

1: Language and Society

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The relevance of gender to linguistic analysis was first noted in the early 20th century when descriptive linguists observed differences in female and male vocabularies and patterns of speaking in non-European languages. Research during this era of second-wave feminism focused on the everyday micro-discourse practices of women and men as instantiating hierarchical power relations, analyzing such phenomena as turn-taking, interruptions, and topic uptake. *Men and Women in Conversation* Tannen, which shifted the source of gender differentiation away from patriarchy and onto language socialization in same-sex peer groups. The close analysis of gender in interaction demonstrated its intersectionality with other social categories, such as social class, race, ethnicity, age, and sexuality. Although work on language and sexuality preceded this development, this relationship too received renewed attention as scholars of language and gender came to recognize the heteronormativity that had implicitly shaped previous work in the field and began drawing on perspectives within the emergent field of queer theory. This annotated bibliography aims to bring together socially oriented linguistic scholarship on both gender and sexuality while also recognizing the independent trajectories of these traditions of research. Although the bibliography at times treats gender and sexuality as separate topics for purposes of clarity or emphasis, research in these traditions remains closely intertwined. *Men and women in conversation*. Though controversial in the field, the book remains an extremely influential text on miscommunication between women and men. Many of these more streamlined overviews are cited later in this bibliography. Yet a number of cross-disciplinary reviews comprising research from a variety of topics and perspectives exist, among them Ehrlich and Meyerhoff, a state-of-the-art introduction to the second edition of *The Handbook of Language, Gender, and Sexuality* published in first edition under the title *The Handbook of Language and Gender*. Other article overviews published since have addressed developments in the use of feminist and critical gender theory within different traditions of research in the field, among them Bucholtz, Cameron, and McElhinny. Overviews of research specifically focused on sexuality reflect diverging approaches to the field and include Kulick, Bucholtz and Hall, and Queen, which offer contrasting perspectives on the usefulness of identity as an analytic category. The feminist foundations of language, gender, and sexuality research. In *The handbook of language, gender, and sexuality*. Her review describes influences from several feminist theoretical perspectives, among them liberal feminism, radical feminism, material feminism, multicultural feminism, postcolonial feminism, and queer theory. Bucholtz, Mary, and Kira Hall. *Theorizing identity in language and sexuality research*. *Language in Society* In contrast to calls for a purely desire-centered approach to language and sexuality, the authors argue that desire is forged through intersubjectively negotiated practices and ideologies. *Language, gender, and sexuality: Current issues and new directions*. The article discusses the theoretical foundations that have motivated this shift as well as its practical consequences with respect to empirical research. In *The handbook of applied linguistics*. Edited by Alan Davies and Catherine Elder, Ehrlich, Susan, and Miriam Meyerhoff. *Language, gender, and sexuality*. The introduction includes insightful discussions of performativity, queer linguistics, and globalization, among other subjects. *Gay and lesbian language*. *Annual Review of Anthropology* The critique was viewed by some as polemical, yet it ultimately inspired renewed attention to both identity and desire. *Theorizing gender in sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology: Toward effective interventions in gender inequity*. She discusses three problematic assumptions: Language and sexual identity. Please subscribe or login. How to Subscribe Oxford Bibliographies Online is available by subscription and perpetual access to institutions. For more information or to contact an Oxford Sales Representative click here.

2: Language, gender, and society - Barrie Thorne - Google Books

Language, gender and society / Barrie Thorne, Cheris Kramarae and Nancy Henley --Beyond the he/man approach: the case for nonsexist language / Wendy Martyna --Prescriptive grammar and the pronoun problem / Donald G. MacKay --Linguistic options and choices for Black women in the rural South / Patricia C. Nichols --Intonation in a man's world.

