

Gender and Language: Challenging the Stereotypes

by

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1. Introduction

Gender and language studies to date have evolved from frameworks largely designed and imposed by men, to a feminist perspective aimed at exposing sexism in language and further to studies that consider paradigms of dominance and difference in language from a variety of perspectives. Gender studies, feminist studies and sociolinguistic studies all currently lack consensus as to reasons for variance in women's and men's language and therefore further research is needed.

The following research study investigates the extent to which gender can be identified as a determining factor in language variance in unacquainted female-male group interaction. Language production will be considered both between and within gender groups and in relation to potential frameworks of dominance and difference and diversity.

The extent to which the participants conform to the following stereotypes of gender and language will be considered:

- women talk more than men
- men talk more than women
- women are less assertive and direct
- women break the rules of turn-taking less than men do
- women use more standard forms than men

The study combines empirical and ethnographic elements of research and data analysis with the aim of balancing objective and subjective observation. Findings will be considered in terms of implications for the theory of gender diversity and suggestions for further study will also be made.

2. Background

2.1 A Brief History of Gender Studies

Initial quantitative sociolinguistic studies, or variationist studies, investigated the use of ‘variants’ such as pronunciation or grammar structure (Labov, 1972) according to the influences of factors such as class, education and sex. With the evolution of feminist sociolinguistics, assertions, such as those of (Labov, 1972) that women produce language closer to the standard form than men, were challenged as being biased and reinforcing over-simplistic stereotypical generalisations. Tightness of social networks and increasing employment opportunities for women can be seen as being as much of an influence as gender in Lesley Milroy’s (1980) study of Belfast working class communities where women with tight social networks use vernacular forms more than men. Beth Thomas (1989) found that a combination of age and tight-knit networks corresponded with more use of the vernacular for women in a study of a Welsh community. In this way quantitative sociolinguistics has been criticised for neglecting societal power structures or frameworks underlying and ultimately controlling language production.

The issue of how sexism and bias is inherent in language was addressed by Robyn Lakeoff (1975) who was innovative in steering gender research away from a previous focus on grammar and phonetics towards a syntactic, stylistic and semantic focus. She suggested that women reinforced their own subordinate status through e.g. hedges and tag questions. Her work however has since been challenged as lacking empirical validity, being based on intuition and, as Jane Holmes points out, hedges may not only express uncertainty, but also have other functions (Janet Holmes, 1992: 318)

In an effort to look beyond assumptions of male-norm linguistic behaviour, women researchers in the more recent past have turned to questioning rather than reinforcing gender stereotypes. Single-sex as opposed to mixed-sex studies have investigated areas such as topic control (Jennifer Coates and Deborah Cameron, 1988) and interruptions (Zimmerman and West, 1975).

3. Initial Reflection and Hypotheses

3.1 Dominance, Difference or Diversity?

The problems of isolating language behaviour attributable to the influence of gender are reflected in the numerous approaches to defining gender and analysing its power to construct language. Deborah Tannen, the popular proponent of differences in men and women's language, in the 1990 bestseller *you Just Don't Understand*, looks to the functions of linguistic devices e.g. discussing whether interruptions are 'co-operative' as she claims they are for women, or 'competitive' for men. Her work however, relies on recollections of a large number of conversations rather than audio-recordings and therefore could be seen to be prone to bias. In her focus on 'cross-cultural' miscommunication of men and women, the male and female 'subcultures' are oversimplistically rendered separate and homogeneous, and as noted by Martin Montgomery, Tannen is 'prone to stereotypical judgements [and tends] to overestimate differences between men and women while underestimating differences within each category' (1995: 170-171). In line with this study Cameron dismisses the scenarios of difference presented as banal and comfortingly familiar:

the 'two codes' model is especially appealing because it suggests a way of eliminating certain troublesome consequences of gender difference without taking what to most people would be the unacceptably radical step of dismantling the entire edifice of gender. This is [a] fantasy that underpins the new verbal hygiene: that men and women could be made less damagingly alien to one another without undermining the concepts of masculinity and femininity. By learning to interpret and manipulate the gendered codes of language we can resolve the problems associated with difference while leaving difference itself intact.

(1995:203).

In a different approach, the term 'gender' has even been questioned as one which may lessen the political thrust of feminism, effectively incurring a relapse to marginalization and oppression by sidelining differences in rights to access to voice and education (Tania Modleski, 1991). Modleski states how gender focus is inevitably a male hetero-sexual-dominant paradigm and how the male identity in crisis is capable of consolidating male power: 'through cycles of crisis and resolution, ... men ultimately deal with the threat of female power by incorporating it' (1991:7). In other words Modleski's concern is that of

how male power works to take over femininity even as it professes to adapt away from the more traditional model.

Diversity and gender, both within and across language communities, is a concept in need of further investigation, but one that could be innovative in transcending research that inadvertently reinforces stereotypes of men and women's language. Feminists such as Sarah Mills consider 'gender' as a term that allows for the premise that women should not be seen as a homogeneous group (and therefore by implication men also) but as a diverse group, subject to a range of influences. Mills for example, cites 'race, class, age, sexual orientation [and] education' (1995:4) as determining factors in women's language production. Janet Bing and Victoria Bergvall, in their argument for gender diversity, assert the need to:

acknowledg[e] individual differences within and across groups [and] emphasise diversity rather than dichotomy. By refusing to accept dichotomy and by asking new questions, we can abandon the tired old question 'How do men and women speak differently?', remembering that every time we seek and find differences, we also reinforce gender polarization.

(1998:506)

In a similar vein, Diana Fuss questions the heterosexual male-female dichotomy, arguing that it is impossible to justify the boundaries of the category 'woman' if it is defined in essentialist terms (characteristics differ within the group) or in terms of experience (women undergo different experiences). She asks:

'Can we ever speak ... simply of the female ... or the male ... as if these categories were not transgressed already, not already constituted by other axes of difference (class, culture, nationality, ethnicity, nationality ...)'

