of examining gender-linked traits and not just gender when studying communication patterns is emphasized.

KEY WORDS: communication styles; gender-typing; gender; interpersonal communication.

Much has been written about gendered communication patterns in both the popular press (e.g., Gray, 1992; Tannen, 1990) and the psychological literature (e.g., Leaper, 1991; Mulac, Bradac, & Gibbons, 2001). For example, women are thought to use more expressive, tentative, and polite language than men do. Especially in conflict situations, women are viewed as more likely than men to engage in "troubles talk" (i.e., sharing emotional problems), whereas men are viewed as more likely than women to avoid discussions of interpersonal problems, or to offer solutions to the problems, an approach women may perceive as unsympathetic. In general, women are expected to use language to enhance social connection, and men are expected to use language to enhance social dominance.

In an empirical test of these differences, Michaud and Warner (1997) examined how college students responded to different written scenarios that described typical interpersonal problems of college students. In Part I of their Communication Styles Survey (CSS), six scenarios were presented with "a friend" as the

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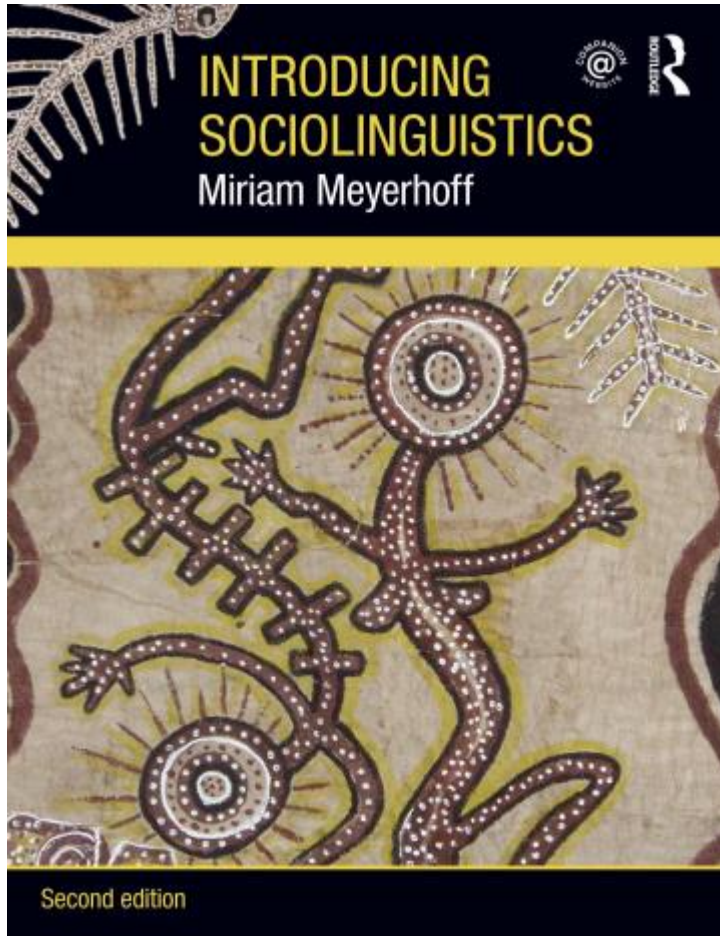
Sociolinguistics is the study of our everyday lives – how language works in our casual conversations and the media we are exposed to, and the presence of societal norms, policies, and laws which address language. Since you are reading this book, you may already have some idea what the study of sociolinguistics entails; you may already have an interest in, and knowledge about, regional dialects, multilingualism, language policy, or non-sexist language. And we will cover all of these topics, along with many others – what social class and ethnicity might have to do with language use, why we do not always ‘say what we mean,’ the role of language in education.

But we would like to encourage readers to approach the study of sociolinguistics not as a collection of facts, but as a way of viewing the world around you. In sociolinguistics, we seek to analyze data so that we can make generalizations about

What is a sociolinguist?

Sociolinguists study the relationship between language and society. They are interested in explaining why we speak differently in different social contexts, and with identifying the social functions of language and the ways it is used to convey social meaning. Examining the way people use language in different social contexts provides a wealth of information about the way language works, as well as about the social relationships in a community, and how people convey and construct aspects of their social identity through their language. This book explores all these aspects of sociolinguistics.

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INTRODUCTION

'What's your research on?' asked the woman at the garden party. 'Language and sex', I replied. 'Whoa-ho', she said, 'You must have them lining up to supervise you.'

In the 1980s, it was not at all unusual for a sociolinguist to describe their interests as being 'language and sex'. However, in the intervening years, the term **sex** has largely been replaced by the term **gender**, and the significance of this change in terminology will become clear in this chapter.

The field of language and gender is one of the most dynamic in sociolinguistics. It is characterised by a lot of discussion about the pros and cons associated with different ways of conceptualising the relationship between language and society. This introductory text has tried to stress that the interplay between language and different social and personal identities

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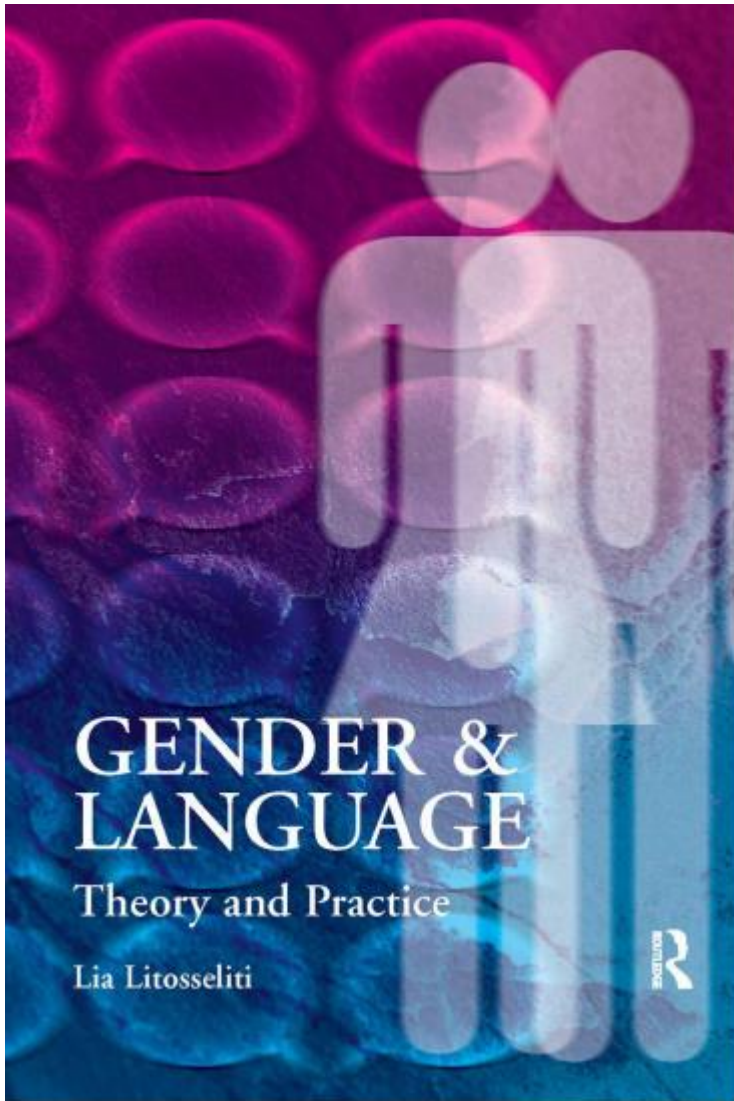
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To give a football commentary in the language of the Bible or a parish-church sermon in legal language would be either a bad mistake, or a joke. Language varies not only according to the social characteristics of speakers – such as the factors of social class, ethnic group, and gender which we have already discussed – but also according to the social context in which speakers find themselves. The same speaker uses different linguistic varieties in different situations and for different purposes. The totality of linguistic varieties used in this way – and they may be very many – by a particular community of speakers can be called that linguistic community's *verbal repertoire*.