These include tag questions, question intonation, and "weak" directives, among others see also Speech practices associated with gender, below. Its Nature and Development, and Origin. These include the prospect of language change based on social and gendered opportunity, lexical and phonological differences, and the idea of genderlects and gender roles influence language. Dominance is an approach whereby the female sex is seen as the subordinate group whose difference in style of speech results from male supremacy and also possibly an effect of patriarchy. This results in a primarily male-centered language. This then results in the varying communicative styles of men and women. Deborah Tannen is a major advocate of this position. Comparing conversational goals, she argues that men tend to use a "report style", aiming to communicate factual information, whereas women more often use a "rapport style", which is more concerned with building and maintaining relationships. Instead of speech falling into a natural gendered category, the dynamic nature and multiple factors of an interaction help a socially appropriate gendered construct. As such, West and Zimmerman describe these constructs as "doing gender" instead of the speech itself necessarily being classified in a particular category. Scholars including Tannen and others argue that differences are pervasive across media, including face-to-face conversation, [16] [17] written essays of primary school children, [18] email, [19] and even toilet graffiti. Cameron notes that throughout the history of scholarship on language and gender male-associated forms have been seen as the unmarked norm from which the female deviates. On the other hand, Cameron argues that what the difference approach labels as different ways of using or understanding language are actually displays of differential power. But the research evidence does not support the claims made by Tannen and others about the nature, the causes, and the prevalence of male-female miscommunication. This emotional labor is commonly associated with the feminine domain, and the call center service workers are also typically females. However, the male workers in this call center do not orient to the covertly gendered meanings when they are tasked to perform this emotional labor. One explanation for this, is that people accommodate their language towards the style of the person they are interacting with. Thus, in a mixed-gender group, gender differences tend to be less pronounced. A similarly important observation is that this accommodation is usually towards the language style, not the gender of the person. That is, a polite and empathic male will tend to be accommodated to on the basis of their being polite and empathic, rather than their being male. For example, the pronouns "he" and "she" directly indexes "male" and "female". However, there can be a secondary relationship between linguistic resources and gender where the linguistic resources can index certain acts, activities or stances which then indirectly index gender. In other words, these linguistic resources help constitute gender. Examples include the Japanese particles "wa" and "ze". The former directly index delicate intensity, which then indirectly indexes the female "voice" while the latter directly indexes coarse intensity, which then indirectly indexes the male "voice". Women are generally believed to speak a better "language" than men do. This is a constant misconception, but scholars believe that no gender speaks a better language, but that each gender instead speaks its own unique language. They analyzed randomly selected interactive dialogue taken once from every ten minutes of their tapes. See subordinating conjunctions Grammatical Errors Utterances which are viewed incorrect by a prescriptivist grammar Polite Forms Utterances that express some degree of politeness The following tended to be higher in frequency for males: On the other hand, the following were found to occur more for females: In addition, female characters had longer sentences on average. Minimal responses[edit] One of the ways in which the communicative behaviors of men and women differ is in their use of minimal responses, i. For example, "minimal responses appearing "throughout streams of talk", such as "mm" or "yeah", may only function to display active listening and interest and are not always signs of "support work", as Fishman claims. They canâ€”as more detailed analysis of minimal responses showâ€”signal understanding, demonstrate agreement, indicate scepticism or a

critical attitude, demand clarification or show surprise. Questions[edit] Men and women differ in their use of questions in conversations. For example, Mark Twain used them in " A War Prayer " to provoke the reader to question his actions and beliefs. Please help improve this article by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. November Learn how and when to remove this template message

Female tendencies toward self-disclosure , i. Instead, scholars define self-disclosure as sharing information with others that they would not normally know or discover. Self-disclosure involves risk and vulnerability on the part of the person sharing the information. Men and women have completely different views of self-disclosure. It typically is much easier to get to know a woman than it is to get to know a man. It has also been said[by whom? This form of communication typically involves text only messages that tend to lose their nonverbal cues. Men and women are both more likely to self-disclose on the computer than they would be face to face. People are more confident when using Computer Mediated Communication because communication is faceless, which makes it easier to divulge information. Sixty-seven women and fifty-three men were asked about intimate and non-intimate self-disclosure to closest same-sex friends. Disclosure to spouse among married respondents was also assessed. The intimate disclosure of married men to friends was lower than that of unmarried men, married women and unmarried women; the intimate disclosure of these last three groups was similar. The results suggest that sex roles are not the only determinant of gender differences in disclosure to friends. Marital status appears to have an important influence on disclosure in friendship for men but not for women. It was concluded that research on gender differences in self-disclosure and friendship has neglected an important variable, that of marital status. Men tend to communicate differently with other men than they do with other women, while women tend to communicate the same with both men and women. The results were consistent with the primary assertion that measures of sex role identity are better predictors of contextual variations in self-disclosure than is sex per se. Although masculinity failed to exert the expected facilitative impact on self-disclosure within the instrumental context, it nonetheless influenced the results; androgynous subjects, who scored high in both masculinity and femininity, were more self-revealing across contexts than was any other group. The influence of biological sex on communication values has received scholarly attention. In general, women value affectively oriented communication skills more than men, and men value instrumentally oriented communication skills more than women, although the effect size for these differences are generally small. Successful communication in relationships is one of the greatest difficulties most couples are forced to overcome. Men in relationships with women may practice self-disclosure more often than their female partner. Self-disclosure is considered to be a key factor in facilitating intimacy. For example, American heterosexual couples were studied using various measures twice a year. By using the average scores of both partners, they found that self-disclosure was higher in those couples who remained together at the second administration of the surveys than in those who broke up between two administrations. Similarly, researchers asked heterosexual couples who had just begun dating to complete a self-disclosure measure and to answer the same questionnaire four months later. They found that couples who were still dating four months later reported greater self-disclosure at the initial contact than did those who later broke up. This test shows self-disclosure can be beneficial to facilitating a positive relationship. Self-disclosure is a process which typically begins rapidly, but then plateaus as the couple gains more information. The initial self-disclosure is extremely important when first meeting someone. The first interactions between a potential couple could be deciding factors in the success or failure of the relationship. Self-disclosure is difficult because not all women and men communicate the same.