(1989:28)

The diversity models as discussed above and the influences on language production may be represented thus in diagrammatic form (see figure 1):

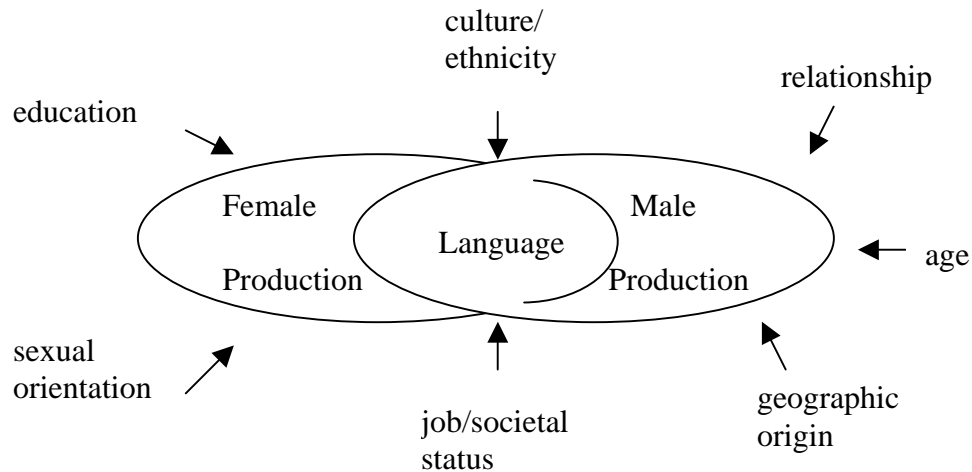


Figure 1: Influences on Gender and Language

It is not unrealistic to claim for example, that as a tertiary educator living in Japan, I would have considerably different conversations concerning my work with either a) a colleague who may be instrumental in a currently sought job promotion and b) an old high school friend, a hairdresser, who lives in a rural township in New Zealand (whether they be male or female) due to the influences of job status, relationship, geographic origins, education and age.

Further, in order to look at how deeply we are conditioned to stereotype women, men and their language, it may prove interesting, before reading further, to classify the following excerpts, from the current study, as men or women's utterances:

- a) yeah no I agree but I wonder ↘¹
- b) It bored the pants off me!
- c) no no no I'm talking about ...
- d) no no no no no don't exaggerate my suggestion to make your point
- d) again I think you're looking at the extreme there

¹ arrow indicates trailing off with quieter voice

3.2 Proposed Hypotheses

In investigating the stereotypes outlined in section 1, it is hypothesised that, due to the above influences, language variance will occur, both within and between gender groups. Four general hypotheses are outlined below.

1) In contrast to proverbs concerning over-talkativeness, which are often aimed at women:

s/he could talk the hind leg off a donkey
s/he could talk the leg off an iron pot
s/he could talk under wet cement
- Anonymous

it is suggested that men overall, will be the more prolific speakers in this female-male group interaction. In line with this prediction, and in a comprehensive summary of 56 studies of gender and floor apportionment, Deborah James and Janice Drakich found that the most prolific speakers were:

- males in 42.9% (24) of the studies
- males in some circumstances in 17.9% (10) of the studies
- sometimes females and sometimes males in 5.4% (3) of the studies
- neither males nor females in 28% (16) of the studies
- female in 3.6% (2) of the studies (1993: 284)

Rather than observing a 'lecture' style of men (Tannen,1990) who talk about 'sports, politics or how things work', and women who talk about 'details of daily life' (1986:120-121), it is expected that topic as determined by individual experience, will be an important factor in determining who talks and for what length of time.

2) Assertiveness and directness, in terms of interruptions, will occur for both genders, according to personal conversational style. Cross-gender conversation research on control and dominance often claims that men interrupt women more. Janet Holmes, for instance, suggests that 'men interrupt others more than women do... [and that] women are evidently socialized from early childhood to expect to be interrupted' (1992:326, see also West and Zimmerman,1983). Contrary to this claim, and in line with the diversity model, Deborah James and Sandra Clarke (1993) report no significant gender based difference

for interruptions i.e. both men and women interrupted other men and women. However, they do find that 'a small amount of evidence exists that females may use interruptions of a co-operative rapport-building type to a greater extent than do males' (1993: 268).

3) It is also suggested that failed bids, (as with interruptions) will be a feature common to both gender groups. Hedging devices such as *you know*, *sort of* and *probably* will not function to show women's 'weakness' (Lakeoff, 1975) but are more likely to serve a variety of functions, such as face-saving (Coates, 1998) as well as expressing confidence e.g. '*you know* you've heard it all before' and uncertainty (Holmes, 1987:64).

4) It is further hypothesized that deviation from standard English, in terms of vernacular and use of slang and informal language will vary according to personal style, rather than gender.

4. The Study

4.1 Participants and Procedure

Participants in the study, unacquainted ex-patriots, currently employed in Tokyo were:

females (f):

-Mf, 38, British, University Lecturer

-Sf, 28, British, Financial Consultant

and males (m):

-Cm, 26, American, University Lecturer

-Bm, 51, Australian, University Lecturer

Participants were chosen according to coinciding availability and, as they were not well known to the researcher, it was felt that bias in choice according to personality type was avoided. The four were recorded over the period of one and a half hours in a soundproof karaoke box and at a quiet restaurant. They were not informed of the nature of the research, apart from the fact that a sample of natural conversation was required. Excerpts from the conversation included opinions on films, immigration and integration, and a discussion on food choices.

4.2 Recording and Data Analysis

Audio recording and transcription were used to record and analyse participants' conversation. A small and relatively unobtrusive MD recorder was used, and the first thirty minutes of the conversation was not analysed as the awareness of being recorded could arguably be at its strongest and have detracted from the naturalness of the conversation.

Transcription conventions of Jennifer Coates (1996) were followed, with some slight adaptations (see appendix 1). A combination of empirical and ethnographic methods were used to analyse and interpret data, and in order to ensure that the belief systems of both the researcher and the participants be taken in to account, participant opinion and feedback on the conversation and the effects of gender in conversation in general were administered (see appendix 2).

Amount of talk was measured in total for each person, and an average talk time for women and men was calculated in seconds and minutes. In analysing the dynamics of turn taking, it should be noted that in rapid conversation, the cause of transitions between speakers could easily be subject to differing interpretation. A speaker may fade out at the end of a sentence assuming their main input has been understood, or as a result of personal style, as well as when being overlapped or interrupted e.g.