Many social factors can come into play in controlling which variety from this verbal repertoire is actually to be used on a

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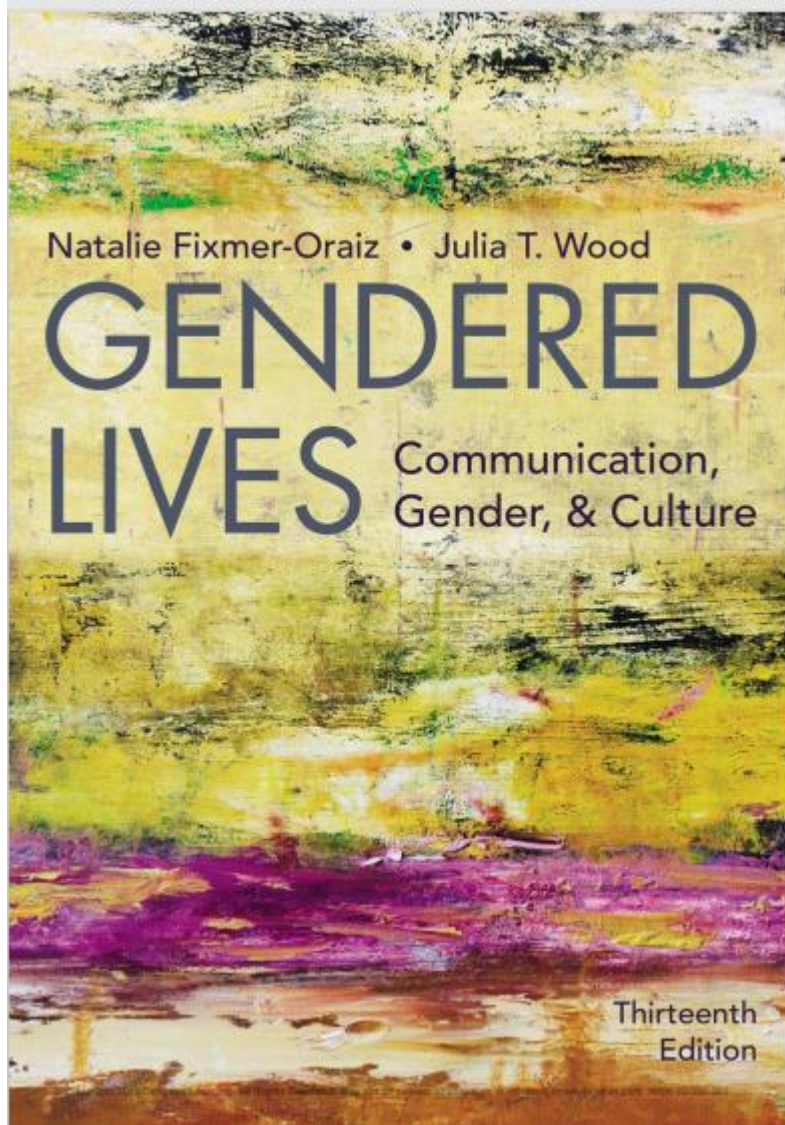
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This is in contrast to the enormous amounts of gender and language research that we have seen since the early 1970s, up to today, and with it, a wealth of different approaches, assumptions and methodologies (see Chapters 2 and 3). It is worth pointing out here that different methodological and analytical assumptions about sex and gender, about language and its different aspects, and about notions of ‘truth’ and ‘reality’, will produce different research in terms of both results and claims. This is important for understanding that, generally speaking, early research on gender and language focused on gender from the perspective of the speakers’ biological sex. For example, language variation studies focused on sex-preferential linguistic usage, that is, men and women’s tendencies to speak in their own and different ways. These ways sometimes involved phonological gender differences and sometimes gendered conversa-



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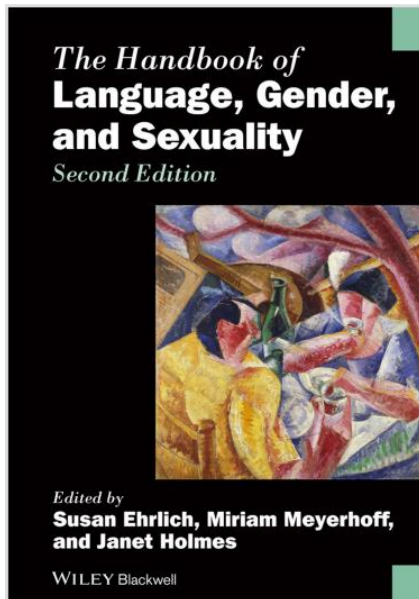
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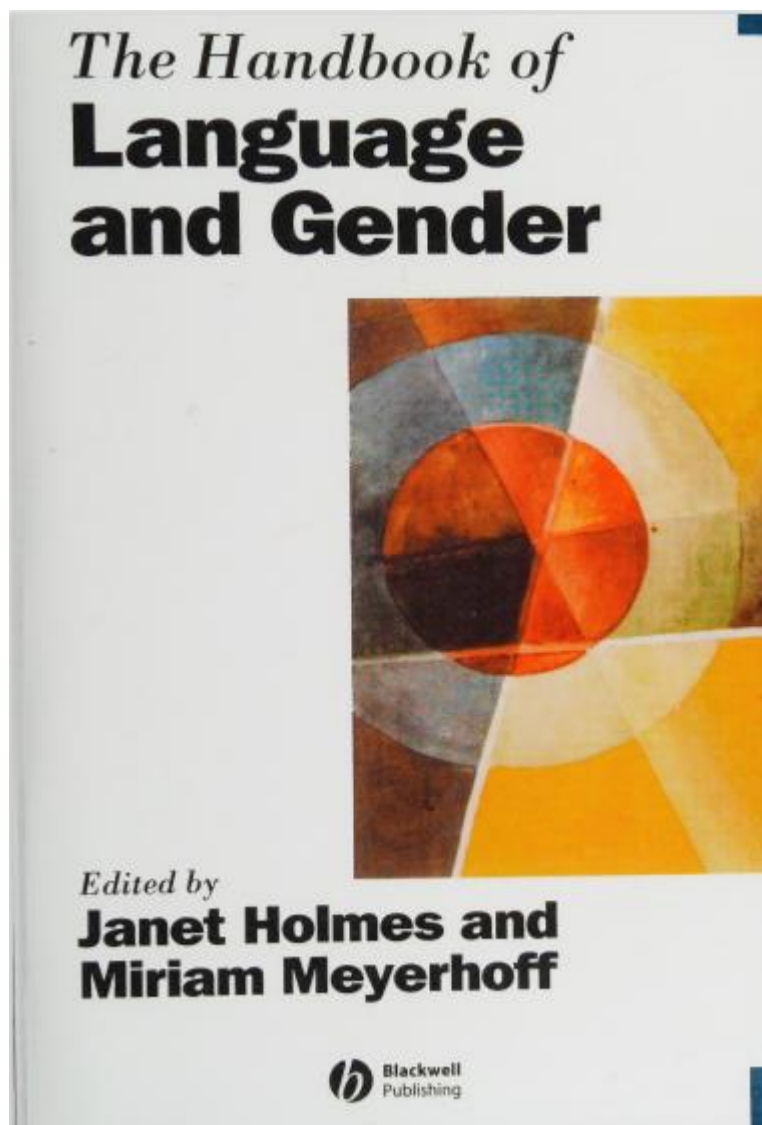
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to understand family interaction – like all human interaction – not only as negotiations for power but also as negotiations for connection. Given the ambiguity and polysemy of power and connection, linguistic strategies that can be identified as control maneuvers must also be examined as connection maneuvers. Power and connection are the dimensions along which human relationships are negotiated, and they are inextricably intertwined with the way **gender identity is negotiated**. Thus an appreciation of the interplay of power and connection, and of the ways power and connection underlie **gender identity and gender performance**, is necessary to understand family interaction as well as the relationship between gender and language.

