

# Research on the Characteristics of Female Language in Sex and the City

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## Abstract

People are the creators and users of language, so language inevitably has gender differences. The female language has a very strong vitality. This paper makes extensive and profound research on the characteristics of female language expression in sex and the city from the perspective of pragmatics. The research was carried out from three aspects: the purpose, topic and expression of women's use of language. According to the research results, firstly from the perspective of purpose, women's conversational purpose is mainly to establish a harmonious interpersonal relationship and make themselves a member of a certain group without being rejected. Secondly, from the perspective of topics, women often talk about life, emotion and so on, which are inseparable from their status, work, social reputation and personality. Thirdly, from the perspective of expressive language, women have advantages over men in terms of language expression ability, fluency, syntactic complexity, wording, analogy and listening comprehension. Because of this innate advantage, women usually speak more and speak more frequently.

## Keywords

Female language; Characteristic; Purpose; Topic; Expression.

## 1. Introduction

Different social groups use different languages. Some of the words and expressions in women's languages are words that men cannot use. As for English, the gender difference in language is very obvious. Women's English reflects women's social status and social attitudes towards women in English-speaking countries. Therefore, the study of female language is of profound significance. The study of gender language can be traced back to the middle of the 17th century. Ethnographers first discovered the differences between the two languages. In the early 20th century, many famous linguists also participated in the study of gender differences. Under the rule of the patriarchal society for a long time, women are forced to be on the edge of the society, and they undoubtedly think it is not important. In a patriarchal society, men have always been dominant in both social and political life. Women are in a position of powerlessness. Different social status is reflected and further strengthened in heterosexual communication. On the basis of social status, the society further emphasizes gender differences from many aspects. Main stages in the growth process, the female basically in their same-sex peers circles, it is because of their association has a completely different subculture, growth in the girl in the acquisition of language and communication at the same time, also learned from other discourse style, respectively, and to keep it to adulthood, life is hard to change. Traditional societies have different expectations of the roles that men and women play. This kind of social expectation is bound to play a very important role in women's verbal communication. Women are mostly engaged in social services. Their profession requires them to pay attention to language norms. Social roles also inspire these features of the female. With the continuous development of society, the social status of women is also increasing. The language of women also gradually changed and formed unique characteristics. There are gender differences in languages from

different cultures. Compared with men, female English has an elegant and standard pronunciation, Flexible and reserved in tone. Women speak more kindly, politely and euphemistically. Women and men differ greatly in their use of language. Sex and the city with four different character of the heroine is given priority to, their language using have a lot of common features, but because of the different character or work they also have different features in using language. It is worth exploring.

## 2. Purpose

languages have purposes. Conversational goal is an important element of speech situation in language communication. Wood proposed the communication characteristics of some women in order to establish relationships, support, intimacy and understanding. First, equality is an important feature of women's communication. Women gain equal relations through similar experiences. For example, Carrie want to have a common topic with her ex-boyfriend, so she said "what are you doing here?" to him in the first episode. In this way, the self - heating and yet everyone is a familiar topic, gradually close to. Second, support for others is one of the language characteristics of women. Women often use words or phrases to show their understanding and support for each other, which may be related to the fact that women are naturally more understanding. We can see that there are many sentences like "Oh, you must feel better now." or "I guess you are right.". Although the words are simple, they show women's understanding of each other. All women have this in common. From these examples above, we may observe that the purpose of female is different from male. There is a strict hierarchy in male society, where everyone struggles to maintain their independence and avoid failure. Independence is central to the male world. Women, on the other hand, believe that people should cooperate with each other. Intimacy is the center of the female world Life is a big group for women. Their conversation is aimed at building a harmonious relationship. For example in the first episode of season 1 of sex and the city, these 4 ladies celebrate one's birthday together. They are just like a small group in the society. They talked about everything especially sex and man. Carrie: "If big had any class, he would have moved away. I was here first." – Miranda: "you are giving him too much power. You broke up with him. Remember?" – Carrie: "yeah, all right, and what makes me what happy?" Here Carrie is breaking up with big for some reason, and she's been feeling depressed for nearly a month. Her best friend Miranda tried to console her and lift her from the grief of her breakup. Carrie said she was afraid of meeting big on the way. Miranda priestly encourages her by saying, "you broke up with him." The purpose of the conversation was clearly to make Carrie feel better and to maintain their relationship. They strengthen their intimate relationship by discussing such a private topic which proves the "intimacy" "connection" and so on. Tannen once used nine words to summarize a woman's conversational purpose: intimacy, connection, inclusive, relationship, rapport, community, problem, novice, listening. In a word, Women pay more attention to emotional communication in language style. Women generally believe that the conversation itself is the most important and does not care about the content of the conversation. The main purpose is to build a harmonious relationship.