Cm:	you're watching the movie and basically they tell all these stories about the cast
	when they were working with them cracking all these jokes ... so
Mf:	oh, that's great
Bm:	right
	so you get the –

With this in mind, accuracy of timing (of overlap and interruption) in transcription was stressed, and following utterances were also carefully considered to clarify distinctions between successful interruption, unsuccessful interruption and overlap. Successful interruptions were measured as those, which caused another to stop mid-utterance e.g.:

Mf:	if you- if it- if it-
Bm:	so it was the miss- it was particularly the plot that you thought was attractive

or fade out e.g.:

Cm: yeah no I-I agree ... but I wonder ↘
 Mf: it's like the aftertaste isn' it? You go away
 wondering what did happen? <laughs> what was that movie about?

Assertiveness and directness, also difficult to measure empirically, were considered in terms of failed bids and hedges. Pronunciation, use of slang and informal language were considered as factors of deviation from standard English.

5 Results

5.1 Talk Time

The current study found that over the total 48 minutes of conversation, women, with a total talk time of 26 minutes 6 seconds, spoke more than men, who recorded a total time of 21 minutes 26 seconds (see Table 1).

Table 1: Total Talk Time

Participant		Total Talk Time (mins and secs)	Total Talk Time %	Mean Total Talk Time (mins and secs)
Women	S	17:28	37%	26:06
	M	8:43	18%	
Men	B	13:54	29%	23:26
	C	7:33	16%	

Overall individual amount of floor apportionment saw the participants ranked thus:

1: Sf 37.0%
 2: Bm 29.0%
 3: Mf 18.3%
 4: Cm 15.4%

The women held the floor longest in all parts of the conversation with Sf speaking for a quarter more than the men's mean total talk time. Mf, with an input of 8 minutes 43 seconds, spoke slightly more than Cm, who recorded the least talk time of 7 minutes 43

seconds. It would be possible to infer from the above data that women in general, talk more than men, however, it is suggested that this would be an over-simplification, and that to ignore topic as an important influence on individual talk time would be a mistake. Variance of talk time according to subject is illustrated in table 2:

Table 2: Individual Talk Time and Topic

Participant	Topic and Talk Time (mins and secs)			
	Movie: <i>Gladiator</i> (5mins 30secs)	Movie: <i>Usual Suspects</i> (5mins 10secs)	Food (9mins)	Immigration/ Integration (20mins 6secs)
S	2:51	2:49	4:11	7:37
B	1:51	0:54	2:25	8:44
M	2:00	1:16	1:43	3:44
C	1:13	2:00	2:08	2:12

A case in point is the variance of Bm's input on a) a topic which he elected, and was obviously familiar with, such as the Australian news item on which he spoke for over 3 minutes in a single turn, compared with b) his total input of 49 seconds for discussion of the film *Usual Suspects* with which he was not so familiar (he asks someone to 'jot my memory ... about the story'). The major contributing factor to Bm's longer talk time was the long explanatory turn concerning the Australian government's reaction to asylum-seekers (see below in an abbreviated form, see appendix 3 for full form). His opinion was prefaced with a lengthy, three-minute introduction to the issue, and stands out as the longest turn:

Bm: ...there were a large number of ... migrants from the middle East [coming] ...down into Indonesia and then across by boat ... there was a case where a boatload of immigrants came across and the boat was overloaded and the boat sank and [the the Australian navy] took some photographs of the boat sinking ...the government said these asylum seekers ... that the parents were throwing there own children into the water right in an attempt to make the navy ... take them to Australia ...and then it came out that that was comPLEtely false ... and I guess my – my opinion ...was how .. disappointed I was in ... particularly the government ...but also the ... population who ...because of this fear of...illegal immigration coming into Australia had voted this paTHEtic government back in to power.

Particularly long turns were also evident for women e.g. in Sf's following input on patriotism which included two long turns of 1 minute 57 seconds and 1 minute, and Mf's turn of 51 seconds on Afghan and Lebanese refugees. In order to fully investigate gender representation in language, not only time but also *function* of language must be considered. With this in mind we turn to the dynamics of turn taking and assertiveness.

5.2 Turn-breaking: Interruptions and Overlap

As seen in table 3, equal interruptions occurred: women interrupted 18 times and men 17.

Table 4: Interruptions and Overlaps

Interruption/ Overlap Function	Successful Interruptions		Unsuccessful Interruptions and Overlap	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
to clarify	S:1	B:3	S:6 M:5	B:3 C:3
to add own thought, opinion	S:2	B:1	S:8 M:6	B:8 C:2
to challenge, disagree	S:2 M:2	B:2	S:7 M:4	B: 6
to question	S:2 M:1	B:5	S:1 M:3	B: 7 C:1
to joke	S:1	B:2	M:1	B:1
to continue or start own turn	S :1	C:2	S:2 M:2	B:3 C:2
to agree or confirm □	S:2 M:3		S:13 M:7	B:3 C:4
to agree and continue or start own turn	S:1	B:2	S:2	B:4 C:3
agree or encourage ‡			S:8 M:31	B: 4 C:14
minimum response *			S:17 M:2	B:11
to concede			S:1	B:2
Total Interruptions or Overlap	S=12 M=6 Women=18	B=15 C= 2 Men= 17	S = 65 M = 62 W = 127	B = 52 C = 29 Men = 81

Key: □ : = to finish another's sentence or confirm by repetition

‡ : = short response e.g. 'yeah'

*: = laugh or 'hm'

Within each gender category however, a wide variance, especially for men, may be seen in successful interruptions per minute of individual talk time:

-Bm 1.08
 -Cm 0.27
 -Sf 0.69
 -Mf 0.69

Bm interrupted most in proportion to his total individual talk time, and interrupted with a question more than others. These questions were often of a challenging or joking nature and could be seen to control the direction of flow of the conversation, to some extent e.g.

Cm: I watched it too many times, because I bought the DVD

Mf: Alright so+ so-

Bm: too many times? how many times?

Cm: um

Although Bm elected the asylum-seekers issue, a woman, Sf effectively turned the topic to one she was more interested in or familiar with i.e. patriotism of Australians and British people living abroad and the Muslim Indian community in England, probably due to her being of Muslim Indian descent. Cm, who often waited until the end of a topic to add his comments recorded a significantly lower rate of interruptions.

It is therefore not unrealistic to suggest that personal interaction style, and again, topic had a large part to play in these results. Although Bm recorded more successful interruptions than others, in the most heated part of the conversation on immigration and integration, Sf steers the talk to topics she is more familiar with and an interesting pattern of mirroring in interruption occurs between the two more dominant speakers, so that it is not easy to say who is actually more 'dominant':

Bm: =but they do integrate<very rapid speech> . they marry they intermarry

Sf: no-no-no- I'm talking -I'm talking about ...