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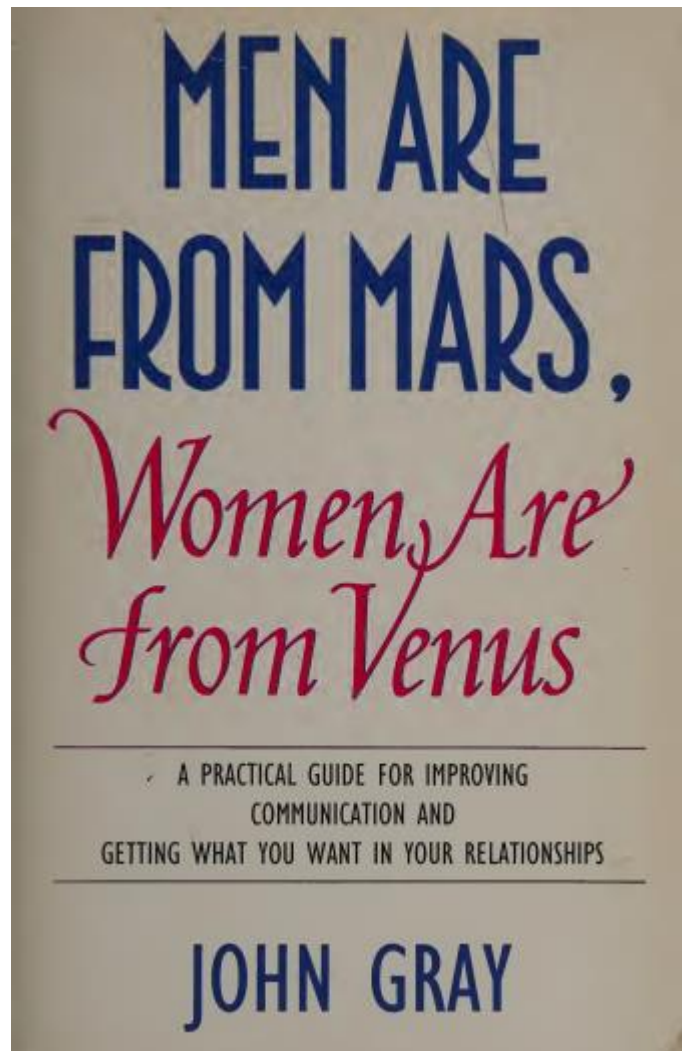
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[Sex and gender] serve a useful analytic purpose in contrasting a set of biological facts with a set of cultural facts. Were I to be scrupulous in my use of terms, I would use the term "sex" only when I was speaking of biological differences between males and females and use "gender" whenever I was referring to the social, cultural, psychological constructs that are imposed upon these biological

cultures, approach. Its basic idea was popularized by the psychologist Jonathan Grey in his bestselling book *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus: The Classic Guide to Understanding the Opposite Sex* (1992) and by the linguist Deborah Tannen in her book *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation* (1990). These works were based on the assumption that men and women speak differently. Their claim is that men learn to talk like men and women learn to talk like women because society subjects them to different life experiences. However, the process of gender differentiation is not the focus of this approach, it is an underlying assumption (and one that has been questioned). The main claim is that **men and women have different conversational goals and thus although they may say the same things, they actually mean different things**. Maltz and Borker (1982) propose that, in North America at least, men and women come from different sociolinguistic sub-cultures.

Gray, J. (1993). Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus: Practical Guide for Improving Communication and Getting What You Want in Your Relationships. HarperCollins.



.....
Generally speaking, when a woman offers unsolicited advice or tries to “help” a man, she has no idea of how critical and unloving she may sound to him.
.....

For many men, it is very important to prove that they can get to their goal, even if it is a small thing like driving to a restaurant or party. Ironically he may be more sensitive about the little things than the big. His feelings are like this: “If I can’t be trusted to do a small thing like get us to a party, how can she trust me to do the bigger things?” Like their Martian ancestors, men pride themselves on being experts, especially when it comes to fixing mechanical things, getting places, or solving problems. These are the times when he needs her loving acceptance the most and not her advice or criticism.

LEARNING TO LISTEN

Likewise, if a man does not understand how a woman is different, he can make things worse when he is trying to help. Men need to remember that women talk about problems to get close and not necessarily to get solutions.

So many times a woman just wants to share her feelings about her day, and her husband, thinking he is helping, interrupts her by

WOMEN, MEN AND LANGUAGE

shitwork'. She concludes that there is a division of labour in conversation which supports men and women in positions of power and powerlessness respectively. As we will see in the next chapter (section 7.3), **when men *do* use minimal responses, these are often delayed, a tactic which undermines the current speaker and reinforces male dominance.**

Linguistics form

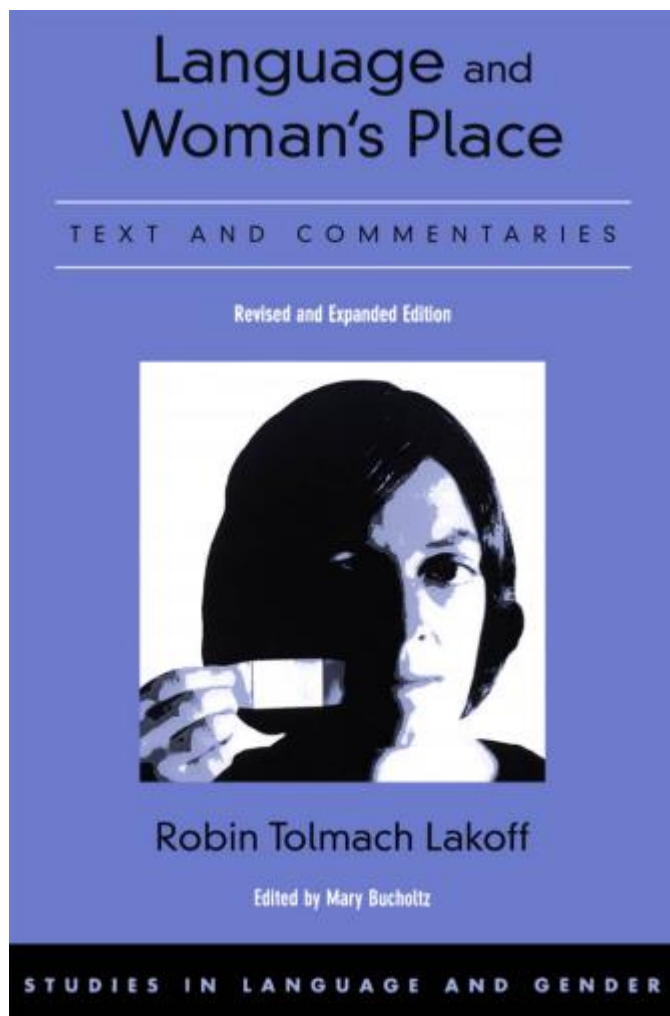
Holmes, J., & Wilson, N. (2022). *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. Routledge.

