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## LANGUAGE AND WOMEN

by

Barbara Wheatley

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

This course is designed for lower-level undergraduate students who have no previous knowledge of linguistics. The purpose of the course is described on the syllabus as follows:

The topic of this course is an area which is currently controversial and has only recently become the subject of serious study. The course will not present you with definitive answers to all the questions raised by feminists and scholars investigating language, but will acquaint you with the current state of the field--the facts, ideas, opinions, and arguments about sexism in language and sex-based differences in language use. An equally important purpose of the course will be to prepare you to respond to the continuing controversies by providing you with a conceptual framework to evaluate future discussions of these issues.

As this statement indicates, the two main topics are sexism in language and gender-based differences in linguistic behavior. The content is restricted almost entirely to language-related questions; topics such as non-verbal communication patterns are not included. (At UWM, a course in the Department of Communication deals with those aspects of communication and the sexes which go beyond the usual domain of linguistics.) Throughout the course, emphasis is placed on distinguishing subjective from objective reports and distinguishing values, opinions, facts, claims, and theories.

### Course Format and Requirements

This is primarily a lecture course, although some of the topics lend themselves well to class discussion.

This course has been offered as a regular semester course and as an intensive three or four week summer course, for the same amount of credit. When the course is taught during a regular 15-week semester, the students are required to do an independent research project on one of the course topics. (The intensive format does not allow enough time for absorption of class material and subsequent independent investigation.) Library research projects are accepted, but I encourage the students to undertake a survey or experimental project, either individually or in groups of two or three. In view of the level of the course, standards for such projects are lenient.

The purpose of this assignment is two-fold: to allow students to investigate further a topic which particularly interests them, and to give them insight into the difficulties of surveys and experiments, and the amount of work that may be necessary to establish, even tentatively, one small fact. It is possible to cover all the lecture material in less than a full semester, depending on the amount of class discussion; this allows the last three weeks or so of the semester to be devoted entirely to the research project, with each student scheduled for frequent meetings with me to discuss progress and problems.

This course is generally popular with the students, and most of them seem to enjoy doing the research project. However, student responses to the three or four week course have been even more favorable; they seem to enjoy the intensive approach.

#### Textbook

I use *Language and Sex: Difference and Dominance*, edited by Barrie Thorne and Nancy Henley. This is an anthology of articles (see bibliography for contents) with an annotated bibliography. It is not ideal as a textbook. The articles vary greatly in difficulty and do not provide a balanced overview of the field; some articles present overviews of particular topics, but others primarily report individual studies, and some topics are not dealt with in any article. I use this book primarily because it seems superior to any other available book; many of the articles are worth assigning to the students. The text is supplemented with a number of reserve readings, especially for the unit on sexism in language.

#### OUTLINE

The following outline lists the topics in the order in which they may be covered; some topics have no apparent intrinsic sequencing and I have experimented with various orderings and found no significant differences. With each topic I have included an explication of some of the main points which I focus on and references to the studies which I deal with in that unit. The studies are summarized in the bibliography following the outline.

#### UNIT I: SEXISM IN LANGUAGE

##### Introduction: What is "sexism in language"?

The introduction focuses on defining "sexism in language" and various terms and concepts which form the basis of a framework for studying the subject as objectively as possible, given its controversial nature.

The first logical possibility for a definition of "sexism in language" is any linguistic terms or patterns by which the two sexes can be distinguished. In other words, we consider the possibility of a language in which there is no means whatsoever to distinguish the sexes or to describe differences between them (including strictly biological differences; without this restriction, people could easily devise sex-referential terms based on biological differences). All people are simply people. While this may seem an obviously absurd proposal, some students are initially surprised to realize that there are practical reasons for making the basic distinction--for example, in medicine, in biology, and in describing wanted criminals. Rejecting this approach as unrealistic can help clarify issues which arise later, such as the difference between sexism in language and sexism in content; words which are sex-specific but otherwise unobjectionable can be used to convey sexist messages.

The definition of "sexism in language" which is adopted is simply any instance where terms or patterns of reference for the two sexes are not parallel, whether or not the non-parallelism is derogatory or seems problematic in some other way. From this point on, the term "non-parallelism" can be used as synonymous with "sexism". (I am not entirely satisfied with either term; the former strikes students as too jargon-like, and the latter as too political.)

The following general terms are defined, both to clarify the approach that I take and to allow me to use them in subsequent discussions.

(1) Value: a personal belief concerning what is right or wrong, good or bad, etc.; not subject to proof or disproof or objective argument. Students are free to maintain their own values; my values naturally become apparent in many discussions but are not authoritative.

(2) Opinion: may be used as synonymous with value, but more important to us is its other usage: a belief about the validity of an untested claim. I emphasize that opinions are beliefs, not facts, and should be subject to modification if evidence is found regarding the validity of the claim.

(3) Fact: a statement about reality which is directly based on reasonably objective observation or experimentation. (What is "reasonable" depends on the aspect of reality in question; e.g. intuition may be acceptable for word meanings, but not for sociolinguistic tendencies.)

(4) Claim: an alleged fact, possibly true but not yet adequately checked.

(5) Theory: a proposed general description of explanation. One cannot reasonably expect theories to be "true"; they may be corroborated or falsified. (I tend to refer to untested theories as "speculations", simply to emphasize the lack of supporting evidence.)

In discussing claims and theories, I emphasize that these are not, in this context, negative terms, as they may be in general usage; claims and theories are fundamental to investigation of reality.

Survey: Contemporary American English and Proposals for Change

Contemporary American English offers a variety of examples of terms which are sexist in the sense that they are non-parallel. The most readily available sources for these are guidelines of non-sexist usage; Blaubeurgs (1978) discusses a number of examples. The following are the instances which I normally concentrate on. Each of them is discussed in terms of how it is non-parallel and, wherever appropriate, in terms of possible origin of the non-parallelism (i.e. what aspect of our society it might reflect) and proposed alternatives.

A. Occupational terms

(1) Use of gender adjectives, as in *woman doctor* and *male nurse*. These are non-parallel in the presence or absence of gender adjectives and in the adjective used--usually *woman* or *lady* vs. *male*. These usages are presumably simply reflections of our knowledge of which sex predominates in each occupation. Most feminists advocate not using any gender adjectives unless they are essential to the meaning (e.g. *She was the first woman doctor in that hospital.*)

(2) Use of suffixes.

a. Agentive suffixes:

-er, -or are normally generic, except in some pairs such as *waiter-waitress*, where they can be generic only as group terms (*waiters' union*).

-man is allegedly interpreted generically by some people and as a masculine form by others; the existence of a parallel -woman suggests that it is not completely generic. (No studies have tested interpretation of the suffix -man, as opposed to the word *man*, in adults.)

-woman.

b. Feminine suffixes: -ess, -ette (also a diminutive).

c. Masculine suffixes: there are no suffixes in English which only mark masculine gender, i.e. which are not simultaneously agentives.

This pattern suggests that masculine forms in English are unmarked; feminine forms are marked. This may reflect a more general assumption that males are in some sense unmarked humans.