Verbal aggression[edit] Aggression can be defined by its three intersecting counterparts: Indirect aggression occurs when the victim is attacked through covert and concealed attempts to cause social suffering. Examples are gossiping, exclusion or ignoring of the victim. Relational aggression, while similar to indirect, is more resolute in its attentions. It can be a threat to terminate a friendship or spreading false rumors. Underwood, leading researcher in child clinical psychology and developmental psychology, began using the term social aggression in several of her experiments. It was found that technology and electronic communication has become a key factor in social aggression. This discovery has been termed cyber-bullying. In a third study, the experimenters determined that while socially aggressive students were vastly disliked, they were alleged to be the popular kids and had the highest marked social

status. Most research has been based on teacher assessments, case studies and surveys. For years, all research on aggression focused primarily on males because it was believed females were non-confrontational. Recently however, people have realized that while "boys tend to be more overtly and physically aggressive, girls are more indirectly, socially, and relationally aggressive. Toddlers use this aggression to obtain something they want that is otherwise denied or another has. In preschool, children become more socially aggressive and this progresses through adolescence and adulthood. Social aggression is not used to acquire materialistic things but to accomplish social goals. However, until the fourth grade there is an overall negative correlation between aggression and popularity. This popularity does not insinuate likeability. In the seventh grade, social aggression seems to be at its peak. When eight-, eleven- and fifteen-year-olds were compared, there were high reports of social aggression but no apparent statistical differences between the age groups. In classrooms with a high achievement record, researchers were less likely to find social aggression. Vice versa can be found for classrooms with a low achievement record. Furthermore, males are also ranked higher in popularity if they are physically aggressive. But, if males practice relational or social aggression then they are seen as unpopular among their peers. In addition to gender, the conditions in which a child grows up in also affects the likelihood of aggression. This is speculated because of the higher rates of conflict and fighting already in the household. Parents who use an aversive style of parenting can also contribute to the social aggression in their children. In a study done measuring the aggressive acts committed by cartoon characters on television, out of minutes of programming time aggressive acts took place. If children relate to the characters, then they are more likely to commit similar acts of aggression. For teenagers, popular films and series such as Mean Girls , Easy A and Gossip Girl have shown an exaggerated, damaging view of how society works.

3: Language and gender - Wikipedia

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You should, however, have a range of examples from different areas as shown above. You should also have a wide body of examples from a smaller range of categories - especially any on which you may be examined. You must be able to comment on language features relevant to sociolinguistics in these examples. As well as this, you should practise your skills in interpreting any given text, in terms of appropriate language theory. George Keith and John Shuttleworth *Living Language* Hodder; ISBN take the second - they do not identify any topic within the general subject area, but give copybook examples of how to "read" a text that embodies attitudes to society in its language use. In this part of the course you must use real language data. Texts should be sourced give author, context, date - including overheard casual speech. Do not repeat uninformed received opinion about language use, as if authoritative. Do not write about theories of, or attitudes to, society expressed in texts. Never make value judgements about these attitudes. This is very easy in one sense. If you look for particular kinds of language use and find them, you may develop unbalanced views. You will also exhaust yourself. Rather, observe what you hear and read in all language contexts. The hard part is logging evidence and organizing it for future use and revision. This is better done collaboratively more people to find it. However, texts that are in some way about society like newspapers or news broadcasts are a rich source of data. Keep a clippings file, and periodically transcribe your most helpful sources to a permanent record. Try to organize these by sociolinguistic category. In browsing a single newspaper you will usually see enough evidence to sustain a lengthy essay! For a given item of data, you must have the relevant context - this is especially vital for single lexical items or phrases. Although you will often look at new lexical forms or new meanings for established forms, do not limit yourself to comment on single words. Often the point of significance is in the order of items in a phrase, or a longer structure. Language and gender Look at any material your teacher has given you. Apply theories you find there and here to all texts you consider. On this sheet you will find simple brief explanations of some of these points of theory. Language forms may preserve old attitudes that show men as superior morally, spiritually, intellectually or absolutely to women. Today this may cause offence, so we see these forms as suitable for change. But changes may be resisted if they seem clumsy. The male as the norm: Men, man and mankind may imply this. The term for the species or people in general is the same as that for one sex only. Personal pronouns and possessives after a noun may also show this implicit assumption. See if a given text follows any of these guidelines or not. Consider conventions of naming in marriage. Consider also titles for married and unmarried people of either sex. Why are stage performers often excepted from these "rules" e. Look at nouns that denote workers in a given occupation. In some cases teacher, social-worker they may seem gender-neutral. Others may have gender-neutral denotation doctor, lawyer, nurse but not g-n connotation for all speakers and listeners. Speakers will show this in forms such as woman doctor, male nurse. Listeners may not show it but their expectations can be tested by statements or short narratives that allow for contradiction of assumptions e. Consider forms that differentiate by gender, in adding diminutive belittling affixes: These are pairs of terms that historically differentiated by sex alone, but which, over time, have gained different connotations e. Patronizing, controlling and insulting: This is not just a gender issue - these are functions or abuses of language which may appear in any social situation. But they take particular forms when the speaker usually or writer is male and the addressee is female. In some cases the patronizing, controlling or insulting only works because both parties share awareness of these connotations. It is possible for the addressee not to perceive - or the speaker not to intend - the patronizing, controlling or insulting. Patronizing terms include dear, love, pet or addressing a group of adult women as girls. Note that calling men boys or lads is not seen as demeaning. Shirley Russell argues that insulting is a means of control. She quotes Julia Stanley, who claims that in a large lexicon of terms for males, 26 are non-standard nouns that denote promiscuous men. Some have approving connotation stallion, stud. In a smaller list of nouns for women are which denote promiscuity e. All have disapproving connotation. Equally