## 3. Topic

Women talk about life, emotions and so on. This is closely related to their social status, occupation and personality. Permanent topics such as clothing, love, family, trivia and fantasy are also inseparable from a woman's natural sensitivity. Even the gossip or gossip behind it can be a conversation topic for women. This kind of small talk refers to a kind of informal community communication. Its purpose is not to communicate what is meaningful, but a way for women to maintain the unity of the community. Because by talking or chatting, the interaction between members can achieve the goal of equality and harmony. This is entirely

consistent with the purpose of the women's conversation mentioned above. The most popular topic among these 4 ladies in this television show is man or sex according to their job, personal characteristic or others. Some people rank women's favorite topics. The top one is fashion, and Fashion is always the woman will not change the subject, no matter what age, because women like beauty, so you will be more attention to things such as fashion, because fashion things can always give them a better a kaleidoscope of beauty and aesthetic experience. The second one is heartbeat. Heartbeat is mainly is the main topic, unmarried women when they met in the opposite sex, always think a lot of strange things, and then talk about the opposite sex to their senses, whether to let them feel the heart beat faster. Then the feeling inside, Women is a kind of emotional animal, because they thought is exquisite, there is always the good or bad, all moved, disgust, etc. They are often moved by a heart feeling, so they will chat with others on their mind. Also boys or man can be the hot topics. Boy is the main topic of young unmarried women. At the beginning of their love life, they always talk about the handsome and cool boys, just as boys often talk about the beauty and character of girls. Boys always accompany them through the best youth. Man is the main topic of adult women. An adult woman will slowly talk about the good and bad of men, as well as their character. And then talk to them about what their lifelong partner should be like? They are going to get married or choose their life partner. On the other side, there will be some hard topics, such as pressure. This is mainly a topic for adult women, who often talk about their work, life and family relationship pressure. Because they usually need to complain, women are no more than men. Women are angry, and they must vent. That is the nature. The last one is the family including children and so on. Most married women suffer from relationship problems. They deal with in-laws, children, relatives, friends and even husband. As their roles become more numerous and they need to take on more responsibilities. It will also become one of the topics they often talk about. From the first season to the sixth season of sex and the city, we can see all the topics that I mentioned above. There is a small point that we should pay attention. According to Fasold's research, 76 topics have been raised. In addition to three ineffective topics, 45 were raised by women and 28 by men. However, only 17 of the topics raised by women have been successful. However, all 28 topics raised by men were successful. Women talk more, but the subject matters are mostly meaningless compared to men.

#### 4. Expression

Women have advantages over men in terms of language expression ability, fluency, syntactic complexity, wording, analogy and listening comprehension. Because of this innate advantage, women usually speak more and speak more frequently. According to the language study of the four leading ladies in the play, the study found that women's pronunciation is more accurate. Women are more likely to use standard language. (1) Trugill and fisher have done some research. They found that when using words such as swimming, women have a more standard pronunciation. This characteristic shows that women generally have no status in society. So they try to show their upbringing and respect by using standard language. (2) When answering questions, women often raise their voices and use fill-in-the-blanks to make an audible pause. For example, Mr. Big: "when shall we go to that place?" .Carrie:"oh...around 4 pm." Carrie in the example answered questions in ascending and vocal pauses. There is uncertainty and a sense of consultation. This reflects the indecisive nature of women. Women use rising inflection at the end of a sentence to show that they care about the person they are talking to. (3)Women tend to use specific words. Women tend to be more accurate and specific in their choice of words. On the one hand, women pay more attention to the elegance and norms of language; on the other hand, they want to protect themselves from the language attack of others. For example, a woman's choice of adjectives to describe a person is accurate. Carrie in the first episode, she introduce the characters in this TV show and she used many words like "attractive" "bright"