Bm: but it does for example|. in ()-

Sf: so you're saying that... because-

Bm: no-no-no-no-no you can't
 exaggerate my:: suggestion to make your point ... and NOT integrating

Sf: I don't think that's necessarily
 true aGAIN I think you're -you're looking at the extreme there..

Participants own comments from the questionnaires further support this view:

- Bm: 'Thanks for Sunday. Makes me think about my conversational style. This *opinionated* male is 51.' (in reply to an email enquiring about his age, my italics)
- Sf: 'Certain topics I was more interested in than others. Those I was passionate about obviously made me more ready to talk and interrupt.'

A more in depth look at how all interruption (whether successful or not) and overlap functioned as input, pointed to the women having a stronger tendency to agree or confirm than the men, Mf at 1.15 and Sf 0.86 times per minute of individual talk time, compared with Cm and Bm at 0.52 and 0.22 respectively. Sf used a large amount of short responses such as 'yeah'; 3.56 per minute of individual talk time, 3 times the amount used by Cm (1.85) and far more than the older subjects Mf and Bm.

The women frequently interrupted to agree, confirm, finish a sentence or repeat to confirm another's utterance as S does in the following exchange:

Sf:	=Absolutely the	inTRI:	gue . and the fact that you o-
Bm:			(right .. yeah(?))
Mf:		yeah ..	and the <i>TW</i> Ist at the end was magnificent .
	magnificent		
Cm:			right
Sf:			and the <i>twist at the end</i> you just had
	no idea it was coming and you just think oh my God		it was such a good sort of()
Mf:			yeah and it
	was so <i>well set up</i> =		
Cm:	=yeah .. <i>well set up</i>		you're right
Sf:	<i>it was</i>		really good group of actors as well
Bm:		and <i>it is</i> .	I don't know . I-I think I understood the twist before it
Bm:			happened therefore I's disappointed

By following the pattern of italicised points in the above exchange, it is clear that co-operative language, or 'the interactional shitwork' (Fishman, 1980) is here a cross-gender feature, with men too agreeing and repeating in support of the women's praises of the film, most notably Bm's comment 'and it is' which stands out for a participant who is often more directly confrontational.

5.3 Assertiveness and Directness

5.3.1 Failed Bids

Failed bids to complete utterances or interrupt successfully were on a par for women and men who totalled 23 and 22 respectively². When individual numbers of failed bids were adjusted to account for proportion of individual talk time, C was seen to stand out as a proportionally less assertive (or more polite) speaker:

-Sf 0.92/min
-Mf 0.80/min
-Bm 1.01/min
-Cm 1.70/min

It should be noted that longer pause times observed in his flow of speech, may have interpreted as signals to begin a turn by other speakers. In his questionnaire feedback he reports - ‘I occasionally went into “observation mode” rather than trying to insert my speech. I am not sure what I can attribute this conversation style to, but it’s not a gender distinction.’

5.3.3 Hedging Devices

Some evidence was found to support Holmes’ multi-functional model of hedging, and it as in the exchange below where Sf a) prompts Cm to give his opinion which she is sure is a positive one,

Sf: *Well* you obviously liked it
and b) seeks Cm’s opinion on a film she ‘absolutely loved’ and receives a very indirect, tentative reply, laden with hedges and completed with rising intonation on the declarative ‘long’:

Sf:... OK what did you think of it? Did you hate it or?

Cm: I didn’t hate it. I *thought* it was ... I *thought* it was *kind of kind of I guess I thought* it was *a little* long#

This model of hedging, however, was found to be problematic in that objective

² failed bids do not correspond in exact number to successful interruptions as more than one person may have simultaneously failed in a bid to speak.

identification of hedges as being clearly uncertain or confident was often not possible e.g. ‘the director said *just like* go ahead’. The model of epistemic modality, or hedging as a face saving device (Coates, 1998) was found to be more appropriate for this study as speakers meeting for the first time, and engaging in talk which often led to disagreement, needed to *distance* from their opinions (albeit in varying degrees) e.g.

Sf: –it’s that Japanese mentality where they feel oh –oh if it’s not on the menu sorry we can’t do it

Bm: that’s not only in Japanese [sic.] it’s a:: other places as well

Bm: but *you know* it’s a common factor not uncommon *I think* .. if it’s not on the menu then we can’t do it

Sf: hm: *I think* it’s more *sort of* pronounced here than – than in other countries *I think*

Bm: oh maybe

The resulting equal numbers of hedges per proportional talk time are illustrated in the following table:

Table 5: Hedges and Talk Time

Hedging Device	Women		Men	
	S	M	C	B
well	6	3	4	3
kind of	1	3	8	3
sort of	6	1	-	1
I think	7	3	8	1
I suppose/guess	-	-	4	6
I mean	9	-	-	2
you know/see	15	1	1	4
just/ like	25	3	3	-
maybe/perhaps	1	-	2	-
a (little) bit	8	-	-	-
pretty much	-	-	1	-
whatever	-	1	2	-
if you like	-	-	-	2
rising tone on declarative	1	-	3	-
Total Hedges	80	16	34	23
Total Hedges/ Individual Talk Time	4.58/min	1.83/min	5.25/min	1.65/min
Mean Hedges/ Talk Time by Gender	Women= 3.21/min		Men= 3.45/min	

Cm and Sf, at either end of the scale in terms of talk time, and assertiveness both used a greater number of hedges than the other speakers, particularly Sf's use of *just* or *like* and *you know* and Cm's use of *I think* and *kind of* might possibly point to a slang-like usage for these younger speakers.

5.4. Standard Forms

Analysing the participants in terms of deviation from standard pronunciation proves somewhat problematic in that the group was not a homogeneous one and therefore it is difficult to apply a *standard*. Pronunciation variance occurred not only due to geographical origin, but also due to speed of speech and resulting assimilation e.g. the final /t/ as [d] in 'got a' > [gʌd], elision, e.g. the final /t/ in 'just working' > [dʒʌswɜ:kɪŋ] and resyllabification e.g. 'suppose' > /spʊz/ for all participants. Sf from the East End, London, used noticeably more glottal stops (especially in rapid speech) e.g. 'that was ad. lib.' > /tʌdʒwʌz/ especially when speaking emphatically, as to a lesser extent did Mf from Coventry, whose English was closer to received pronunciation. Sf, the financial consultant, used elided 'h' e.g. 'e's in that?' 'es in *Usual Suspects*?' to a far greater degree than the others, who were all English teachers. The American subject, Cm, occasionally used 'dunno' or 'kinna' for 'don't know' and 'kind of'.