terms denoting abstinence - like the noun phrase tight bitch - are disapproving. In *Losing Out* Professor Sue Lees argues that men control female behaviour by use of such terms, especially slag. Note that today both dog and bitch are used pejoratively of women. Dog denotes physical unattractiveness, while bitch denotes a fault of character. Judging women by appearance is well-attested by language forms. Blonde, an adjective of colour, becomes a noun, with connotations of low intelligence. Brunette has a similar origin, as has the compound noun redhead no common term for a woman with black hair. Babe is both approving beauty and disapproving intelligence. More strongly pejorative about intellect is bimbo. A male equivalent - himbo - has not passed into common use. The software on which this guide is written accepts bimbo but not himbo as a known form. Hunk approving and wimp disapproving apply to men criteria of strength and attractiveness, but neither has clear connotation about intelligence. Non-standard terms may cross gender boundaries. In the USA guys is sometimes used to denote mixed-groups. Totty has been recorded to denote men. Bird was current in the late s current for an attractive young man in East Yorkshire female 6th former, Gender differences in spoken English: Keith and Shuttleworth record suggestions that: Note that some of these are objective descriptions which can be verified ask questions, give commands while others express unscientific popular ideas about language and introduce non-linguistic value judgements nag, speak with more authority. Consider evidence to see if any of these claims is justified. See, for instance, the study from Reading, Berkshire, of non-standard forms in spoken English. Note where speakers or writers use different lexical or syntactical forms in ways which may be influenced by their sex. Can you identify the sex of a writer by language data in a text? Or a speaker, where the text is transcribed to eliminate clues from phonology? Persuasive language - introduction: Your syllabus requires you to study how language is used to achieve a variety of purposes in a range of social contexts. To do this, we may focus on the contexts, then look for the purposes, or vice versa. One very obvious purpose of language use is to persuade, and this can be found in a variety of contexts, among them advertising, the law, politics and academic debate. Less obvious contexts might be journalism, polemics and philosophy. Students at school are likely to be exposed frequently to attempted persuasive public speaking e. Another very special use of persuasive language is in the context of religious gatherings. In *The Language Web*, Professor Jean Aitchison claims that language is very good at conveying some kinds of information and poor at conveying different kinds - such as spatial information like that on a map, or how to tie a knot. Language is good at allowing us to guess or predict how others feel, she claims, and at deceiving or persuading she cites evidence from anthropology about how primates use rudimentary language to do both of these - including "lying". You are expected to study persuasive language in some or all of the contexts listed above. You may wish to begin with this draft theoretical framework. Be ready to add to it or alter it: TV advertising forms distinctive lexis neologism or semantic change formal lexis e. Madam Speaker; Your Excellency; the Rt. Lady formal syntactic structures e. The ayes have it. Prisoner at the bar How do you plead? Give us this day our daily bread inclusive and exclusive usage e.