Alternatives: *-person* has been proposed as a neutral agentive to replace *-man* and *-woman*, either universally or only when a generic is needed. In general, however, occupational terms are reformulated in terms appropriate to each individual situation--*fire fighter, police officer, etc.* *Chair* is a relatively popular solution to the *chairman-chairwoman-chairperson* problem.

#### B. Generic terms

*Man* is non-parallel to *woman* because it has two meanings, *male human* and *human*, in contrast to one meaning, *female human*. The same applies to *he* and *she*. This pattern again indicates that the terms for males are less marked than the terms for females.

Alternatives: For generic *man*: *people, person, human, etc.* (although some people associate the *-man* in *human* with *man*). For pronouns, a variety of alternatives have been proposed. *They* seems to be the most feasible alternative, since it is widely used in spoken language, and it should be easier to change written usage than spoken usage. In the context of our discussion of pronouns, I summarize Bodine's (1975) article on the origin of the rule that *he* is the "proper" generic form.

#### C. Some word-pairs which are not wholly equivalent

- (1) *girl - boy*: *girl* is used for a wider age range than *boy*. This probably reflects the lower status of women (cf. *boy* for black men), especially in view of the observation that it seems to be used more for women in lower status jobs.

Alternatives: use *girl* for female children and adolescents only.

- (2) *lady - gentleman*: it seems to be true that *lady* is used in a wider range of situations than *gentleman*, although this has not been studied. *Lady* is often considered offensive, largely because it is associated with traditional, now unacceptable, sex roles.

Alternatives: avoid the use of both terms, or use them only in parallel.

D. Names

Assignment of surnames: wives take husbands' names, including first names in formal address; children take fathers' surnames.

Alternatives: wives retain own surnames (usually fathers' surnames) on marriage, or invent names or take them from other sources. Children's names appear to be an unresolved problem, at least beyond the first generation.

E. Titles

*Mr. - Mrs., Miss, Ms.* (pronounced [mɪz]). *Ms.* has been proposed as a means of avoiding identifying women by marital status. It is frequently objected to as hard to say (a strange claim in view of the common southern pronunciation of *Mrs.*); this objection is probably due simply to its novelty and/or to exaggerated voicing of the [z] so as to contrast it with *Miss*.

F. Freezes

The majority of "freezes" apparently put the term for the male first, although there are exceptions, and some phrases are less "frozen" than others. Examples: *man and woman, husband and wife, Mr. and Mrs., ladies and gentleman, etc.*

Alternatives: reversing the order simply reverses the sex bias. Some feminists favor this as a means of emphasizing women; others try to alternate so as to be unbiased.

G. Slang

It has been claimed that: a) there is more slang referring to women than to men, and b) a higher proportion of the slang referring to women is derogatory. I know of no studies which control for slang usage within a community (dictionary studies conflate all slang used in a number of communities and may conflate slang used at various periods). Given the absence of controlled studies, I usually work with slang terms elicited from the class. A large number of slang terms for males and females involve taboo terms; I usually find the class willing to volunteer these, but only after I have suggested one or two. On the basis of these samples, it seems to be true that there is more slang for women than for men, except for terms referring to homosexuals, that much slang for women is derogatory, though possibly not a higher percentage--this is hard to evaluate--and also that more slang for women than for men refer to sexual desirability. (These patterns usually emerge even though the slang samples vary from semester to semester.) We tentatively assume that these observations

are valid, and I discuss some general characteristics of slang which might explain them. I point out that slang is invented by sub-groups to talk about things of particular interest to members of the group. Flexner (1960) claimed that most slang is invented by males because they participate in more sub-groups; although this is presumably less true now than in 1960, slang still seems largely reflective of heterosexual males' interests--e.g. the high number of sexually evaluative terms, both positive and negative, for women, and derogatory terms for male homosexuals. Since one function of slang is to be "vivid" or "colorful", the tendency of slang terms to be extreme (see Flexner) seems explicable, which in turn may explain why many terms for women are highly derogatory rather than mildly critical. In this context, it is necessary to bear in mind the fact that terms such as *chick*, which many women interpret as derogatory, are not so intended by many men who use them.

H. As time permits, other words or patterns may be discussed.

#### Language and Attitudes: The Significance of Linguistic Sexism

This unit is concerned with two related questions: does linguistic sexism encourage or perpetuate sexism in other aspects of our lives, and will language reform have any effect other than simply to alter our forms of expression?

We first consider the argument that change *qua* change is helpful because it serves as a consciousness-raising tool. I point out that it may also have a negative effect because such changes may be viewed as trivial and encourage the belief that sexism is a trivial problem. Since there is no evidence, as far as I know, on the relative good and bad effects of change *qua* change, the validity of this argument cannot be evaluated.

We next consider the possible effects of language on thoughts, perceptions, and attitudes. It seems clear that if language controls or strongly influences our thoughts, etc., then sexist language presumably does encourage or perpetuate sexist attitudes. (Some feminists have argued along these lines, implying that language reform is a *sine qua non* for societal reform.) In this context I present the strong and weak forms of the Whorf hypothesis and the evidence from the Hopi and English study (Carroll and Casagrande (1958)) which supports a fairly weak form of the hypothesis, but contradicts the deterministic view. We then turn to the studies dealing specifically with the interpretation of generic masculine terms in English: Harrison and Passero (1975), Harrison (1975), and Schneider and Hacker (1973). These studies suggest that, despite the technical neutrality of these terms, they are not interpreted neutrally, either because their meanings are not genuinely neutral or because the awareness of their alternate meanings

subtly influences visualization of appropriate referents. The evidence is strongest in the case of children. Finally, we consider the Martyna study (1978), which casts doubt on the generic nature of *he*. (Since this study follows a reverse procedure, it does not show that the use of *he* encourages visualization of a male, but it suggests that males, in particular, may use *he* to reflect imagery of a male, and thus that the term is not truly generic.) We conclude that, at least in the case of the generic masculine forms, the non-parallelism in terminology may affect and reflect sex-biased visualization of referents.

### Patterns in Semantic Change

I begin this unit with a discussion of the "etymological fallacy", a term I use for the belief that any word which was once sexist remains sexist even for speakers who are unaware of its etymology. I point out that words such as *hysteria* and *testify* are sexist only for those people who synchronically associate them with *hyster-*, as in *hysterectomy*, and *testicles*. Learning their etymology is considered by some people to be a "discovery" of synchronic sexism; it is more accurately described as creation of synchronic sexism.

We then consider some patterns in the history of words in English. I begin with a brief discussion of some terms whose history is interesting, but not very enlightening because the reasons for the changes are not clear. The primary meaning of *man* was once "human", rather than "male human". The shift that has occurred seems reasonable if males were considered "unmarked" humans and the term therefore used more frequently to refer to males; however, I have no evidence that this was the case. *Girl* originally meant a young person of either sex. Again, I do not know the reason for the change; perhaps *maiden*, the earlier term, became too strongly associated with virginity and seemed inappropriate for prepubescent females or young females whose virginity was questionable. *Boy* apparently developed from an Old English name, possibly because of the pejoration of *knave*. *Mistress* has changed its primary meaning in a way that *master* has not. This may reflect the relative scarcity of mistresses, in the original sense, as opposed to masters; the direction of the shift may have been influenced by euphemism (see below).