Page 222

Do women and men speak differently? Do children speak differently from adults? The answer to both these questions is almost certainly “yes” for all speech communities, and the reasons in both cases are mainly social and cultural.

The linguistic forms used by women and men generally contrast – to different degrees – in all speech communities. There are other ways too in which the linguistic behaviour of women and men may differ. It is claimed that in many societies women are linguistically more polite than men, for instance, and that women and men tend to emphasise different speech functions. These claims will be explored in later chapters. In the first section of this chapter, the focus will be on evidence that women and men from the same speech community may use different linguistic forms or the same forms to different extents.

Tag question



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to inequality, dominance, and limited opportunity.

Of course, subsequent research has refined some of Lakoff's initial claims about the interplay of language, context, and politics that gives rise to "women's language." For example, we now have a sharper sense of why a woman's use of tag questions may reflect her "not being really sure of [her]self, . . . looking to the addressee for confirmation, . . . having no views of [her] own" (*LWP* 49) within a particular conversation. But refinements are not refutations. Lakoff never claimed that *LWP* offered the final state-

A tag, in its usage as well as its syntactic shape (in English) is midway between an outright statement and a yes-no question: it is less assertive than the former, but more confident than the latter. Therefore it is usable under certain contextual situations: not those in which a statement would be appropriate, nor those in which a yes-no question is generally used, but in situations intermediate between these.

One makes a statement when one has confidence in his knowledge and is pretty certain that his statement will be believed; one asks a question when one lacks knowledge on some point and has reason to believe that this gap can and will be remedied by an answer by the addressee. A tag question, being intermediate between these, is used when the speaker is stating a claim, but lacks full confidence in the truth of that claim. So if I say

(7) Is John here?

I will probably not be surprised if my respondent answers "no"; but if I say:

(8) John is here, isn't he?

Lexical hedges pg 79

4. The use of hedges of various kinds. Women's speech seems in general to contain more instances of "well," "y'know," "kinda," and so forth: words that convey the sense that the speaker is uncertain about what he (or she) is saying, or cannot vouch for the accuracy of the statement. These words are fully legitimate when, in fact, this is the case (for example, if one says, "John is sorta tall," meaning he's neither really impressively tall nor actually short, but rather middling, though toward the tall side: 5

Page 89

newcomer to the class of hedges is the word *like*, which is used by younger speakers all over the English-speaking world to mitigate the force of utterances (see, for example, Underhill 1988; Andersen 1997; Irwin 2002). Robin Lakoff explicitly linked women's use of hedges with unassertiveness. She claimed that women's speech contains more hedges (a claim based on no empirical evidence), and argued that this is because women 'are socialised to believe that asserting themselves strongly isn't nice or ladylike, or even feminine'

Rising Intonation on Declarative

Page 109

aware of any of this.

12. **Rising intonation** in declaratives. This phenomenon has recently been recognized in the popular press, associated with adolescent speech, under the name “uptalk.” In both cases—traditional women and modern teens—the reasons for this usage, as often for tags, seem similar: either a feeling of real powerlessness or a desire not to appear assertive (because it isn’t “nice”).

Empty Adjectives

Page 84

constrained in what they are supposed, and not supposed, to say as are women. For instance, men in most occupations and social strata may *not* use empty adjectives or let on that they know the meanings of words like “kick pleat” or “braise.” If men are too grammatical or too polite in their speech, they are viewed with suspicion. Men are supposed to be in command of a whole different range of lexical items, and woe betide a man

Page : 47

AFFECTIVE ADJECTIVES A great many words have affective meaning (to do with expressing feelings), not referential meaning (related to some object or state of affairs). Lakoff suggests that, out of the wide range of adjectives used in expressing approval or admiration, many are strongly marked as feminine, such as **divine, adorable**. She refers to such words as ‘empty’ adjectives.

color terms

PRECISE COLOUR TERMS Words such as **beige, ecru, aquamarine.** Lakoff reports seeing a man ‘helpless with suppressed laughter at a discussion between two other people as to whether a book jacket was to be described as “lavender” or “mauve”’ (2004b: 43). She concludes from this that from a man’s point of view such fine distinctions are trivial and beneath their notice.

Avoidance of strong Swear Words

versa. In any event, it is a truism to state that the ‘stronger’ expletives are reserved for men, and the “weaker” ones for women.)

Now we may ask what we mean by “stronger” and “weaker” expletives. (If these particles were indeed meaningless, none would be stronger than any other.) The difference between using “shit” (or “damn,” or one of many others) as opposed to “oh dear,” or “goodness,” or “oh fudge” lies in how forcefully one says how one feels—perhaps, one might say, choice of particle is a function of how strongly one allows oneself to feel about something, so that the strength of an emotion conveyed in a sentence corresponds to the strength of the particle. Hence in a really serious situ-

Super polite forms page 189

4. “Superpolite forms” (LWP 80)

Extremely polite language forms are typical of Stewart’s interaction, as in the following excerpt, in which she performs her characteristic double-thanking of her guests:

MS: Sebastian, thank you very much
for the perfect cup . . . of perfect green tea

SB: you’re welcome
Thank you

MS: [thank you VERY much

Lakoff noted that “women’s politeness is principally . . . [used for] establishing and reinforcing distance: deferential mannerisms coupled with euphemism and hypercorrect and superpolite usage” (LWP 99). Stewart’s general

Emphatic stress page 48

EMPHATIC STRESS Lakoff refers to this as speaking in italics, as in ‘What a *beautiful* dress!’ She suggests that women use over-the-top emphasis because they anticipate not being taken seriously. What she seems to be touching on here is women’s greater pitch range (see [chapter 2](#)).

6. **Hypercorrect grammar:** women are not supposed to talk rough. It has been found that, from a very young age, little boys [engage in nonstandard language behavior] more than do little girls . . . [and] are less apt . . . to be scolded [for doing so]. Generally women are viewed as being the preservers of literacy and culture, at least in Middle America, where literacy and culture are viewed as being somewhat suspect [i.e., effeminate, cf. *LWP* 44] in a male. . . . In cultures where book larnin' is the schoolmarm's domain, this job [of preservation] will be relegated to women. [Lakoff goes on to suggest that women are less prone to neologisms and are less likely to be the source of linguistic innovation than men.]

THE INTENSIFIER so As in 'I like him so much!' Lakoff puzzlingly calls this a hedge too. It is supposed to weaken a speaker's strength of feeling. It has subsequently been viewed as a boosting device (like **very**).