4: Do men and women speak the same language? | World news | The Guardian

Language, Gender, and Society has 7 ratings and 1 review. Reuel said: *I must have read an earlier edition. The title is correct, but I'm not sure if it w.*

Share via Email Do men and women speak the same language? Can they ever really communicate? These questions are not new, but since the early 90s there has been a new surge of interest in them. Countless self-help and popular psychology books have been written portraying men and women as alien beings, and conversation between them as a catalogue of misunderstandings. Advice on how to bridge the communication gulf between the sexes has grown into a flourishing multimedia industry. These explain that the gulf between men and women is a product of nature, not nurture. The sexes communicate differently and women do it better because of the way their brains are wired. The female brain excels in verbal tasks whereas the male brain is better adapted to visual-spatial and mathematical tasks. Women like to talk; men prefer action to words. Writers in this vein are fond of presenting themselves as latter-day Galileos, braving the wrath of the political correctness lobby by daring to challenge the feminist orthodoxy that denies that men and women are by nature profoundly different. Simon Baron-Cohen, the author of *The Essential Difference*, explains in his introduction that he put the book aside for several years because "the topic was just too politically sensitive". In the chapter on male-female differences in his book about human nature, *The Blank Slate*, Steven Pinker congratulates himself on having the courage to say what has long been "unsayable in polite company". Both writers stress that they have no political axe to grind: Yet before we applaud, we should perhaps pause to ask ourselves: Certainly not since the early 90s, when the previous steady trickle of books began to develop into a raging torrent. By now, a writer who announces that sex-differences are natural is not "saying the unsayable": The idea that men and women "speak different languages" has itself become a dogma, treated not as a hypothesis to be investigated or as a claim to be adjudicated, but as an unquestioned article of faith. Our faith in it is misplaced. Like the scientists I have mentioned, I believe in following the evidence where it leads. But in this case, the evidence does not lead where most people think it does. If we examine the findings of more than 30 years of research on language, communication and the sexes, we will discover that they tell a different, and more complicated, story. The idea that men and women differ fundamentally in the way they use language to communicate is a myth in the everyday sense: But it is also a myth in the sense of being a story people tell in order to explain who they are, where they have come from, and why they live as they do. Whether or not they are "true" in any historical or scientific sense, such stories have consequences in the real world. They shape our beliefs, and so influence our actions. The myth of Mars and Venus is no exception to that rule. For example, the workplace is a domain in which myths about language and the sexes can have detrimental effects. A few years ago, the manager of a call centre in north-east England was asked by an interviewer why women made up such a high proportion of the agents he employed. Did men not apply for jobs in his centre? The manager replied that any vacancies attracted numerous applicants of both sexes, but, he explained: What we find is that women can do this more. More jobs are now in the service than the manufacturing sector, and service jobs, particularly those that involve direct contact with customers, put a higher premium on language and communication skills. Male job applicants have to prove that they possess the necessary skills, whereas women are just assumed to possess them. But it is not only men who stand to lose because of the widespread conviction that women have superior verbal skills. Someone else who thinks men and women are naturally suited to different kinds of work is Baron-Cohen. In *The Essential Difference* he offers the following "scientific" careers advice: People with the male brain make the most wonderful scientists, engineers, mechanics, technicians, musicians, architects, electricians, plumbers, taxonomists, catalogists, bankers, toolmakers, programmers or even lawyers. The female-brain jobs make use of a capacity for empathy and communication, whereas the male ones exploit the ability to analyse complex systems. He stresses that there are men with female brains, women with male brains, and individuals of both sexes with "balanced" brains. He refers to the major brain types as "male" and "female", however, because the tendency is for males to have male brains and females to have female brains. And at many points it becomes clear that in spite of his caveats