We next consider some of the many terms cited by Schulz (1975). I discuss euphemism and dysphemism, pointing out that both occur frequently as references to topics which cause discomfort, tension, or fear, such as sexuality, and that both are normally short-lived: euphemisms are either used temporarily and retain their original meaning, or are used too much and lose their euphemistic value; dysphemisms may last longer, but they tend to fade from usage as their novelty and "vividness" is lost. These characteristics of euphemism and dysphemism probably account for many of the examples cited by Schulz. Some words, such as kinship terms, *nun*, and *abbess*, were

apparently used euphemistically for a short time; others, like *whore* and *tart*, have apparently permanently pejorated, probably through euphemistic usage; and other terms were probably originally used as dysphemisms. The large number of derogatory sexual terms for women which can be found in a historical survey of English is presumably due to the relatively ephemeral nature of both euphemisms and dysphemisms.

Schulz does not discuss pejoration of terms for men. I give some examples (e.g. *knave*, *villain*) and point out that the discrepancy in numbers of terms that have pejorated presumably reflects societal patterns; there were fewer male prostitutes, and sexual freedom or promiscuity was more acceptable for men than for women.

Finally, we briefly look at the recent history of first names in English. A number of names which were originally used for males are now used primarily for females (e.g. *Shirley*, *Beverly*, *Evelyn*); I know of no names which have undergone the reverse shift. Presumably this is a reflection of our general societal pattern that it is more acceptable for females to adopt characteristics of males than vice versa (consider clothing styles).

### Language as a Key to Content

Graham's findings on the preponderance of references to males in children's books are discussed. I point out that this is not an indication of sexist language; the only language reform which could eliminate this pattern is a change to a language with no means of distinguishing sex, and this possibility was rejected as impractical at the beginning of the course. Graham's findings show that males predominate in the CONTENT of the books. (Students often find it very difficult to distinguish the form of language from the messages conveyed by language, and to understand that even non-sexist language forms can be used to convey sexist messages.) I suggest that language is, in fact, a very useful index to content because it indicates not only proportions of male to female characters, but also their relative prominence in the text.

## UNIT II: SEX DIFFERENCES IN THE USE OF LANGUAGE

### Stereotypes about Female and Male Speech

I begin the unit on sex-based differences in the use of language with a survey of stereotypes for two reasons: first, because they are intrinsically interesting, and second, because they provide a framework for the studies of actual usage, since the natural question to ask about stereotypes is the extent to which they are based on reality.

Before considering the studies on stereotypes, I briefly summarize the claims made by Jespersen (1922) and Lakoff (1973); these claims form the basis for Edelsky's studies of stereotypes and also for much of the research intended to determine actual differences in linguistic behavior. I then review the stereotypes found by Edelsky (1977, 1979) and Kramer (1974a, b). We discuss the relationship between stereotypes and expectations (e.g. *ladies are polite, ladies don't swear*), and the acquisitional patterns Edelsky found involving the difference between stereotypes based on clichés such as the examples above and stereotypes not based on such clichés. Finally, I raise the question of the origin of stereotypes, pointing out several possibilities: that stereotypes accurately reflect reality; that they reflect the language of books, movies and TV, which in turn might reflect present or past reality; that stereotypes reflect a failure of reality to fully accord with expectations (e.g. *women talk too much* because they talk more than they are expected to, but possibly still less than men); or that stereotypes represent overgeneralizations from actual differences (e.g. if women use more qualifiers or compound requests, this might create a general impression of "wordiness").

#### Speech Styles: Descriptive and Conversational Language

This unit of the course is concerned with style differences which do not correlate with social dialect variants. We begin with the issue of verbosity; I summarize the findings of Swacker (1975, 1978) and Eakins and Eakins (1978). I point out that these studies do not provide an adequate basis for assuming that males are always more verbose than females, though they disprove the reverse claim. Swacker (1975) involves an unnatural situation; an individual is not normally offered the opportunity to speak uninterrupted as long as s/he chooses. Swacker (1978) involves a natural situation, but not one that people, even linguists, frequently find themselves in. The relative verbosity of women and men in commonly occurring situations, such as conversational interaction, remains undetermined. Eakins and Eakins' findings may indicate that men talk more, but they may simply indicate that higher status faculty talk more; the interaction of sex and status is not clear.

I next briefly discuss Silverman and Zimmer's finding (1978) that the sexes do not differ in fluency, contrary to Jespersen's claim. I also discuss Edelsky's finding that women do not use a rising intonation in answer to questions more than men, contrary to both Lakoff's claim and the stereotype Edelsky found.

We then consider some studies on vocabulary differences, Swacker (1975), Kramer (1974), and Hartman (1978). I point out that Swacker's finding that men use more exact numbers, even when guessing, may correlate with the stereotype (Kramer 1974b) that men are more precise. Kramer (1974a) found no differences in the use of adjectives or adverbs in college students' written descriptions, and the fact that subjects were not able to correctly

assign author sex suggests that the descriptions also lacked more subtle sex differences. In contrast, Hartman found that elderly women did use more "flowery" adjectives in oral interviews, which suggests that other variables interact with speaker sex.

In the area of syntax, we look at the available evidence relevant to Lakoff's claims that women use more tag questions, qualifiers, and compound requests. Tag questions and compound requests were confirmed as stereotypically feminine by Edelsky (1977). Although no conclusive studies on tag questions have been done, the findings of Dubois and Crouch (1974) and Baumann (1978) cast doubt on the general validity of this stereotype. The fact that the elderly women in Hartman's study did use more tag questions may indicate that this stereotype reflects past speech patterns. Similarly, the women in Hartman's study used more prefatory sentence qualifiers, while the relatively young women in Baumann's study did not. Finally, Swacker's (1978) study provides some supporting evidence for the claim that women use more compound requests.

Next, I summarize the findings of Gleser et al. (1959), who studied word choice, and Barron (1971), who studied case usage. Their findings are similar in that both found differences in types of meaning expressed. Furthermore, their specific findings apparently overlap, although the difference in measures makes it difficult to be certain. Barron's finding that women use more Participative and more explicit Purposive may parallel Gleser et al.'s finding that women use more references to emotion and motivation. Also, since Participative included statements such as *I think*, *I believe*, etc., this may parallel Gleser et al.'s finding of more references to self, as well as Hartman's finding that women use more sentence qualifiers and Swacker's finding (1978) that women use more first person pronouns in questions.