Minimal responses

Women use minimal responses to signal their active listenership and support for each other, as the following example from a conversation between two women shows (this example was first used in section 6.3, page 87, and comes from Holmes 1995: 55). In this conversation, two women are talking about a good teacher.

and overlaps, but also from **delayed minimal responses**. Minimal responses, such as *mhm* or *yeah*, are a way of indicating the listener's positive attention to the speaker, as was pointed out in the previous chapter (section 6.3). The listener has an active, not a passive, role in conversation, and minimal responses (as well as paralinguistic features such as smiling, nodding, grimacing)

Commands and directives

We can define a directive as a speech act which tries to get someone to do something. Goodwin (1980, 1990, 2011) observed the group play of girls and boys in a Philadelphia street, and noticed that the boys used different sorts of directives from the girls. The boys used explicit commands:

- (14) Michael: Gimme the pliers (*Poochie gives pliers to Michael*)
- (15) Huey: Get off my steps (*Poochie moves down steps*)

Topic choice

It seems that, with each other, men avoid self-disclosure and prefer to talk about more impersonal topics such as current affairs, modern technology, cars or sport. The all-male conversations I've collected rarely involve self-disclosure of the kind found in women's friendly talk. For example, in one of these conversations three men friends discuss the 1960s at some length, and this topic can be divided into sub-topics such as Bob Dylan; revolution and why it hasn't happened in Britain; Marxism; students today. This contrasts with the topics found in conversations involving women of similar age and background (see section 8.2.1 above). When talk does become more personal, it deals with matters such as drinking habits or personal achievements rather than feelings. Topic choice is not a superficial matter: it has profound consequences for other linguistic choices. Hedging, for example, is closely correlated with more personal and/or sensitive topics. In terms of floor-holding patterns, non-personal

These men align themselves with hegemonic masculinity through their choice of topics (cars, fights, sport), through their emphasis on achievement (in fighting or sport), through their construction of a tough image through the use of swear words and (in the case of example (26)) the appeal to violence. These men also construct a masculinity characterised by emotional restraint. Male inexpressivity is recognised as a major feature of contemporary masculinity, and is increasingly seen as problematic: 'we have learnt to use our language to set a safe distance from our felt experience' (Seidler 1989: 63).

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of swear words and extensive use of euphemism. Euphemisms are veiled, indirect expressions (saying **passed away** instead of **died**, for instance). People use swear words to express strong feelings, but in women they are supposed to be 'unladylike'. Lakoff contrasts these two hypothetical utterances: (a) Oh dear, you've put the peanut butter in the fridge again, and (b) Shit, you've put the peanut butter in the fridge again. She suggests that people would identify speaker (a) as a woman and (b) as a man, acknowledging that some women are becoming capable of uttering (b) 'publicly without flinching' (2004a: 44). Oddly, non-swearing seems to be presented as something negative. (Note that swear words could be called 'empty' words. Like the 'empty' adjectives women are supposed to employ, they are used to express feelings, that is, their meaning is of the affective kind and not referential.) Many of the features Lakoff proposes, however, are discourse particles and patterns of intonation, features that, like swear

developed. Chapter 4 will focus on quantitative sociolinguistic studies, Chapter 5 on studies involving the concept of social network. In Chapter 6 I shall look at those studies which examine **women's and men's linguistic behaviour in the wider sense of communicative competence: this will include studies examining the use of hedges, questions, compliments, swearing and politeness, among other things.** Chapter 7 will concentrate on the way certain conversational strategies can be used to achieve dominance in talk, looking in particular at interruptions, silence and patterns of floor-holding, while Chapter 8 will focus

role assigned to them on the basis of their sex. This is a two-way process: in becoming linguistically competent, the child learns how to 'do' masculinity or femininity in a particular speech community; conversely, when children adopt particular **linguistic behaviour as part of their performance of masculinity or femininity, they perpetuate the social order which creates gender distinctions.**

Girls and boys learn during childhood to identify with either women or men. They demonstrate their membership of the group by their use of gender-appropriate behaviour, and this includes gender-appropriate *linguistic* behaviour. Social psychologists refer to this process (of learning how to 'do' being a girl or being a boy) as the acquisition of **gender identity.** This process will vary from culture to culture. It is relatively rigid in the USA. for example.

The social status explanation

Some linguists have suggested that women use more standard speech forms than men because they are more status-conscious than men. The claim is that women are more aware of the fact that the way they speak signals their social class background or social status in the community. Standard speech forms are generally associated with high social status, and so, according to this explanation, women use more standard speech forms as a way of claiming such status. It has been suggested that this is especially true for women who do not have paid employment, since they cannot use their occupations as a basis for signalling social status.

The fact that women interviewed in New York and in Norwich reported that they used more standard forms than they actually did has also been used to support this explanation. Women are typically considered less statusful in society compared to men, and so, it is suggested, some try to acquire more status by using standard speech forms, and by reporting that they use even more of these forms than they actually do.

Though it sounds superficially plausible, there is at least some indirect evidence which throws doubt on this as the main explanation for gender differences in social dialect data. It is suggested that women who are not in paid employment are most likely to claim higher social status by using more standard forms. This implies that women in the paid workforce should use fewer standard forms than women working in the home. But the little evidence that we have in fact suggests that just the opposite may be true. An American study compared the speech of women in service occupations, working in garages and hotels, for instance, with the speech of women working in the home. Those in paid employment used more standard forms than those working in the home. In the course of their jobs, the first group of women were interacting with people who used more standard forms, and this interaction had its effect on their own usage. By contrast, the women who stayed home interacted mainly with each other, and this reinforced their preference for vernacular forms.

Exactly the same pattern was found in an Irish working-class community. The younger women in Ballymacarrett, a suburb of Belfast, found work outside the community, and used a much higher percentage of linguistic features associated with high status groups than the older women who were working at home. This evidence throws some doubt, then, on suggestions that women without paid employment are more likely to use standard forms than those with jobs, and so indirectly questions the social status explanation for women's speech patterns.

A variation on this explanation suggests that standard or prestige forms represent linguistic capital which people can use to increase their value or marketability in some contexts. This has the advantage of accounting for the higher proportion of such forms in the speech of those in the white-collar professional

workforce, especially when they are interacting with people they want to impress. Where women have few other sources of prestige, language may become especially significant as a social resource for constructing a professional identity. But if you work in a soap factory or a shoe factory, or on a building site, the forms that your companions value are more likely to be vernacular forms, so your linguistic capital will take a different form.

Woman's role as guardian of society's values

Example 7

Mrs Godley, an early New Zealand settler, believed in the civilising influence of women. When two young men she knew were about to begin work on a sheep station in the South Island province of Canterbury in 1852, she warned them that they would become "semi-barbarous". She begged them to have a "lay figure of a lady, carefully draped, set up in their usual sitting-room, and always behave before it as if it was their mother".

A second explanation for the fact that women use more standard forms than men in many Western speech communities points to the way society tends to expect "better" behaviour from women than from men. Little boys are generally allowed more freedom than little girls. Misbehaviour from boys is tolerated where girls are more quickly corrected. Similarly, rule-breaking of any kind by women is frowned on more severely than rule-breaking by men. Women are designated the role of modelling correct behaviour in many communities. Predictably then, following this argument, society expects women to speak more correctly and standardly than men, especially when they are serving as models for children's speech.

A woman's place is in the home.