about not confusing gender with brain sex, he himself is doing exactly that. The passage reproduced above is a good example. Baron-Cohen classifies nursing as a female-brain, empathy-based job though if a caring and empathetic nurse cannot measure dosages accurately and make systematic clinical observations she or he risks doing serious harm and law as a male-brain, system-analysing job though a lawyer, however well versed in the law, will not get far without communication and people-reading skills. These categorisations are not based on a dispassionate analysis of the demands made by the two jobs. They are based on the everyday common-sense knowledge that most nurses are women and most lawyers are men. If you read the two lists in their entirety, it is hard not to be struck by another "essential difference": In those days we called this sexism, not science. At its most basic, what I am calling "the myth of Mars and Venus" is simply the proposition that men and women differ fundamentally in the way they use language to communicate. All versions of the myth share this basic premise; most versions, in addition, make some or all of the following claims: Men talk more about things and facts, whereas women talk more about people, relationships and feelings. This causes problems in contexts where men and women regularly interact, and especially in heterosexual relationships. The literature of Mars and Venus, in both the self-help and popular science genres, is remarkably patronising towards men. They come off as bullies, petulant toddlers; or Neanderthals sulking in their caves. One male contributor to this catalogue of stereotypes goes so far as to call his book *If Men Could Talk*. Perhaps men have realised that a reputation for incompetence can sometimes work to your advantage. Like the idea that they are no good at housework, the idea that men are no good at talking serves to exempt them from doing something that many would rather leave to women anyway. Though it is only some kinds of talking that men would rather leave to women: This should remind us that the relationship between the sexes is not only about difference, but also about power. The long-standing expectation that women will serve and care for others is not unrelated to their position as the "second sex". But in the universe of Mars and Venus, the fact that we still live in a male-dominated society is like an elephant in the room that everyone pretends not to notice. My father, like many men of his generation, held the belief that women were incompetent drivers. During my teenage years, family car journeys were invariably accompanied by an endless running commentary on how badly the women around us were driving. Eventually I became so irritated by this, I took to scouring passing traffic for counter-examples: My father usually conceded that the men were idiots, but not because they were men. Whereas female idiocy was axiomatically caused by femaleness, substandard male drivers were either "yobbos" - people with no consideration for others on the road or anywhere else - or "Sunday drivers": As for the women who drove unremarkably, my father seemed surprised when I pointed them out. It was as if he had literally not noticed them until that moment. At the time I thought my father was exceptional in his ability to make reality fit his preconceptions, but now I know he was not. Psychologists have found in experimental studies that when interpreting situations people typically pay most attention to things that match their expectations, and often fail to register counter-examples. It is not hard to see how these tendencies might lead readers of Mars and Venus books to "recognise" generalisations about the way men and women use language, provided those generalisations fit with already familiar stereotypes. An anecdote illustrating the point that, say, men are competitive and women cooperative conversationalists will prompt readers to recall the many occasions on which they have observed men competing and women cooperating - while not recalling the occasions, perhaps equally numerous, on which they have observed the opposite. If counter-examples do come to mind "What about Janet? In relation to men and women, our most basic stereotypical expectation is simply that they will be different rather than the same. We actively look for differences, and seek out sources that discuss them. Most research studies investigating the behaviour of men and women are designed around the question: And the presumption is usually that there will be. If a study finds a significant difference between male and female subjects, that is considered to be a "positive" finding, and has a good chance of being published. A study that finds no significant differences is less likely to be published. Most people, of course, do not read academic journals: These sources often feature research on male-female differences, since media producers know that there is interest in the subject. But the criteria producers use when deciding which studies to report and how to present them introduce another layer of distortion. And sometimes headlines trumpet so-called facts that turn out, on investigation, to have no basis in evidence at all. In , for instance, a popular

science book called *The Female Brain* claimed that women on average utter 20, words a day, while men on average utter only 7, This was perfect material for soundbite science - it confirmed the popular belief that women are not only the more talkative sex but three times as much - and was reported in newspapers around the world. One person who found it impossible to believe was Mark Liberman, a professor of phonetics who has worked extensively with recorded speech. His scepticism prompted him to delve into the footnotes of *The Female Brain* to find out where the author had got her figures. What he found was not an academic citation but a reference to a self-help book. Following the trail into the thickets of popular literature, Liberman came across several competing statistical claims. The figures varied wildly: As far as Liberman could tell, all these numbers were plucked from thin air: He concluded that no one had ever done a study counting the words produced by a sample of men and women in the course of a single day. The claims were so variable because they were pure guesswork. After Liberman pointed this out in a newspaper article, the author of *The Female Brain* conceded that her claim was not supported by evidence and said it would be deleted from future editions. But the damage was already done: This is how myths acquire the status of facts. Do women and men really speak so differently? This title stood out as unusual, because, as we have seen, the aim of most research studies is to find differences rather than similarities between men and women. Hyde is a psychologist who specialises in "meta-analysis", a statistical technique that allows the analyst to collate many different research findings and draw overall conclusions from them. Scientists believe that one study on its own does not show anything:

5: Language, Gender, and Sexuality - Linguistics - Oxford Bibliographies

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These days, many younger Japanese women would no longer choose to use the specific female forms. Such linguistic differences are part of a cultural re construction of a biological difference -- a marking of gender differences that appears to be dying out in Japanese culture, as the roles and attitudes of men and women change. The available terminology of ordinary English does not give us any easy way make it clear -- if we want to -- whether we are talking about biological or cultural differences. In recent years, many people have imposed this distinction on the terms "sex" and "gender", although in ordinary usage these terms overlap. Here are some paired quotes from different recent newspaper stories, in which uses of "gender" might easily have been replaced by "sex," or vice versa: The homeless were recorded by gender and whether adult or child, but names were not taken. He declined to identify the surgeon , even by sex. We unconditionally reject [birth control] as a means of gender selection. In the new paradigm of sex determination that is emerging, the fetus is roughly female to begin with. Here is another newspaper quote, where gender and sex are used in adjacent sentences in apparently interchangeable senses: Faulkner sued The Citadel two years ago for rescinding its acceptance of her after learning her gender. In The American Heritage dictionary, the definition of gender starts with its grammatical senses, and then references the definition of sex: A set of two or more categories, as masculine, feminine, and neuter, into which words are divided according to sex, animation, psychological associations, or some other characteristic, and that determine agreement with or the selection of modifiers, referents, or grammatical forms. One category of such a set. The classification of a word or grammatical form in such a category. The distinguishing form or forms used. The definition of sex in the same dictionary starts from the biological question of reproductive function, but extends to all associated characteristics: The property or quality by which organisms are classified according to their reproductive functions. Either of two divisions, designated male and female, of this classification. Males or females collectively. The condition or character of being male or female; the physiological, functional, and psychological differences that distinguish the male and the female. The sexual urge or instinct as it manifests itself in behavior. The dictionary definitions are consistent with the overlapping usage seen in the newspaper quotes. Nevertheless, as indicated earlier, in recent years many people have decided to use this pair of terms to express the newly-salient distinction between biological and cultural aspects of reproductive status. Roughly, in this way of talking, sex is genetics and physiology, while gender is culture and identity. From a recent medical text: Hence in biological sciences, sex differences are innate, chromosomally determined characteristics that distinguish between males and females, while in psychological and sociological sciences gender differences refer to male or female traits that result from learning and social roles. Another quote, from a book entitled Gender Voices: During the last decade of research, it has become clear that gender is a very complex category. Theories are still be developed which try to grapple with the complexity but they share the idea that gender, unlike sex, is a continuous variable. Although the terminology of sex vs. One has to do with the larynx, and the other with the brain. According to a publication from the National Center for Health Statistics, at age 2 the 50th percentiles for males and females are identical; at age 10, girls are. As a result of these laryngeal changes, adult human males have significantly lower voices than females do, out of proportion to their rather small different in average height. This difference reflects not only the difference in vocal cord length, but also a difference in vocal cord mass -- and perhaps some socially-conditioned factors as well. A graph showing data from various studies is reproduced below taken from Kent This difference also means that adult males are even more subject to the risk of choking on aspirated food that is a price the human species pays for adapting its vocal organs to speech. None of the other species of apes shows a similar sexual dimorphism of the vocal organs, although overall size differences between the sexes tend to be larger in other apes than in homo sapiens. Brain anatomy and physiology There is only one well-documented difference in neuroanatomy between human

males and females, concerning the corpus callosum, an array of neural fibers that connects the two hemispheres of the cortex. According to a series of studies reviewed in Holloway et al. Brain size tends to track body size, and so male brains are on average larger. Some researchers have argued that the differences are not so much in size but in three-dimensional tissue distribution, with the female splenium more bulbous and thus more concentrated in the midline, where section areas may be most easily compared. It is claimed de Lacoste et al. The sexual dimorphism of the corpus callosum is said to contrast with other aspects of brain anatomy, where average sizes, corrected for overall brain size, show no significant differences between males and females. The corpus callosum does not appear to be dimorphic in monkeys and prosimians, while evidence from apes is uncertain. Such differences suggest that interhemispheric communication may differ between the sexes. Speech and language tend to be localized on the left, or dominant, side of the brain "lateralized", while some other functions such as visuospatial integration and emotional appreciation of context are lateralized on the opposite side. Several functional studies have found sex differences in cerebral lateralization for language-related activities. Perhaps the most striking differences appear in some studies of early development. A more recent study has found an adult difference in degree of lateralization of at least certain kinds of phonological processing. Finally, there are some suggestive differences in patterns of disability following stroke. However, it needs to be stressed that in what is known about neurophysiology, just as for neuroanatomy, there is a great deal of individual variation, and the overall similarities between the sexes are much greater than the differences. Developmental studies of cerebral lateralization A pair of developmental studies appear to show large and striking differences in lateralization of language-related functions between male and female infants at three and six months of age. The information in this section comes from D. In the AEP technique, recordings are made from scalp electrodes. The intensity of the recorded signal depends on the amount of activity in the neural tissues in the brain region near the electrode location. When a sudden sound, typically a beep-like "tone pip," is heard, there is a corresponding burst of AEP over a period of a second or so. In these studies, tone pips were presented in pairs; each tone was a tenth of a second long, and the tones in each pair were two seconds apart. The tones were presented in three conditions, called music, verbal and baseline. In the music condition, classical music was played as a background. In the verbal condition, the background was passages from a second-grade reader, read by a female voice. In the baseline condition, the background was a white-noise hiss. In the studies being discussed, what matters is the difference between the signal recorded on the right side of the head and the signal recorded on the left side of the head. The figure below shows the AEP recordings for one presentation of a pair of tones to a 3-month-old male infant in the "verbal" condition: You can see that the signals from the left-side electrodes especially the extrema labelled N2 and P3 are systematically smaller than the signals from the right-side electrodes. As the graph below indicates, this pattern is quite regular for the male 3-month-olds in all conditions -- the right-side electrodes show higher activity regardless of the background condition. For the female three-month-olds, the situation is reversed -- they show higher activity in the left-side electrodes, regardless of conditions. When infants are tested at the age of six months, the situation is different. The male six-month-olds still show the same pattern of greater right-side response regardless of background condition. The female six-month-olds show no significant lateralization for the baseline condition, and show the verbal condition with more activity on the left side, while the music condition shows more activity on the right side. This is the pattern expected for adult subjects. Thus the infants at three months show opposite condition-independent lateralization, while at six months, the female infants seem to have developed the adult pattern, while the males are still showing the same immature pattern as at three months. We should mention in passing that other studies have shown that human infants have some phonetic perception abilities essentially from birth, a matter that we will return to later in the lecture on child language acquisition. No one knows what these infant AEP differences mean -- beyond the fact that there are apparently some real sex differences in developmental lateralization of brain function. In other words, this particular type of phonological processing was more strongly lateralized in males than in females. It should be noted that a variety of other language-related tasks in this and other studies did not show sex-linked differences in localization of activation. Evidence from aphasia Evidence for language-related functional differences in neuroanatomy between adult males and females is offered by a