I attempt to draw all these studies of syntax and word choice together, speculating on possible explanations for the patterns of similarities and differences that emerge. Since these studies are not all recent, and some involve older subjects, the differences in their findings may reflect changes in the speech habits of the sexes. They may also reflect differences in the functions of the speech patterns involved and in the behavior of the sexes in various situations. Perhaps women use these patterns for two purposes, to express uncertainty or to facilitate conversation, while men use them primarily for the second purpose and therefore tend to limit their use to relaxed conversational situations. Finally, the findings of Brouwer et al. (1979) in their study of Dutch suggest that the sex of the addressee may be a more crucial variable than the sex of the speaker; this needs to be studied further.

We conclude this unit with a brief examination of turn-taking behavior in conversation. I present the findings of Zimmerman and West (1975) and Eakins and Eakins (1978), and we discuss Zimmerman and West's proposed explanation of the patterns they found.

### Dialect Variation and Gender

After introducing the concept of "dialect" in general and "social dialect" in particular, I discuss the general finding that, for stylistic variants which are correlated with social dialects, lower and middle class women tend to use more prestigious variants than men of the same social class. Evidence for this general pattern is provided by a number of studies; I mention Fischer (1958), Labov (1966), Levine and Crockett (1967), Hartford (1978), and Trudgill (1975). We then discuss the two possible reasons for this pattern which were suggested by Trudgill: a) women are more status conscious and/or more status SYMBOL conscious, and therefore respond more to the overt prestige of the standard, and b) the non-standard has a covert prestige which is specifically masculine (possibly associated with roughness, toughness, etc.); I explain how Trudgill's findings in the Norwich study support this claim.

Finally, we briefly look at the question of language shifting by bilinguals. I discuss the findings of Solé (1978) on Spanish-English bilinguals and Gal (1978) on Hungarian-German bilinguals. In both cases the women are less conservative and the choice of language appears to be related to the sex roles in the cultures associated with the two languages. In this context, I briefly summarize Nichols' (1978) study of dialect variants; her findings suggest that sex role options may also be a crucial variable in dialect shifting.

### Genderlects: Patterns in Some Non-European Languages

I begin this unit by explaining my definition of the term "genderlect": a sex-exclusive form of language whose usage is determined by the sex of the speaker, the addressee, or both. English and other Indo-European languages lack genderlects in this sense; while we may have some sex-preferential forms, i.e. forms used more by or to one sex, we have no sex-exclusive forms, i.e. forms used only by or to one sex. Examples of genderlects are given in Bodine (1975) and the sources she cites; Furfey (1944) and Trudgill (1974) summarize some cases. I present a variety of these to the class, illustrating the range of types of gender variants: pronunciation, inflections, vocabulary items, particles, pronouns. Syntactic variants are unattested. I point out that variants are usually only slightly different, although they may occur frequently (pronunciation, inflections) or, if they are more drastically different, usually involve a small number of items (vocabulary, particles, pronouns). I mention two exceptionally divergent genderlects, which are not included in Bodine (1975): the Walbiri men's secret ceremonial "upside-down" talk, and the "whistle language" of the Mazateco Indians, which is used only by men, though women understand it.

We next consider the question of the cause of genderlects in general and the origin of specific genderlects. Some genderlects clearly involve taboos, which may have originated in a belief in "word magic", and some may have

developed out of taboo-based language forms, but in many cases there is no indication that taboo was ever involved. We speculate on some possible explanations for these. It may be that there is a general desire on the part of humans to differentiate the sexes, and language differences arise as one instance of this. Trudgill (1974) points out that sex-exclusive patterns are most common in societies with relatively rigid sex roles. Genderlects may not have arisen in our society because of relatively less strict sex roles, or, possibly, because there are many existing language variants, such as dialect variants, which can be used differentially by the sexes without such use becoming associated primarily with gender and thus rigidifying into genderlects. Turning to the origin of specific genderlects, we find that in some cases one sex appears to be using an innovative form (e.g. men in Koasati, and both sexes, but different innovations, in Chukchi). There may be societal reasons for greater conservatism of one sex, though it is hard to see how to explain Chukchi. Furfey suggests that genderlects may be associated with male dominance; this may be especially true in Chiquita, where the private male-to-male form uses a special gender marking for males, gods, and demons, and in Japanese, where sex-exclusive and sex-preferential patterns interact in such a way that women's variants can generally be considered more polite; the use of more polite forms by a lower-status person when speaking to a higher-status person is a recurrent pattern in stylistic variation.

### Sex Differences in Language Acquisition

I begin this unit with some background material: a brief summary of relevant aspects of general characteristics of language acquisition, and a clarification of the performance-competence distinction; some studies of language acquisition deal with performance and some with competence.

In considering sex differences, I first summarize the findings of early studies and discuss Cherry's (1975) criticisms of their methodology. The common assumption that girls are significantly better at language-learning than boys is rejected, to be reinstated only if more valid studies also find an advantage for girls. We then go on to consider some more valid studies of competence. (Many studies, including those referred to below, are briefly summarized or mentioned in Cherry 1975 or Macaulay 1978.) The studies are not extensive and some findings conflict, but there is some evidence that girls are slightly more advanced than boys in the very early stages. No consistent sex differences have been found in older children, except in secondary language skills, reading and writing: in the U.S., girls are apparently better than boys, but the reverse is true in some other countries.

Greater differences between the sexes appear in the amount and type of language used to children and in children's use of language in interaction

with adults. Mothers apparently vocalize more to female infants, and female infants' vocalizations are more often responsive to mothers. Mothers tend to use more directives to two-year-old boys, and they use more conversation-sustaining language to two-year-old girls; they also talk more to girls and simplify their speech less. (Since use of "motherese" is presumably a response to children's attentiveness, this pattern may be at least partly due to a greater tendency on the part of daughters to be attentive, for whatever reason.) A study of preschool teachers showed that they were similar to mothers in that they used more directives to boys and acknowledged more answers from girls, but teachers talked more to boys, possibly because of the constraints of the school situation.

In summarizing this unit, I emphasize that the greatest sex differences may be in adults' verbal treatment of children, rather than in the children themselves. These differences primarily involve performance factors, and are apparently not crucial to the development of competence, as is evidenced by the failure to find differences between girls' and boys' competence beyond the early stages. An interesting, but unanswered, question is the extent to which girls' early encouragement to participate in conversation affects their later verbal behavior.

#### Male and Female Voices

This unit begins with a presentation of essential background knowledge: the physiological differences between males' and females' vocal tracts, especially those affecting pitch, and the acoustic characteristics of speech sounds, in particular, vowel formants.

We first discuss Mattingly's findings on vowel formants in adults (summarized in Sachs 1975). I explain the relationship between formants and vocal tract size, and point out that Mattingly's findings indicate that some aspects of sex differences in voices are not biologically based, but presumably learned. We then discuss the studies on children's voices (Sachs 1975), which suggest that boys' and girls' voices also differ in ways that are not biologically-based. Learned aspects of voice quality may be associated with role identification; two girls who were consistently identified as boys were described by a neighbor as tomboys. Sachs' findings indicate that formants are not the only cue to sex, but at this point the other cues are undetermined.