"funny" ...to describe her friends. She used "handsome" "sexy" "eligible" ...to describe men in it. (4) Women often use compliments. Because society has long viewed women as a vulnerable group, women are inherently dependent. In order to get along well with others, they have to use compliments frequently to please others. Therefore, some adjectives with strong emotion are often used to express the evaluation, admiration and gratitude of others. For example, when actors compliment others, they say, "what a good idea!" "What a wonderful meal," Carrie said as she praised charlotte's cooking. (5) Women use evasion and euphemisms. They use a lot of avoidance words to make themselves less assertive, such as "I think" "I mean" "I'm afraid" "you know" "well" "maybe" "kind of" "sort of". Women are more likely to avoid a positive response. This shows that women often lack confidence in what they say and are hesitant and tentative. In daily communication, women also use euphemisms to replace unpleasant meanings or expressions that are not respectful enough. Taking the lines for example, "what do you think of the color of my coat?" \_ "it's interesting." The latter one did not answer the former one's question directly, but expressed her intention in a vague way: she did not like the color. This shows that women are gentle and deferential and avoid provoking others. It is also worth mentioning that women are more likely to use marked politeness and polite language, such as "please" "thanks" .(6) Women use softer swear words. Compared with men, women pay more attention to the elegance and implication of language. They tend to use swearing in a weaker tone than their male counterparts. They will use words like "oh dear" "my god" "oops" "fudge" to instead words like "dame" "shit" "fuck" "son of bitch". This difference, on the one hand, suggests that women in a subordinate position in society must be polite and careful. They should always avoid offending men who are above themselves and are free to express their feelings. On the other hand, it shows that the society has higher requirements for women and lower requirements for men. Society is less receptive to women's bad manners or bad behavior. (7) Women are more likely to use questions. When women express their thoughts, they rarely say directly what they want. They often add questions at the end of statements to achieve the function of politeness, politeness and euphemism. According to the lines, man tends to say "you can do it." "He is a nice guy." but woman tends to say "you can do it, cannot you?" "He is a nice guy, isn't he?" (8) Women like to use subjunctive mood. Because women have long been subordinate in society, they use language more euphemistically. This avoids direct commands or requests. Also in the lines, if she need held, she will say "I was wondering if you could possibly do me a favor?" (9) From the perspective of speech and behavior strategy, women mostly adopt the principles of cooperation, politeness, respect, emphasizing others as the center, and have strong cooperative psychology and spirit to maintain the smooth communication. Women are more active in the conversation and can give full and true answers to each other's questions. (10) Women are good at using nicknames, such as dear darling, and men are also good at using nicknames. This is also because women are insecure and need love and comfort from men.

## 5. Conclusion

Language skills people's communication tools, there is no gender. However, language problems are always connected with social problems, and men and women have different characteristics due to their gender differences. This paper studies the purpose of speech, topic and speech expression. The whole study was based on the lines of sex and the city. Look from the speech purpose, subject, words: their session mainly lies in the purpose of establishing a harmonious interpersonal relationship, make oneself become not excluded, for a member of the collective life for women the essence of which is a big club, women is the purpose of communication in this big club keep close to each other in the fusion of relationship rather than isolated or isolated, in their verbal communication, telling and listening becomes a main melody, so women always appears so obedient, negative speech style. Women usually talk about life and emotion, which is closely related to their status, work, social prestige, and unique characteristics of women.

Women, for example, in a speech community, some permanent topic such as dress, love, family, life bagatelle, experience, feeling, feeling something, complain, complaining, for some things such as fantasy, these and women born delicate feelings and thinking are inseparable. Even behind talk or chat can also be a female topic of conversation, this kind of talk about gossip refers to a kind of informal community communication, it is not what you want to communication with the purpose of the content of the true meaning, but women a way in order to maintain the unity of this community. In terms of language, women have an advantage over men in terms of language expression, fluency, syntactic complexity, wording, analogy, and listening comprehension. Women use exaggerated adjectives, adverbs, and exclamations accompanied by higher tones. The syntactic structure is also mostly the regulated structure and question structure, such as the use of fuzzy language and additional interrogative sentence.

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