This explanation of why women use more standard forms than men may be relevant in some social groups, but it is certainly not true for all. Interactions between a mother and her child are likely to be very relaxed and informal, and it is in relaxed informal contexts that vernacular forms occur most often in everyone's speech. Standard forms are typically associated with more formal and less personal interactions. It seems odd to explain women's greater use of more standard speech forms (collected in formal recorded interviews) by referring to a woman's role as a speech model in her very intimate and mainly unobserved interactions with her child.

Subordinate groups must be polite

Example 8

"You are an intolerable bore Mr Brown. Why don't you simply shut up and let someone speak who has more interesting ideas to contribute," said Lord Huntly in the well-educated and cultured accent of the over-privileged.

(Bassett, Sinclair and Stenson, 1985)

A third explanation which has been proposed for women's use of more standard forms is that people who are subordinate must be polite. Children are expected to be polite to adults. Women as a subordinate group, it is argued, must avoid offending men – and so they must speak carefully and politely.

It is not immediately apparent why polite speech should be equated with standard speech. It is perfectly possible to express yourself politely using a vernacular Liverpool or Glaswegian accent, for example, and it is equally possible to be very insulting using RP, as example 8 illustrates. A more sophisticated version of this explanation, however, which links it to the social status explanation, suggests that by using more standard speech forms women are looking after their own need to be valued by the society. By using standard forms, a woman is protecting her *face* (a technical term used by sociolinguists with approximately the same meaning as in the phrase *to lose face*). She is also avoiding offence to others.

Suggesting that a woman uses standard forms in order to protect her face is not very different from saying she is claiming more status than she is entitled to, compared to men from the same social group. On the other hand, the suggestion that women's greater use of standard forms may relate not only to their own face-protection needs, but also to those of the people they are talking to, is more promising. It is consistent with other evidence of women's sensitivity to their addressees, which is discussed more fully in chapter 12.

Like most of the explanations presented, this explanation also begins from the assumption that it is women's behaviour which is aberrant and has to be explained. Men's usage is being taken as the norm against which women's is being measured. Yet this seems odd when we remember that what people are trying to explain is why women are using the standard forms or the norms. Why should standard or "correct" behaviour need explaining? It is men's speech which uses fewer standard forms – not women's. Instead of asking "why do women use more standard speech forms than men?", it makes more sense to ask "why don't men use more standard forms?".

Exercise 5

Before you read the next section, can you think of possible reasons why men in social dialect studies might use more vernacular forms than women?

Vernacular forms express machismo

Example 9

Knocker: Comin' down the club Jim?
 Jim: Not friggin' likely. It's rubbish that club.
 Knocker: It ain't that bad. Music's cool. I seen a couple of sharp judies there too. If we plays our cards right . . . Anyways you was keen enough las' week.
 Jim: The music's last Knocker. I'm off down the Pier 'ead if there ain't nothin' better on offer.
 Knocker: Bleedin' rozzers crawlin' round down there. Come down ours instead.

Note: Vernacular lexical items in the Liverpool dialect Scouse: *judies* = girls; *last* = hopeless, terrible; *rozzers* = police.

One answer which has been suggested to the question "why don't men use more standard forms?" is that men prefer vernacular forms because they carry macho connotations of masculinity and toughness. If this is true, it would also explain why many women might not want to use such forms.

There is some evidence to support the suggestion. The recorded speakers who were identified as most likely to win in a street fight were those who used most vernacular forms. The fact that Norwich men tended to claim that they used more vernacular forms than they actually did, while the women didn't, supports this explanation too. The men apparently wanted to sound less standard than they actually were. This suggests these men regard vernacular forms positively and value them highly, even if they don't always openly admit to doing so. It has been suggested, then, that these forms have "covert prestige" by contrast with the overt prestige of the standard forms which are cited as models of correctness. (See chapter 15 for a further discussion of covert and overt prestige.)

Relevant research

1. Nurhasanah. (2018). Gender Language Differences in Traditional Market. Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara

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IN TRADITIONAL MARKET**

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GENDER DIFFERENCES IN THE USE OF LINGUISTIC FORMS: A STUDY OF NOLLYWOOD MOVIES

Chinyelu Nwaenyi

Abstract:

Many sociolinguistic studies contrast women's and men's language use. Differences in the way that men and women use language have long been of interest in the study of discourse. In this study, gender differences in language use were examined in Nollywood films using Robin Lakoff's model which states that women's speech style is defiant and inferior to men's style. This investigation has basically consisted in identifying, describing and analyzing two Nollywood films in which instances of intensifiers and minimal responses found in the conversations of both male and female characters are noticeable by applying a descriptive qualitative method of research. The findings reveal that intensifiers and minimal responses are used by both male and female characters, but males use minimal responses more, not to show weakness, but to buttress and reinforce their points while females use intensifiers more because of the social role attached to them.

Keywords: Language, gender, Nollywood, intensifiers, minimal responses

Introduction

Language is central to human affairs. It serves as a vital tool for communication and as a primary means of constructing and maintaining the society. Language also encodes and

**A SOCIOLINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF TOPICS IN CROSS-GENDER
INTERACTION IN *ONE FOR THE MONEY* MOVIE**

A THESIS

**Presented as a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Attainment of the
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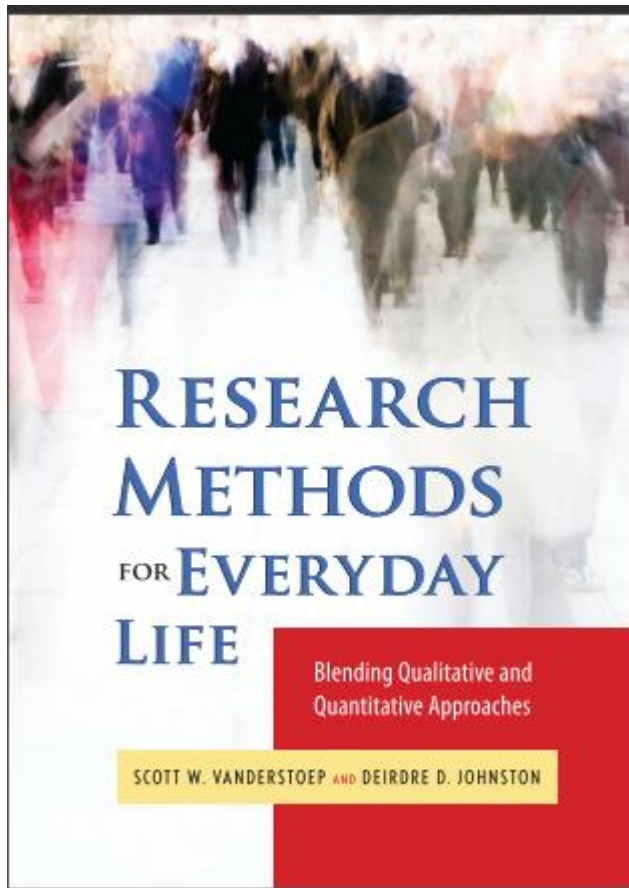
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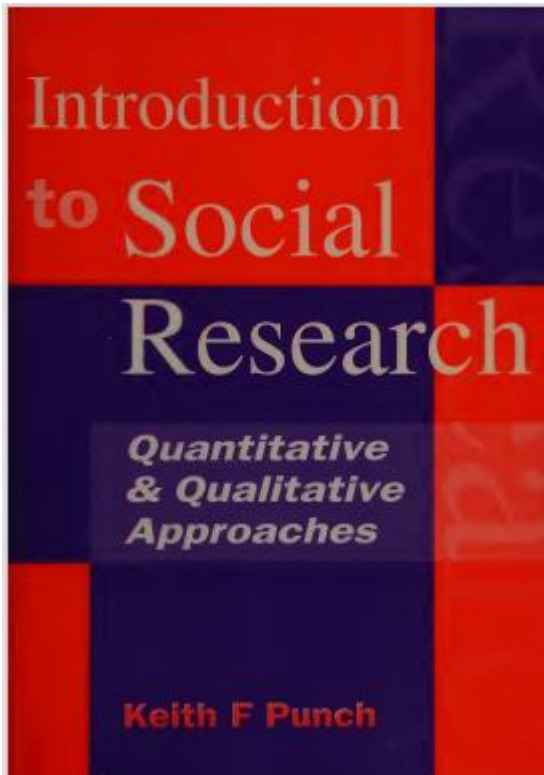
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TYPES OF RESEARCH