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### BOOKS

Dubois, Betty Lou and Isabel Crouch (eds.). 1978. *The Sociology of the Languages of American Women (SLAW)*. San Antonio, Texas: Trinity University. (Papers in Southwest English IV.)

Conference proceedings. The following papers are annotated below: Baumann, Eakins and Eakins, Hartford, Hartman, Nichols, Silverman and Zimmer, Solé, Swacker. The other papers are: S. Ervin-Tripp, "What do women sociolinguists want?": prospects for a research field"; C. Kramer, "The problem of orientation in sex/language research"; B. K. Dumas, "Male-female conversational interaction cues: using data from dialect surveys"; G. N. Garcia and S. F. Frosch, "Sex, color, and money: who's perceiving what? or Men and women: where did all the differences go (to?)?"; V. John-Steiner and P. Irvine, "Women's verbal images and associations"; W. von Raffler-Engel and J. Buckner, "A difference beyond inherent pitch"; W. Redlinger, "Mothers' speech to children in bilingual Mexican-American homes"; Y. Tixier y Vigil and N. Elsassner, "The effects of the ethnicity of the interviewer on conversation: a study of Chicana women"; M. Zimmerman, "Alignment strategies in verbal accounts of problematic conduct: the case of abortion". Also included are three brief workshop summaries: S. McConnell-Ginet, "Intonation"; A. Bodine, "Investigating the generic masculine"; C. Kramer, "Female/male conversation interaction".

Thorne, Barrie and Nancy Henley (eds.). 1975. *Language and Sex: Difference and Dominance (L&S)*. Rowley, Massachusetts: Newbury House.

An anthology of articles, with an extensive, topically-organized annotated bibliography. The following articles are annotated below: Kramer, Graham, Schulz, Swacker, Trudgill, Zimmerman and West, Bodine, Sachs. The other articles are: B. Thorne and N. Henley, "Difference and dominance: an overview of language, gender, and society"; R. M. Brend, "Male-female intonation patterns in American English"; L. Cherry, "Teacher-child verbal interaction: an approach to the study of sex differences"; N. M. Henley, "Power, sex, and nonverbal communication".

Some other relevant books are listed in the bibliography included in the "Sexism in Language" Workshop materials prepared by Wheatley and Badami (to appear in the next issue of this journal).

### GUIDELINES

Several publishing companies and professional educational associations have prepared guidelines on how to avoid sexism in language. These guidelines can serve as good sources of examples of language which is considered sexist, together with non-sexist alternatives which are relatively uncontroversial. A list of available guidelines is included in the "Sexism in Language" Workshop materials.

## ARTICLES

Language and sex is an area of current concern, and any bibliography of articles will quickly become outdated. The following bibliography includes some classic articles, as well as a number of more recent ones. There are many recent papers which have been presented at conferences but are not yet published. Some of these circulate informally, but I have not included them in this list; it is limited to more readily accessible articles.

The articles are listed in the order in which they are discussed in the course outline. Some articles included here were not mentioned above; they are listed at the point where they are most relevant. Background reading, articles not discussed extensively, and articles on topics familiar to most linguists are annotated only briefly. Starred articles are those which are fairly difficult reading for lower-level undergraduates.

Blaubergs, Maija. 1978. Changing the sexist language: the theory behind the practice. *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 2:244-261.

A clear exposition, with numerous examples, of the three positions taken by various feminists on sexism in language: (1) "indirect change": language reform is unnecessary because as society changes, language will naturally change to reflect new societal patterns; (2) "change via circumvention": avoid sex-specific terms, using existing or newly-invented neutral terms instead; (3) "change via emphasis on feminine terms": use sex-specific terms wherever possible to increase the visibility of women. Blaubergs rejects position (1) as mistaken and points out some difficulties with (3); she considers both (2) and (3) potentially viable, though contradictory, approaches.

\*Bodine, Ann. 1975. Androcentrism in prescriptive grammar: singular *they*, sex-indefinite *he*, and *he or she*. *Language in Society* 4:129-146.

Bodine traces the usage of *he* as the singular generic pronoun, in preference to *he or she* or *they*, to the influence of prescriptive grammarians, and she argues that the choice of *he* reflected the androcentric viewpoint of the prescriptivists. The article contains numerous supporting quotations from original sources. On the basis of the relative social significance of gender versus number, Bodine argues that it is better to violate number agreement by using *they* than to violate gender agreement by using *he*. She further argues that a change in the pronoun system is not inconceivable, as evidenced by the history of second-person pronouns in European languages, and that *they* is a feasible alternative, having persisted in conversational speech to the present.

Bate, Barbara. 1978. Nonsexist language use in transition. *Journal of Communication* 28:139-149.

A report on a survey of faculty members on their reactions to sexist (traditional) and non-sexist (innovative) words and usages.

Flexner, Stuart Berg. 1960. Preface to the *Dictionary of American Slang*. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., Inc.

Although this article is now almost twenty years old, it still provides good background material on slang. It includes a discussion of the role of men as primary creators and users of slang.

\*Carroll, J. B. and J. B. Casagrande. 1958. The function of language classification in behavior. In E. E. Macoby, T. M. Newcomb, and E. L. Hartley (eds.), *Readings in Social Psychology* (3rd edition). New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

The original report of the studies testing the Whorf hypothesis by comparing Navaho and English speakers and Hopi and English speakers. (The procedure followed in the Hopi study, which tested the effects of vocabulary, is not accurately presented in most summaries I have seen.)

Harrison, Linda and Richard Passero. 1974. Sexism in the language of elementary school textbooks. *Science and Children* 12:22-25.

A study of children's interpretations of generic terms. Procedure: 85 3rd-grade children were asked to circle appropriate pictures in response to questions. On survey I, the questions were phrased neutrally (*people of goodwill, salesperson, hand-made, etc.*); on survey II, the questions included generic masculine terms (*men of goodwill, salesman, man-made, etc.*). Findings: a significantly higher percentage of children responding to survey II circled only pictures of males.

Harrison, Linda. 1975. Cro-magnon woman--in eclipse. *The Science Teacher*, 42:8-11.

A study of junior high school students' interpretations of generic terms. Procedure: 257 male and 246 female students were asked to draw pictures of early humans in response to seven specific questions. Survey I used generic masculine terms (*man, men, mankind, he*); survey II used neutral terms (*humans, people, they*); survey III mentioned both sexes (*men and women, they*). Findings: (1) Responses to the three forms were significantly different, with survey I eliciting the most male-only pictures and survey III the least. (2) The sex of the subject affected responses; a higher percentage of males drew only male figures. (3) The topic affected responses; more males were drawn for tool-using and cultivating and more females for child nurturing.

Schneider, Joseph and Sally Hacker. 1973. Sex-role imagery and use of the generic *man* in introductory texts. *The American Sociologist* 8:12-18.