Slang or informal language was rarely used, as seen in table 5, perhaps due to the presence of the MD recorder, or because the people were not familiar socially. For this reason it is not possible to analyse these features in terms of gender influence.

Table 5: Slang and Informal Language

Women		Men	
S	M	C	B
cop (x2)	bored the pants off me	really <i>cool</i>	get the dirt on (it)
guy	hang out	it's all <i>dirt</i>	
what kind of food do they <i>do</i> here	vege?	funny <i>stuff</i>	
anybody know?	week-ends quite a lot (reduction)	a stomach <i>thing</i>	

mad cow <i>stuff</i>	bit of a <i>drag</i> really	a taste <i>thing</i>	
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5.5 Questionnaire Feedback and Findings

Participant feedback from the questionnaire indicated that on the most part, subjects felt that the recorded conversation they took part in differed to mixed conversations in general in that overall, slightly more disagreement to the statements below was indicated (see appendix 2).

- women talk more than men
- women use more standard forms
- women are less direct and assertive
- women break the rules of turn-taking less

The following factors were listed by participants as influencing their language input:

- interest in and knowledge of topic
- personality/ character
- confidence due to age
- familiarity with others
- mood
- another person of same gender and country

6 Conclusion: Discussion of Findings and Implications for Further Study

As predicted the isolation of gender as a factor in language variation of mixed-group interaction was not straightforward. It is acknowledged that the study was limited by its small number of previously unacquainted participants, and therefore cannot be generalised over the entire spectrum of men and women's language. However, it is suggested that there are some grounds for support of a diversity paradigm, both between and within gender groups, especially with regards to amount of talk, assertiveness and interruptions, possibly due to topic, personal speaking style, geographic origin, culture, occupation or age.

Men, contrary to hypothesis 1, did not speak more than women. Long explanatory turns, representative of Tannen's 'lecture' style of men were also evident in both women's input. Here, as predicted, topic and experience, along with cultural background, were of influence. This is not to adopt a gender-determined view of topic, as Tannen does, but to suggest that topic competence will vary according to individual experience. In addition,

length of speech may not necessarily indicate control in conversation, as assumed in the male-dominance theory.

Although support was found for hypothesis 2, or equal interruptions for men and women overall, such a blanket assumption is seen to be unrealistic when the strong individual variance within gender groups is taken into account – one male interrupted more than the women, and one far less. Some evidence for women using more co-operative language was found, in line with James and Clarke, in particular the use of interruptions or overlaps to agree, confirm and encourage. However, again individual variation in *type* of agreement was clearly present between the women as well as being a feature for one male in particular.

Trends in failed bids, as predicted in the third hypothesis, were equal for both genders overall, but one participant, a man, scored significantly higher than others. Here, stylistic characteristics of slower speech and frequent pauses may have been a factor in addition to or as a result of lack of assertiveness. Two participants, one female and one male, used a greater number of hedges. Although difficult to conclusively demonstrate, and therefore an area for further study, personal stylistic variation due to age could have been an influencing factor (they were 10 years younger than the other participants).

Hypothesis 4, that personal conversational style rather than gender determines use of the vernacular, was found to be partially correct. Geographical origins and perhaps also the influence of occupation may have played a part in individual language form (the teachers used more standard pronunciation, the financial consultant a less standard form).

An interesting area for further study would be that of how relationship status could be of influence in gender studies. Many mixed-gender studies focus on conversations of married couples compared with the participants in this study, all of who were single. The present study, although far from conclusive, may serve to inspire more research in the area of gender and language diversity.

Appendix 1: Transcription Conventions

Transcription conventions used for conversational data are as follows. Jennifer Coates' conventions are followed in the main, with additional conventions being marked with an asterisk.

1. A question mark indicates a question
e.g. what was all that about?
2. *A parenthesised question mark indicates speech which is not clearly audible
e.g. (philosophical drama (?))
3. * A blank parenthesised bracket indicated inaudible speech
e.g. to make it into a real ()
4. A hyphen indicates an incomplete word or utterance
e.g. it wa- it was awhile ago
5. Pauses are indicated by full stops, for less than one second
e.g. England vee . Scotland
*or more than one second
e.g. I thought it was ... gee what
6. * an extended horizontal line indicates overlap in utterances
e.g. B: Kevin Spacey piece isn't it?
C: right
M: yes...yeah
S: excellent movie
7. An equals sign at the end of one speaker's utterance and at the start of the next utterance indicates the absence of a discernable gap
e.g. which movie was=
=tightly plotted
8. Angled brackets give additional information
e.g. B: <laughs>
9. Capital letters are used for words/syllables uttered with emphasis or loudness
e.g. it's not meant to be SHAKespeare
10. * A sharp mark indicates rising tone on a declarative
e.g. I thought it was a little long#
11. An arrow indicates trailing off with a quieter voice
e.g. and he was in that other movie ↘

Appendix 2: Language and Gender Questionnaire and Results

Part A

Various claims have been made by researchers relating to the language of women and men. Read the following statements and indicate to what extent you agree or disagree in general, and for the conversations today. You may comment further in the blank space.

1. Women talk more than men.

In general:

agree			disagree	
1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	SB	M	C	

Mf: depends on context

Sf: depends on context, topic and how one is feeling

Cm: not a 5 because I think it could be proven somehow

Today:

agree			disagree	
1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		BCSM		

Mf: pretty balanced, 1 quieter male

Cm: I occasionally lapsed into just listening so it was out of balance today

2. Women use more standard forms of English than men i.e. they avoid the vernacular, do not swear or use slang as much.

In general:

agree			disagree	
1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	BM		CS	

Today:

agree			disagree	
1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		BM	S	C

3. Women are less direct and assertive.

In general:

agree			disagree	
1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	M		BS	C

Today:

agree			disagree	
1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		M	BS	C

Mf: Even balance of personalities

4. Women break the rules of turn taking less than men i.e. men interrupt more.

In general:

agree			disagree	
1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	BSM			C

Today:

agree			disagree	
1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		SM	B	C

Part B

Do you consider that any other factors besides gender influenced the way that you spoke to others today? If so, please note the factors and how they were of influence.