Once a researcher understands the basic research model (described in the preceding section), he or she needs to choose an approach to investigate the topic of interest. Although this is a broad-brush distinction, most research is best understood as being either **quantitative** or qualitative in nature. In general, **quantitative research** specifies numerical assignment to the phenomena under study, whereas **qualitative research** produces narrative or textual descriptions of the phenomena under study. Although we describe each approach in detail in following chapters, it is helpful to outline the general advantages and disadvantages of both types at the outset. As you will see, the upsides and downsides of each approach are

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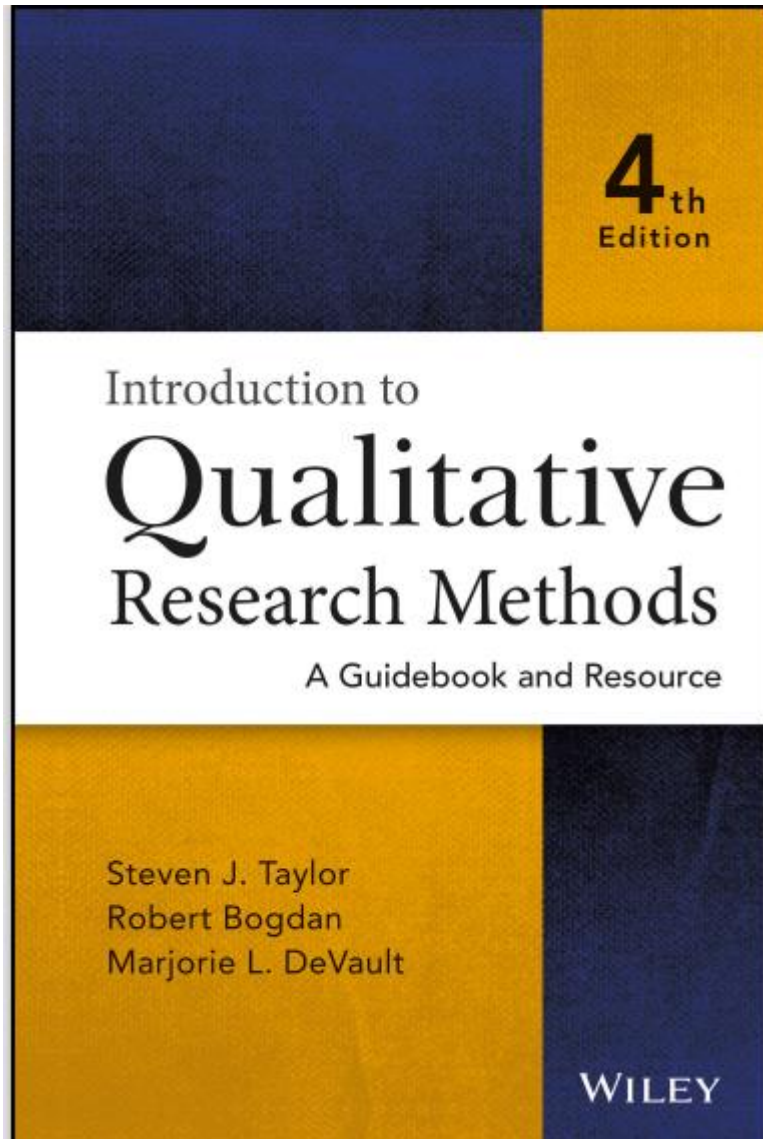
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4.8 COMBINING QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE DATA

We can now summarize these sections on the nature of data. Quantitative data are information about the world in numerical form, whereas qualitative data are (essentially) information about the world in the form of words. Quantitative data are necessarily structured in terms of the number system, and reflect researcher-imposed constructs. Qualitative data may range from structured to unstructured, and may or may not involve



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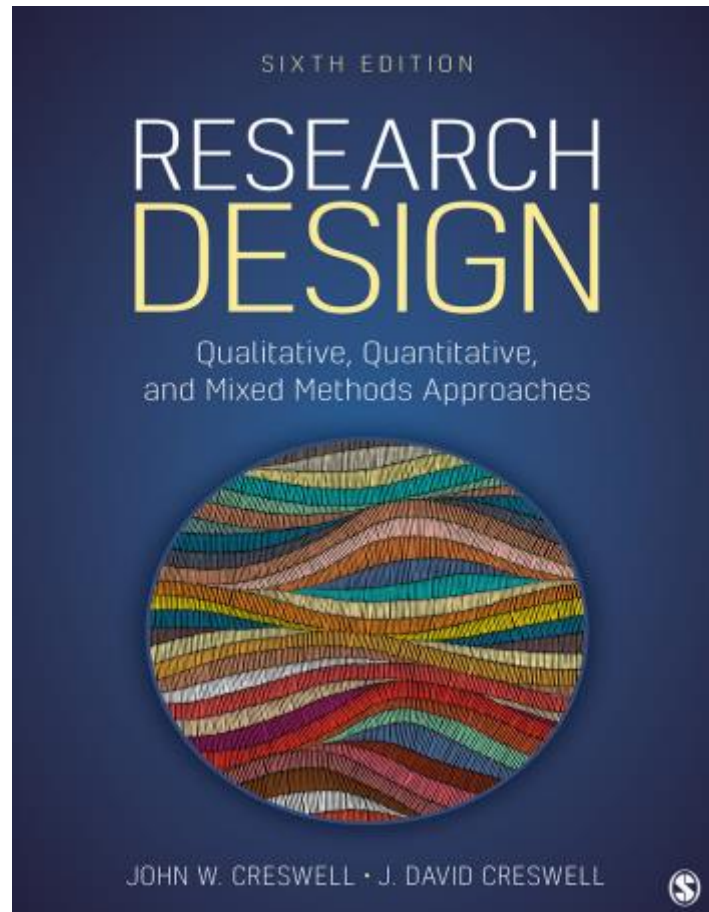
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QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY

The phrase *qualitative methodology* refers in the broadest sense to research that produces descriptive data—people's own written or spoken words and observable behavior. As Ray Rist (1977) pointed out, qualitative methodology, like quantitative methodology, is more than a set of data-gathering techniques. It is a way of approaching the empirical world. In this section we present our notion of qualitative research.

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Data Collection Types	Options Within Types	Strengths of the Types	Limitations of the Types
Audiovisual, social media, and digital materials	Photographs Videotapes Art objects Computer messages Sounds Film	May be an unobtrusive method of collecting data. Provides an opportunity for participants to directly share their reality. Is creative in that it captures attention visually.	May be difficult to interpret. May not be accessible publicly or privately. May be disruptive and affect responses due to the presence of an observer (e.g., photographer).