A study of college students' interpretations of generic terms. Procedure: 306 students were asked to bring in pictures which would be appropriate for use as illustrations associated with chapter titles in a sociology textbook. The chapter titles given to one group included some with the generic *man* (e.g. *Economic Man*), while the chapter titles for the other group were neutral (e.g. *Economic Behavior*). Findings: approximately 64% of the pictures from the first group contained only males, while approximately 50% of the pictures from the second group contained only males. The authors conclude that *man* is not truly generic. However, the validity of the procedure is somewhat questionable. The equivalent terms for the two groups may have differed by more than the use of *man*; there were some other systematic differences in the types of pictures submitted. (Some of these differences are not discussed in this paper, but are discussed in *Words and Women*, C. Miller and K. Swift, pp. 19-20.)

Ervin, Susan M. 1962. The connotations of gender. *Word* 18:249-261.

A report of a study which found a correlation between the connotations of *man* vs. *woman* in Italian and the connotations of masculine gender vs. feminine gender non-sense words.

Martyna, Wendy. 1978. What does *he* mean? Use of the generic masculine. *Journal of Communication* 28:130-138.

A study on the use and meaning of generic pronouns. Procedure: 20 female and 20 male students were asked to complete sentences; half of the sentences were presented in written form, and half orally. Test sentences were of three types: the subject was presumably male (e.g. *judge*), presumably female (e.g. *nurse*), or presumably neutral (e.g. *person*). The sentences were so designed that the completion would normally begin with an anaphoric pronoun. After the subjects had finished the sentence-completion task, they were asked how they chose the pronoun in each case. Findings: The pronoun used most for male-related terms was *he* and for female-related terms *she*. Alternatives to *he* were used most often for the neutral terms, and included *he or she* (in writing), *they* (in speaking), and repetition of the noun. Overall, women used *he* less than men. The subjects gave a variety of reasons for their choices. In the case of neutral sentences, 60% of the men reported that they visualized a male and chose accordingly, while only 10% of the women visualized a male. None of the subjects reported visualization of a female for these sentences. Martyna concludes that the use of alternative forms indicates that *he* is not truly generic, and that this is true especially for males, who may use *he* not as a neutral term but as the term appropriate to their visualization of males.

Schulz, Muriel R. 1975. The semantic derogation of woman. *L&S*, pp. 64-75.

Schulz catalogs a large number of terms referring to females which have, at some point in the history of English, changed in meaning to become derogatory; most become sexual slurs. She considers three possible explanations for the frequent pejoration of words referring to females: (1) association with a contaminating concept, (2) euphemism, and (3) prejudice. She concludes that prejudice is the most likely explanation. Schulz does not distinguish temporary pejoration from apparently lasting pejoration, and the discussion of possible causes, especially euphemism, is not adequately related to the examples given earlier in the paper.

Graham, Alma. 1975. The making of a nonsexist dictionary. *L&S*, pp. 57-63.

Graham reports on an analysis of the frequency of certain gender terms in children's literature, based on 700,000 citation slips which were obtained for use in writing a children's dictionary. She found a notable preponderance of references to males (e.g. use of *he*); analysis of a sample indicated that this preponderance was not due to generic use of masculine forms. She further reports on efforts to make the dictionary nonsexist, primarily by rewording definitions and examples, and concludes with a brief discussion of some sexist patterns in English.

One, Varda. 1971. *Manglish*. Venice, California: Everywoman Publishing Co. (Available from KNOW, Inc., P.O. Box 86031, Pittsburgh, PA 15221.)

A classic feminist article on sexism in English. It contains some valid arguments and examples, but also some which are invalid and some factual inaccuracies. I have used this as a required reading and devoted class time to a critical analysis of it, in an attempt to improve the students' critical abilities. Some students found this very worthwhile; others strongly objected to critiquing it, feeling that it should be accepted at face value.

Kramer, Cheris. 1975. Women's speech: separate but unequal? *L&S*, pp. 43-56.

A survey of facts, claims, and folklinguistic beliefs about sex-based differences in linguistic behavior. Although no longer current, this can serve as a good introduction to the topic.

Jespersen, Otto. 1922. The woman. Chapter XIII from *Language: Its Nature, Development and Origin*.

A classic discussion of sex-based language differences; topics include genderlects, the role of males and females in language change, and style differences in English. The sources are largely anecdotal or literary.

54 - Wheatley  
Bibliography

Lakoff, Robin. 1973. Language and woman's place. *Language in Society* 2:45-80.

A summary of Lakoff's intuitions on 'woman's language'--the form of language used by women and to describe women. Lakoff's claims concerning vocabulary and syntactic patterns have formed the basis for many recent empirical studies.

Edelsky, Carole. 1977. Acquisition of an aspect of communicative competence: learning what it means to talk like a lady. In S. Ervin-Tripp and C. Mitchell-Kernan (eds.), *Child Discourse*.

A study of stereotypes. Procedure: 122 adults and 122 1st, 3rd, and 6th grade children were presented with sentences containing words or patterns which Jerpersen or Lakoff claimed to be typically feminine or masculine; subjects were asked to report whether women, men, or either would be most likely to say each. Some subjects in each group were interviewed about the reasons for their choices. Findings: the two youngest groups were not very consistent in their answers. 6th-graders and adults consistently assigned most sentences to one sex or the other. On some sentences, 6th-graders assigned sex more consistently than adults; on others, adults were slightly more consistent than 6th-graders. Edelsky hypothesizes that there are two types of learning patterns. Stereotypes based on clichés are learned deductively and are stronger for 6th-graders; they are modified by adults on the basis of experience. Other stereotypes are induced from experience and are slightly stronger for adults.

\*Edelsky, Carole. 1979. Question intonation and sex roles. *Language in Society* 8:15-32.

A report of two studies on intonation designed to test Lakoff's claim that use of a rising intonation in answers to questions is characteristic of women. Study 1--procedure: four women and four men approached a total of 165 women and 154 men and asked them their birthplace and their favorite color. Subjects' answers were recorded and classified as one of four intonation patterns: straight rise, straight fall, rise-fall-rise, and flat. Findings: Most subjects used a straight fall pattern. Female subjects approached by a female experimenter used significantly more rise-fall-rise. There were no other effects for sex. Conclusions: at least in this situation, women did not differ from men in their use of the straight rise pattern. Edelsky questions the claim that this pattern indicates uncertainty, and suggests that each intonation pattern may be used to signal various meanings. Study 2--procedure: tapes of 3 female and 3 male experimenters, each using three intonation patterns (straight rise, straight fall, rise-fall-rise) were rated on a semantic differential by 21 female and 9 male students. Findings: straight rise was rated as most feminine and straight fall as most masculine, suggesting that these intonation patterns are stereotypically associated with sex.

Kramer, Chervis. 1974a. Folklinguistics. *Psychology Today*, June 1974, pp. 82-85.

A report of a study on stereotypes and a study on written descriptive language. Stereotype study--procedure: 25 male and 25 female students were presented with 49 New Yorker cartoon captions and asked to identify the sex of the speaker. Most of the captions were consistently assigned to one sex or the other, indicating intersubject agreement on sex-typed language. Description study--procedure: 17 male and 17 female students wrote descriptions of two pictures. The descriptions were analyzed for use of prenominal adjectives and *-ly* adverbs. Also, 10 paragraphs (5 by each sex) were presented to 11 female English majors, who were asked to identify author sex. Findings: the paragraphs did not differ systematically in the use of prenominal adjectives and *-ly* adverbs. Subjects were not able to identify author sex.