Shoogufta: certain topics I was more interested in than others. Those topics I was passionate about obviously made me more ready to talk and interrupt.

Mary: *Personality and combination thereof

*Confidence: although I am usually shy with strangers, I felt confident in this group because I'm a teacher + the situation was familiar so I was probably more assertive than I otherwise would have been. I was also one of the older members of the group and therefore felt confident.

*Had another female Brit in the group so felt I had an 'ally' straight away.

*Interest in the topics

Charles: I have often been accused (perhaps rightfully) of being 'too quiet', so for this exercise I wanted to participate as much as possible. I didn't make any extraordinary efforts, though, and occasionally went into 'observation mode' rather than trying to insert my speech. I'm not sure what I can attribute this conversation style to, but it's not a gender distinction.

Bruce: Topic - knowledge of, degree of interest in	>	likelihood of interrupting
Character – introvert, extrovert	>	”
Mood – positive e.g. cheerful	>	likelihood of (dis)agreeing
Familiarity with other people	>	”

Appendix 3 Transcripts: *Gladiator*

...

M: Gladiator? I hated it

S: you hated it?

M: it bored the pants off me

S: <intake of breath> why?

M: I could not get onto it I had it on video | and I put it on and I was so bored by it I

C: | hm

M: went and got the photo albums and started doing (that?) and jus' waited with it on

S: | no wa::y

M: to see if anything good would ever happen and it never did

M: I COULD not understand . why anybody liked it why it won an oscar –

S: | I LOved the film

B: <laughs>

M: | but I liked Russel Crowe

S: | I absolutely loved the film

M: why? explain to me why? | what was interesting it was so . dull

C: | <chuckles>

S: well first of all it- it was sort of –well jus the fact that it was you know that it was historical first of all I love- | I love historical films

B: | <snoring noise>

M: yeah history's great but it depends what you do with it

S: yeah but come on it's like the most interesting period of- of history | I mean()

M: | gladiators with a kick

M: | but they managed to make it boring

S: No::: it wasn't | it was really good

B: | but was it really based on history though? he wasn't was he? \

S: well no but it's the fact | that it's using you know historical sort of themes or whatever

M: | yes yeah

S: OK

C: it's a bunch of historical figures and only Russel Crowe is the- | the odd man out . you could say

S: | right exactly

S: 'e's s'posed to jus' be \

B: Russelus Crowus the famous <general laughter>

S: | gladiator

B: | roman gladiator

S: OK so what did you think of it? did you hate it or? \

C: I didn' hate it I thought it was ... gee what . I thought it was kind of . I guess I thought it was a little long # .. | but I didn' hate it . um and I watched it on video too ..so..

M: | <snicker, quiet> I bet | yeah

C: | That probably kind of \

M: and maybe the big screen was- would be a better experience \

C: right .. um but yeah I think ... I thought it was very entertaining # um | and when I

S: | mhm

C: see movies like that I always think o::h what's the real story? and I kind of wanted to go and read about it but did not so <laughs> maybe it wasn't that interesting

S: hm: hm OK

B: jot my memory can you tell me a little bit about the story?

S: u:: m

B: 'cause it was a while ago since I've seen it

S: it wa- it was a while ago . OK so first of all you've got .. Russel Crowe . what was his- I can't remember what his name was ..

C: can't remember it either

S: but he was actually .. yeah he was actually a general in the

B: a general or something?

S: army and he was a very successful he went out and sort of won a lot of wars for the- the then king um and the king's son was actually quite jealous of the fact that HE used to get a lot more attention than his father the king

B: w-w-uh-wasn't the opening sequence that battle sequence?

S: the battle scene yeah

B: 'cause that was really good . I thought that was a very good sequence

S: that was a really good battle scene yes, very good battle scenes in general

B: I seem to remember I was really impressed by the opening and then I was kind of disappointed with the actual story

C: <snickers>

S: oh but you know the whole point of movies is that you go- yes – yes of course there should be an element of interesting there but it's about escape- escapism isn't it it's about jus' lettin' yourself go into a film and just enjoying the-

B: is that- is that the whole point of movies?

S: of COURSE it is .. sure (it is(?))

M: (philosophical drama (?))

B: it is a- a- an aspect of the movies yeah of course

S: but it's not- it's not a docuMENTary where you go to find out facts about historical events is it?

B: no:

S: we're talking about a Hollywood movie first of all you know they tend o twist- to twist the facts anyway a little bit just to make it a little bit more interesting . 'cause history

B: m m:

S: is always a little bit um you know maybe a little bit TOO boring or a little bit uninteresting for Hollywood to make into a real ()

B: but I mean this was a pretty clichéd story wasn't it?

S: yeah of course it was

C: yeah

B: this is- this is this is general er genera:l you know from the Roman upper class or whatever ah being betrayed and then having to fight his way back as an ordinary gladiator and defeating everybody and it was it was nothing very new in the story was

C: right

B: it it was just like an action sort of action adventure story set in Roman times really wasn't it?

S: hm hm yes again I reiterate the fact that it's s'posed to be fun <chuckles> it's s'posed to be a movie so it's not s'posed to be-

B: <chuckles>

M: did you.. did you get into the characters?

S: =I did I did I absolutely loved it

M: you see I found them u-utterly unbelievable

S: really ↘

M: I found them very two dimensional and an' that's that's what lost it for me I-I ()

S: yes yes it is of course it is yeah I ()

B: but then that's an action movie

() it's not meant to be they're not MEANT TO BE it's not meant to be SHakespeare

S: exactly that's what I mean so it's s'posed to be just

C: yeah

M: but it was be-

C: <chuckle>

M: you know the ones that win all the Oscars you'd think at least it should have some DEpTh to it you know the one- something that was↘

B: well no: why? why why because it

C: it depends on who wins-

M: because if well then why

does Bruce Willis ever win any Oscars?