Probes

in qualitative interviewing are reminders to the researcher to ask for more information or to ask for an explanation of ideas.

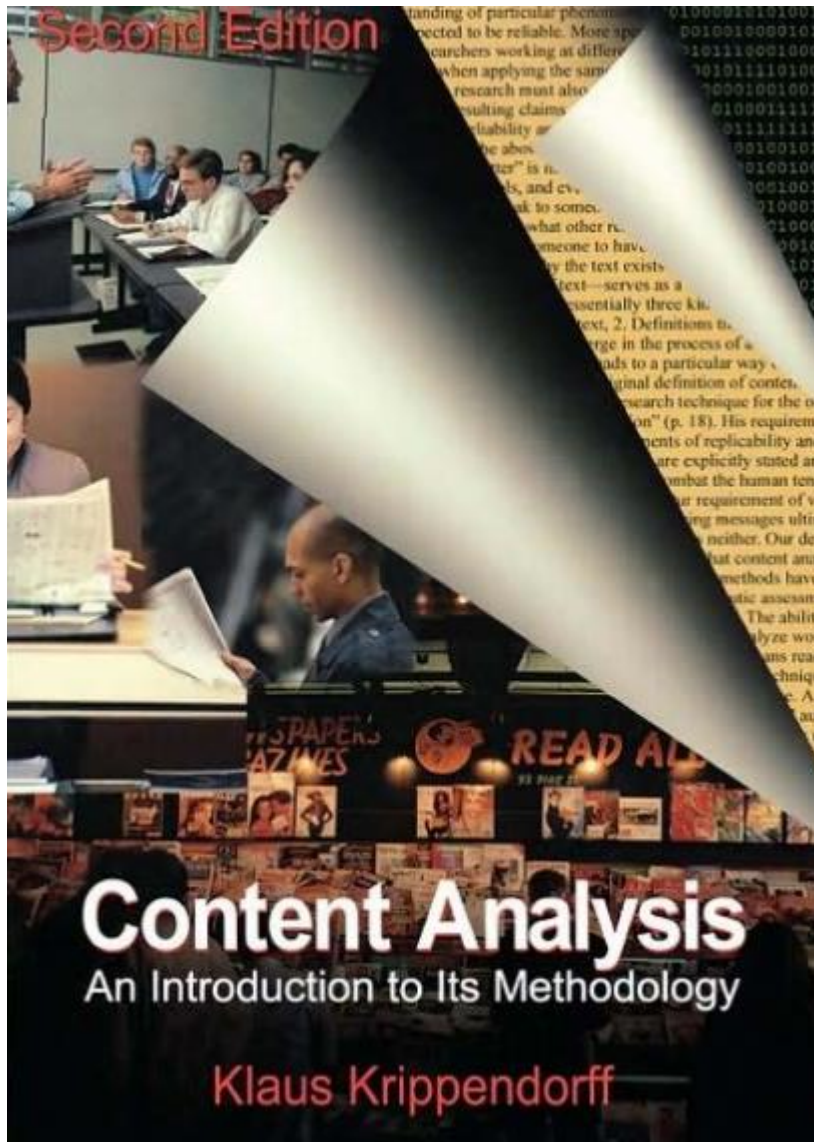
Purpose statement

in a research proposal or project sets the objectives, the intent, and the major idea for the study.

Purposefully sample

participants or sites (or documents or visual material) means that qualitative researchers sample individuals who will best help them understand the research problem and the research questions.

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2.1 DEFINITION

Content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use.

As a *technique*, content analysis involves specialized procedures. It is learnable and divorceable from the personal authority of the researcher. As a research tech-

Coding is the transcribing, recording, categorizing, or interpreting of given units of analysis into the terms of a data language so that they can be compared and analyzed. A distinction can be drawn between single-valued and multi-

Drisko, J. W., & Maschi, T. (2015). *Content Analysis*. Oxford University Press.

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Content Analysis



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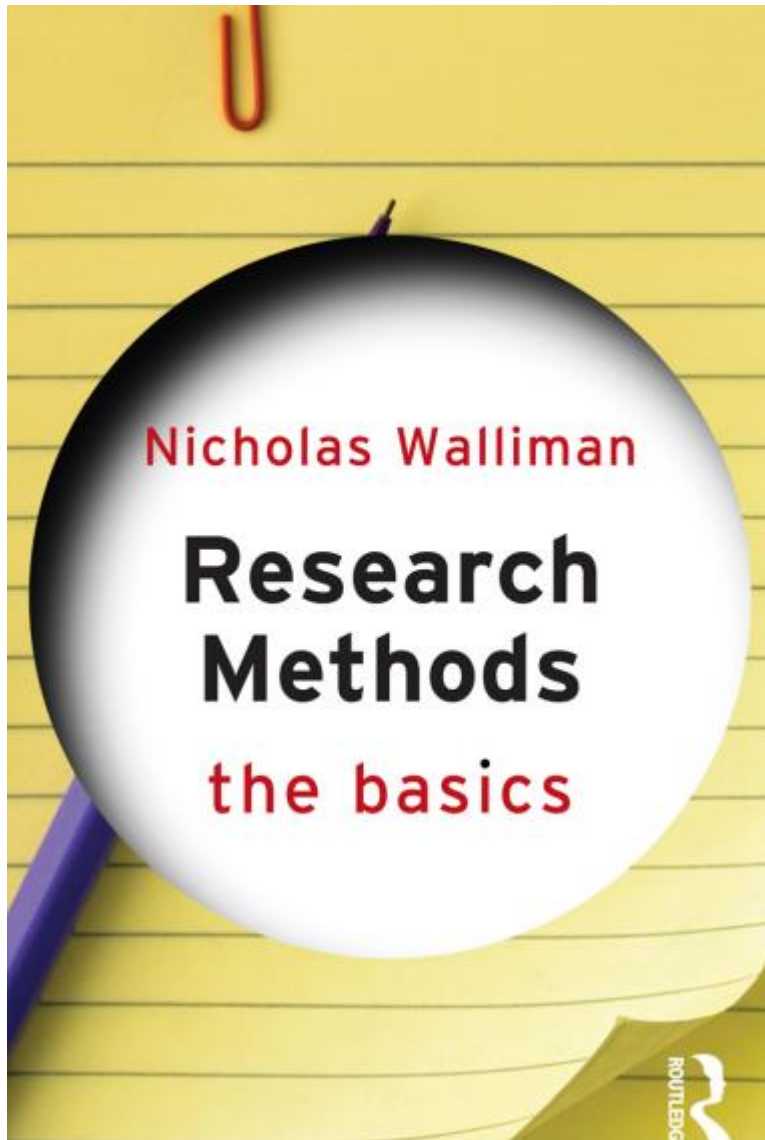
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researchers, "text" actually refers to a wide range of communication media that can be stored in many different formats. Researchers have applied content analysis to texts, audio recordings, television shows and

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PRIMARY AND SECONDARY DATA

Data come in two main forms, depending on its closeness to the event recorded. Data that has been observed, experienced or recorded close to the event are the nearest one can get to the truth, and are called **primary data**. Written sources that interpret or record primary data are called **secondary sources**, which tend to be less reliable. For example, reading about a fire in your own house in the newspaper a day after will