Kramer, Chervis. 1974b. Stereotypes of women's speech: the word from cartoons. *Journal of Popular Culture* 8:622-638.

A report of a more extensive study on stereotypes, involving captions from *Playboy*, *Cosmopolitan*, and *Ladies' Home Journal*, as well as the *New Yorker*. Findings were similar to those in the smaller study. Some subjects reported awareness of the stereotypes but questioned their validity.

Swacker, Marjorie. 1975. The sex of the speaker as a sociolinguistic variable. *L&S*, pp. 76-83.

A study of descriptive language. Procedure: 17 female and 17 male college students orally described three Dürer prints. There were no time limits, and subjects were instructed to be thorough. Findings: (1) men talked more than women; men's average for all three descriptions was 13 minutes; women's average was 3.17 minutes. (2) There was no significant difference in the rapidity of speech. (3) Men used more specific numbers, even when guessing, and women used more approximations (*about six, six or seven*). (4) Both sexes used pauses as topic shift markers, but men also used interjections (e.g. *OK*), and women used more conjunctions.

Swacker, Marjorie. 1978. Women's verbal behavior at learned and professional conferences. *SLAW*, pp. 155-160.

A study of sex differences in audience responses to papers at three professional meetings, LSA, the Second Colloquium on Hispanic Linguistics, and the North American Semiotics Colloquium. There were noticeable sex differences in several areas: (1) men's average time for questions/comments was more than twice the average time for women; (2) men averaged more questions per comment; (3) men prefaced more questions/comments with references to the literature, while women began more questions/comments with self-

references such as "It seems to me..." "I would like to ask," or second person references such as "Could you please clarify..."; (4) the sexes differed in the relative frequency of various types of questions or comments made (e.g. requests for clarification, presentation of supporting or counter examples).

Eakins, Barbara and Gene Eakins. 1978. Verbal turn-taking and exchanges in faculty dialogue. *SLAW*, pp. 53-62.

A study of conversational interaction. Procedure: 7 faculty meetings were taped and transcripts were analyzed in terms of Sacks et al.'s model (see Zimmerman and West, below). Average number of turns per meeting, average speaking time per turn, average interruptions and average times interrupted were counted for each speaker. Findings: (1) men had more turns than women and higher status faculty had more turns than lower status faculty; the relationship between these two variables is not explained. (2) Men spoke longer per turn than women; the effect of status, if any, is not discussed. (3) Women were interrupted more per turn than men. The authors' failure to explicate the cross-sex status relationships makes the significance of their findings unclear.

Silverman, Ellen-Marie and Catherine H. Zimmer. 1978. The fluency of women's speech. *SLAW*, pp. 131-136.

A report of a study testing Jespersen's claim that women are more fluent because their vocabularies are smaller. Procedure: three-minute speech samples of 10 male and 10 female university students describing "A Memorable Life Experience" were analyzed. Fluency was measured in terms of pauses, repeats, and false starts. Findings: there were no significant differences in fluency or in range of vocabulary used. Women waited longer after presentation of topic to begin speaking.

Hartman, Maryann. 1978. A descriptive study of the language of men and women born in Maine around 1900 as it reflects the Lakoff hypotheses in "Language and women's place". *SLAW*, pp. 81-90.

An analysis of speech samples elicited by interviewing 12 men and 16 women, ages 73-93. Findings indicated that women used more tag questions, more sentence qualifiers, and more "flowery" adjectives and had more hesitations; there were some differences in interjections used.

Dubois, Betty Lou and Isabel Crouch. 1975. The question of tag questions in women's speech: they don't really use more of them, do they?†  
*Language in Society* 4:289-294.

The authors criticize Lakoff (1973) on several grounds, most of which involve methodological inadequacies. They then discuss the question of tag questions, pointing out (a) that tag questions may not signify uncertainty,

as Lakoff claims, (b) that there are two distinct types of tags, those with rising and those with falling intonations, and (c) that Lakoff's claim is not based on empirical investigation. They report on an analysis of tapes of paper discussions at a professional conference. They found 33 tags, of various types, in their sample; all were produced by men.

Baumann, Marie. 1978. Two features of 'women's speech?' *SLAW*, pp. 33-40.

A study of tag questions and sentence qualifiers in speech samples obtained from a graduate class and an office staff meeting. Findings: the number of instances of use of these patterns was small, but both patterns were used by both sexes. (Tags: 3 F, 2 M; sentence qualifiers, 6 F, 9 M.) Baumann questions Lakoff's claim that these patterns are used primarily to express uncertainty, and suggests that their more important function may be to maintain the flow of conversation.

\*Gleser, G. C., L. A. Gottschalk, and W. John. 1959. The relationship of sex and intelligence to choice of words. *Journal of Clinical Psychology* 15:182-91.

A study report. Procedure: subjects were 45 men and 45 women, 15 of each sex in each of three IQ groups, ages 20-50. Subjects were asked to describe orally "any interesting or dramatic life experiences". Samples were analyzed in terms of the "grammatical" and the "psychologic" types of words used; percentages of words in each category were computed. Findings: in general, differences in grammatical categories varied with IQ, and differences in psychologic categories varied with sex. Women used more words referring to emotion and motivation, more references to self, more auxiliary words (verb auxiliaries, conjunctions, prepositions, etc.), and more negatives. Men used more references to time, space, or quantity and more references to destructive action. Differences tended to disappear at higher IQ levels, though this was not statistically significant.

\*Barron, Nancy. 1971. Sex-typed language: The production of grammatical cases. *Acta Sociologica* 14:24-42.

A study using case grammar analysis as the basis for measurement. Procedure: four female and four male social studies teachers (six 11th grade, two 6th grade) were videotaped. 10-minute speech segments were analyzed in terms of explicit and implicit cases used. Findings: women produced more Purposive and more explicit (but not more implicit) Participative; men produced more Instrumental and Source, and more explicit Objective. Barron hypothesized that the absence of differences in Agentive and Locative may be due to the constraints of the subject matter.

\*Brouwer, Dédé, Marinel Gerritsen and Dorian de Haan. 1979. Speech differences between women and men. *Language in Society* 8:33-50.

The authors criticize much previous work for improper methodology, and report a study on speech differences in Dutch. Procedure: 309 women and 278 men were recorded as they requested train tickets. One ticket seller was male, one female. Findings: women were more hesitant and made more requests for information. There were no differences between the sexes in number of words, use of diminutives, or use of civilities. Sex of addressee had a significant effect: both sexes used more words, more diminutives, more civilities, and more hesitations in speaking to the male ticket seller.

Zimmerman, Don H. and Candace West. 1975. Sex roles, interruptions and silences in conversation. *L&S*, pp. 105-29.