B: wins Oscars should it have depth to it? I'd 've thought because it wins Oscars it probably DOESn't have much depth

S: right

C: <chuckles>

M: but then you know you've got your Bruce Willis films your Arnold Swartznegger films they never win Oscars 'cause they just 2D and they're out an' out 2D and nobody cares 'cause they're- we all know what we're getting but that movie I'm assuming was purporting to be something else with depth with the intrigue of the political:: ranglings etcetera etcetera and it didNOthing for me at all and I just foud them all utterly unbelievable an' . that's-s- that's one of the problems I had with it

B: m::

I don' think it was purporting to be anything other than anything other than what it really was

M: a Hollywood movie

C: yeah

B: ye::ah

S: yeah that's what I think as well it's s'posed to jus' be I mean I- you have to take movies with a hu:ge pinch of salt unless they are- you know- not- unless they are independent films .. in that- in that sense that's where you're getting the real sort of- real character driven pieces

M: yeah but if- if you put that alongside something like *Braveheart* which I'm sure somebody here would have hated but I really liked *Braveheart*

M: which is the same kind of thing . but it DREW me in the characters () the characters

S: see-see eXActly right

B: ye:::s I agree
M: have depth the characters were real there was something to like something to hate
B: I- I-I but I must agree yea::h yea::h I agree
M: something to get upset about and there was just nothing to react to in *Gladiator* it just had the opposite effect on me
S: really?
M: yeah
S: that's interesting=
B:=I think the storyline of- in *Braveheart* was much stronger
M: yeah
C: which movie was-=
B: =tightly plotted
C: which was *Braveheart* I haven't seen it
B: Mel Gibson- Mel Gibson against the English
M: Mel Gibson Mel Gibson Scottish he::ro
S: English-
England vee . Scotland .. It wasn't – it wasn't a football match though
C: OK (I've seen scenes of it he's (?)) (quieter)
M: yeah < laughs >
S: < laughs>
C: Mel Gibson with . face paint or-
M: it was pretty (much the(?)) same amount of violence too
S: exactly
< general laughter>
B: yes yes yes . and it's really spectacular . the battle scenes but- but the whole thing
S: lot (of(?)) hatred though
M: <laughs>
B: for me was more interesting ↘
S: have you seen it?
C: no no I haven't
S: where have you been . I'm sorry to say this but ()
<general laughter>

Appendix 3 Continued: *Usual Suspects*

C: The usual suspect ss
S: OK, does anyone remember much of it?
C: YEAh -
B: again, a while ago, but -
C: I watch it – I watched it too many times, because I bought the DVD.
M: Alright so, so-
B: Too many times? How many times?
C: Umm –
S: Well you obviously ... - you obviously like it?
C: Well I watch – I’ve watched it enough that – the reason I like the DVD so much # is there’s a directors’ commentary, which is really cool so the directors are
M: Oh, yeah?
C: talking and . you’re watching the movie and basically they tell all these stories about the cast when they were working with them ... cracking all these jokes ... so
M: Oh, that’s great Right
B: So you get the –
you get the dirt on the making of the movie
C: Yeah, it’s all dirt and what’s - and there in the movie sometimes, well they’d be well OK I’m I the movie in this scene and see I show my ring so that my mother knows it’s me it’s some really funny stuff .. um
<laughter>
S: I’ve never seen a DVD like that with director’s comments
C: yeah they’re -
M: no, I know
B: most of them – most of them these days have these
have () really
S: I don’t have a DVD player that’s how
C: yeah, they have some kind of commentary () some of ’em are kind of boring but, some of – a lot of ’em are kind of interesting
B: This is a ... <taps finger on table> um . Kevin Spacey piece isn’t it?
C: right
M: yes .. yeah
S: excellent movie
C: Yeah, nice group of actors too .. that’s one of the reasons I liked it Kevin Spacey ...
M: yes ... yes
S: Ga-GableByrne
M: yes
S: Byrnes or Byrnes?
M: Byrne
C: Byrne
S: um
C: Stephen Baldwin who may not be that great an actor but ()
S: yeah and what’s that um that ah .. is Mexican or Spanish guy, what’s his name?

C: Oh yeah, um=
S: =um . is it (Roal(?))
C: no what is his name? He was in *Traffic* and he was in that other movie ↘
S: yeah, he's a really good actor I really like
him
B: oh he did - the guy in *Traffic*? ...The guy who was the Mexican cop
C: yeah
S: that's it ,yeah
B: he's great ...
S: yeah he's ()
M: BELICIONE DEL TORO=
B: he's in – he's (us-us- us(?))
S: =IS THAT HIS NAME?
C: yeah – yeah Belicione, yeah
S: yeah
M: HE's in that? He's in *Usual Suspects*?
S: YE::S |. (and he-(?))
C: yeah he DOESn't look like 'imself though because- <snickeres>
S: he doesn't an- and it's so funny because when
he speaks 'is lines you don't understand a word that 'e's saying .. it's jus' the way he
– he says it- , using all the – of all|the slang an – his w- (I won't swear but)
M: yeah, yeah <laughs>
B: BUT people ..
RAved about *Usual Suspects* didn't they?
C: Right
S: you didn't like it?
B: and I didn't find – think it was a great movie
S: <intake of breath, whispers> o::h I thought it was greaa::t
M: Oh I did I loved it =
S: =Absolutely the inTRI:gue |. and the fact that you o-
B: (right .. yeah(?)) ↘
M: yeah .. and the TWIst |at the end was magnificent .
magnificent
C: right
S: and the twist at the end you just had
no idea it was coming and you just think oh my God | it was such a good sort of ()
M: yeah and it
was so well set up=
C: =yeah .. well set up you're right
S: | it was | really good group of actors as well
B: and it is . I don't know . I-I think I understood the twist before it
B: happened therefore I's disappointed
M: yeah
C: OK
M: I have a friend who's – who can always predict the endings | and she's always sitting
B: (well(?)) I can't

M: movies really bored 'cause she can see what's coming and I have no clue at all I'm just like oh wow and so it's never spoiled for me

S: right right

M: if you - if it - if it

B: so it was the mys- it was particularly the plot that you thought was attractive

M: yes .. yeah . yeah it – it leads you along and draws you in and then there's that wonderful twist (and its o::h(?))

S: but not only that the way that um the film is sort of um told . in flashbacks .. as well . and then you come

C: yeah

M: yeah

S: back to the present and then you're told again about what happened again here and there and then the cop who's questioning er .. Spacey . is asking him questions

M: yeah yeah

S: and we know that he's – that you're lying what is the real truth and he re -does the same scene again but there are slight different changes in it an' again that was what was really interesting I think and jus' the:: ↘

B: mm

C: yeah

M: and when you see the penny drop with the policeman about what he's done

S: exactly

M: and how he's picked the names off the board and just told this complete fabrication

S: and you jus' go like this and then suddenly you see him walking properly in the street (get's to (??))