series of studies by Doreen Kimura and colleagues Kimura , Kumura and Hampson , which show that in patients suffering damage to the left hemisphere of the brain, more men Looking at the details of correlations between damage location and type of impairment, Kimura further finds that when the left anterior portion of the frontal cortex is damaged, somewhat more women than men suffer aphasia. When the the left posterior portion of the frontal cortex is damaged, more men than women suffer aphasia. We will return to questions of this kind in the lecture on Neurology and Pathology of Language. However, some other researchers have called the conclusions into question, since the men and women in the study also differed in typical size of brain lesions. Functional differences No one knows why the sex difference in the human corpus callosum exists, if indeed it has any function. Nor does anyone really know why human larynx size and position differ between the sexes. Evolutionary theorists usually assume that sexual dimorphism arises as a result of within-species reproductive competition, part of what is known as "sexual selection". This is a plausible account in the case of larynx size and position -- a deeper voice, sounding like it comes from a larger person, might have been helpful to paleolithic males in impressing potential mates or intimidating potential rivals. It is less clear that there is any story of this kind about the differences in brain anatomy and physiology. Perhaps there was an evolutionary pressure for greater communicative abilities among women, or better integration of language functions with other kinds of processing. Alternatively, since some visuospatial functions are localized in the non-dominant hemisphere, and males tend to perform better than females on tasks such as visualization of object rotation, greater lateralization of male brains might have something to do with development of hunting-related skills like long-distance navigation and projectile aiming. At present, all stories about a functional-evolutionary basis for the language lateralization differences between the sexes are speculative at best. A recent news release from the Educational Testing Service reiterates the general finding that females tend to score somewhat higher than males on language-related tests: A profile based on nationally representative samples of 12th graders shows that for many categories of tests ranging from reading to math to natural science , average differences in the performance of females and males were very small. Writing and language use stood out as areas in which females scored higher than males. The study indicated that among all girls and boys nationally, the familiar gap in math and science is about one-quarter of what it was in However, differences persist among very high achieving students. Over the same year period, boys have not closed the gap in writing. Such results are widely replicated, from standardized tests in Addison, Vermont , to English writing skills among Taiwanese business students. It is important to keep in mind, while considering these issues, that the average differences in these various skills between men and women are fairly small, and that there is a great deal of variation among individuals of either sex. To the extent that there are systematic differences in language usage between men and women, we must apparently look elsewhere for an explanation than in the anatomy and physiology of their brains. Quite a few languages show lexical and morphological differences like those exemplified above for Japanese.

6: Language, Gender, and Society | Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies

University of Pittsburgh LING / Language Gender and Society Fall I may change any portion of the course at any time, but I will give you plenty of warning.

7: Language, Gender, and Society by Barrie Thorne

Even in this modern day, language still plays a great role in defining gender, to the extent that it affects gender roles in society. Protagoras, a Greek philosopher, introduced the grammatical concepts of gender with the use of masculine, feminine and neuter terms when classifying nouns, according to Aristotle.

8: Language and Gender

Gender and language change The study of language and society - sociolinguistics - can be dated to about the middle of

the twentieth century. Before that.

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