An analysis of conversations in terms of the model proposed by H. Sacks, E. A. Schegloff, and G. Jefferson (A simplest systematics for the organization of turn-taking for conversation, *Language* 50:696-735, 1974). Procedure: recordings of 31 two-party conversations, 10 M-M, 10 F-F, and 11 M-F, were analyzed in terms of interruptions, overlaps, and silences. Findings: in same-sex conversations, total number of interruptions was small, and interruptions and overlaps were fairly evenly distributed between the two participants in the conversation. In cross-sex conversations, total number of interruptions was much higher, and almost all instances (98%) involved men interrupting women; all overlaps involved men overlapping women. (In Sacks et al.'s model, interruptions are considered violations of a speaker's conversational rights; Z&W hypothesize that they may function as topic control mechanisms.) The distribution of silences in same-sex conversations was fairly even, but in cross-sex conversations women were silent more than men. Many silences followed interruptions, overlaps, or delayed "minimal responses". Z&W conclude that, in this sample, men largely controlled topic development and denied women equal rights in conversational interaction.

Fischer, John L. 1958. Social influence in the choice of a linguistic variant. *Word* 14:47-56.

A study of -in/-iŋ in New England children. Boys used -in more than girls.

\*Labov, William. 1966. *The Social Stratification of English in New York City*. Washington, D. C.: Center for Applied Linguistics.

A study of various phonetic variants. Women used more standard variants of [ð], [θ], [æ], and [ɔ].

\*Levine, Lewis and Harry J. Crockett, Jr. 1967. Speech variation in a Piedmont community: Postvocalic *r*. In S. Lieveson (ed.), *Explorations in Sociolinguistics*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press.

This region has two competing standards: southern *r*-less and national *r* (also associated with poor whites). Women in general use more *r*; that

this represents a movement toward the national standard is indicated by the increase in *r* in more formal speech.

- \*Hartford, Beverly S. 1978. Phonological differences in the English of adolescent Chicanas and Chicanos. *SLAW*, pp. 73-80.

A study of phonetic variants. Females generally use more middle-class English or more Spanish pronunciation, while males use more non-standard English (BEV) pronunciation.

- \*Trudgill, Peter. 1975. Sex, covert prestige, and linguistic change in the urban British English of Norwich. *L&S*, pp. 88-104.

A report of a dialect study. Trudgill found that on most measures, women of each social class used more standard pronunciation than men. He suggests that this may be partly due to greater status-consciousness on the part of women, but also that it may be related to specifically masculine "covert" prestige of the non-standard. This hypothesis is supported by his finding that on self-reports of forms used, men tend to report use of the non-standard more than women, often reporting non-standard usage even when they actually use standard forms. (10-19 year old females pattern like males; this may be a recurring developmental pattern, or it may reflect a shift in values for young women.) The one variable which had an apparently reversed pattern for the working class was found to be associated with a nearby rural non-standard dialect, as well as with the standard, and was apparently entering urban speech from both "above" and "below".

- Solé, Yolanda Russinovich. 1978. Sociocultural and sociopsychological factors in differential language retentiveness by sex. *SLAW*, pp. 137-54.

164 Mexican-American university students were surveyed on their usage of English or Spanish in various situations. Women reported more usage of English. Solé hypothesizes that there is less conflict between Mexican and Anglo values for women and that women have a greater desire to adapt to Anglo culture.

- \*Gal, Susan. 1978. Peasant men can't get wives: Language change and sex roles in a bilingual community. *Language in Society* 7:1-16.

A study of language choice in a Hungarian-German bilingual community in Austria. Hungarian is associated with the peasant life-style; German is associated with the worker life-style. Young people use German more than older people, and young women use German more than young men. The choice of language is related to desired life-style; young women also prefer to marry workers rather than peasants.

60 - Wheatley  
Bibliography

Nichols, Patricia C. 1978. Black women in the rural south: Conservative and innovative. *SLAW*, pp. 103-14.

Nichols questions the validity of the methodology of previous studies of sex as a variable in dialect usage, especially the practice of classifying women's social class on the basis of their husbands' or fathers' social class. She reports a study she did on syntactic variants in two southern communities where the least standard form of language is Gullah. She found that in one community, women generally used more standard forms than men; the reverse was true in the other community. In the community where women used more standard forms, women had more education and greater job mobility, in comparison to the women in the other community.

\*Bodine, Ann. 1975. Sex differentiation in language. *L&S*, pp. 130-51.

A survey of sex differentiation in various languages. Bodine distinguishes "sex-exclusive" forms, i.e. those which have invariable gender correlates, from "sex-preferential" forms. She categorizes differentiation in terms of the aspect of language involved (pronunciation, morphology, or vocabulary) and in terms of the crucial gender variable in each case: sex of speaker, sex of spoken to, sex of speaker plus sex of spoken to, and sex of spoken about. She includes a chart of reported differences and gives the sources for each.

Furfey, Paul. 1944. Men's and women's language. *The American Catholic Sociological Review* 5:218-23.

A survey of sex differences in various languages, with the emphasis on variants used exclusively by one sex or the other. Furfey hypothesizes that sex variants are, in at least some cases, associated with masculine superiority and may serve as a tool of sex dominance.

Trudgill, Peter. 1974. Language and sex. Chapter 4 (pp. 84-102) in *Sociolinguistics: An Introduction*. Middlesex, England: Penguin Books.

An overview of genderlects and gender-based variation in the use of social dialects; includes a somewhat less technical summary of the work on urban Norwich speech.

Cherry, Louise. 1975. Sex differences in child speech: McCarthy revisited. *Educational Testing Service Research Bulletin*.

A survey of research on sex differences in language acquisition. Cherry questions the validity of the methods used for data collection and analysis in the early studies, which consistently found that girls were more advanced than boys, and concludes that we cannot accept the findings of these studies.

She briefly summarizes more recent research on differences in phonology, syntax, vocabulary, and conversational interaction, and points out the need for further research. The article includes a useful chart summarizing the studies discussed.

- \*Macaulay, Ronald K. S. 1978. The myth of female superiority in language. *Journal of Child Language* 5:353-63.

A critical survey of studies on sex differences in language acquisition. The article contains brief summaries of many studies, including some studies on brain development and on reading skills. Macaulay concludes that the evidence does not support the claim that there are any sex differences in language acquisition.

- \*Sachs, Jacqueline. 1975. Cues to the identification of sex in children's speech. *L&S*, pp. 152-71.

A brief summary of previous studies on sex and voice quality, and a report of studies on children's voices. Previous studies indicate that the differences between male and female adults' formants are greater than can be accounted for by presumed differences in vocal tract size, and that prepubertal children's sex can be identified from recordings of sentences. The studies reported here attempted to determine the importance of vowel formants in identification of children's sex. Findings: (1) Judges could identify children's sex from isolated vowels, but not as well as from sentences. (2) Judges could not reliably identify sex from sentences played backwards. Sachs also had subjects rate children's voices on a semantic differential; the boys' voices were characterized as "rough, unsure, masculine, and high", and the girls' voices as "feminine, meek, delicate, high, and smooth".