M: yeah and he jus' suddenly loses the limp fantastic=

S: =and just a complete shift in character as well you jus' think well that's complet- you

M: yeah yeah

S: woul- it- you'd be right if you were the cop trying to look for the guy on the street you would never 'ave seen 'im because he just completely changed

C: to some degree I wonder whether that . aspect of it kind of ruins it for some people because it's like what've be – what've we been watching all this time if it's actually not true so what actually did happen ()?

M: yeah yeah

S: yeah no well it's the whole enjoyment of it

C: yeah no I-I agree ... but I wonder ↘

M: it's like the aftertaste isn' it? you go away thinking what did 'appen <laughs> what was that movie about?

S: yeah

S: but also they were all s'posed to be really really good friends on the set as well

C: right right

S: so you know that scene where they're doin' the line up scene? m it was all apparently

C: yeah

S: that was ad lib there was no real script on it and the director just said like go ahead

C: yeah

M: yeah

S: with it do what you wanna do with it and the fact that they were such good friends

M: yeah

S: really showed and it really helped with the - the . characters . well and the interaction

M: the rapport was there yeah yeah

S: between them

B: how many times have you seen it?

S: oh about three or four times, can you tell?

B: three or four

<all laugh heartily>

S: I watch it whenever I ca- if it's on TV I'll watch it or whatever it's a really good film

B: I should watch it again <laughs>

S: You should watch it again I think

B: why did you get the DVD because you wanted to watch it again?

C: yeah I wanted to watch the movie again and again um

S: yeah

C: I liked the movie visually too and I dunno if I think that way about a lot of movies but in -in this movie the changes in scene were very very interesting for me

S: actually

you're making me want to go and watch it again <laughs>

C: 'cause they go from New York . they go to . Los Angeles when they're inside one apartment they've got this you know um not this kind of furnishing it's got

M: <laugh>

S: <laugh>

C: this really avant-garde furnishing . and then they go to another scene and it's

M: hm

S: hm

C: completely different and then they're in a jail cell . yeah um

B: ... the jail cell is kind of basic furnishing I guess

C: and then they're all at the port so they're at so many different kinds of locations that it's kind of . it's kind of yeah always interesting

S: quite fresh and interesting

... it does make me want to go and see it again I might go and get it out -

B: <laughs> 'gee I haven' seen it for a week or so-

S: I haven't seen it for like a week or yeah I might go and get it again < laughs> hm

Appendix 3 Cont.: Food Choices

M: well we were jus' talking about food actually

S: yes we were
M: that there is a need perhaps to eat in the near future
B: you mean in the posi- world population or on our part? <laughs>
C: <laughs>
M: um well I was speaking more as a representative of this group unelected and (un)
S: <laughs>
B: so you- you thinking- you thinking of going somewhere to have a bite to eat somewhere?
M: well um it-it- Brenda indicated that- here ..there is food and it apparently is good food
S: here
B: a::h
M: so I'm wondering should we just hang out and eat something
B: sounds interesting
yeah I'm starting to get a bit hungry=
C: = that would work .. yeah
S: I might have to go and visit my washing instead though I've jus' realized 'cause you reminded me of your washing
M: well it's still gunna sit there
S: yeah
B: hi washing . how are you? . i'ts me I'm back
S: (sort it out(?)) <laughs>
M: It's not going to go anywhere in the next hour or so and hasn't been for the last five hours .. so you might as well jus' leave it
S: that's true no it's not .. no:: ..that's true <laughing>
jus' kind of reminded me of it
M: yeah
S: it was like um. ()
B: whenever I do my washing though .. and I a- I always hang it out right 'cause I never use a drier I hate using driers . and I always hang it out and it inevitably rains
C: <laughs>
B: it's like do you want some rain in Tokyo? ask Bruce to do his washing
S: that's true yeah hm
B: do you hang out your washing?
S: (cause it's like-(?))
yeah I do yeah ... don't dry ... it's a very strange conversation we're having here
<general laughter>
M: these are the basics of life
S: we were jus' - I was jus' talking about my laundry bags just a minute ago
M: <laughs>
yeah . so what kind of food do they do here?
S: yeah I was jus' going to ask that as well anybody know? I mean I've been here before. but we had like the buffet
M: have you eaten here before you're not allowed to say

W: it's kind of better if I'm not umm but it's um- ah we'll have to get a menu it's quite a variety it's sort of- she's an American cook so standard American sort of suitable-for-

C: that's good

W: Tokyo-type-fare

C: and are there some vegetarian options?

W: there is some vegetarian

C: that's good

M: vege?

C: yeah

M: why are you a vegetarian?

S: why are you a veg- yeah I's just going to ask?

M: <laughs>

C: actually it's not not some exciting reason I guess I kind of lost the taste for meat and I gradually lost the taste for a lot of things somehow

S: really?

M: yeah?

C: when I was in college I ..-which yeah- it seems weird – sorry i t's kind of an aside –it seems weird to me to keep saying 'when I was in college' 'cause I'm not- it wasn't that long ago but um anyway ... it makes me feel like I'm older but.. it's

S: <laughs>

probably from talking to my students too much perhaps um

B: <laughs>

C: but back then um there was a period of time when I suddenly started living off campus# and started cooking for myself and I would never buy meat um so after a

S: mhm:

C: kind of a long period I tried to eat a turkey sandwich and jus' hated it (and couldn't(?))

S: yeah

B: d'you think you body had changed like you hadn't been eating caus- meat because you hadn't been cooking meat

C: I guess () I was I guess () (quiet)▲

M: your stomach does though doesn't it? it gets unused to digesting it so if you have it again it actually reacts against it you can \

C: this wasn't a stomach thing though it was - it was definitely a taste thing though

B: I found that-

M: just taste yeah yeah

C: I really don't like the taste

S: you missed out on the mad cow stuff anyway

B: I think that's happened to m-

C: yeah I know what you mean

B: <laughs>

M: yeah

C: but I seem to have lost taste in general because I –I go to restaurants with my friends and I eat things and I think 'is this meat?' and they tell me 'no it's cheese or .. this a mushroom'

<general laughter>

B: this could be a neurological problem

M: <laugh>

C: I guess that's possible

S: no 'cause some - 'cause no- because mushrooms do have. sometimes a similar texture as- as meat don't they?

C: yeah .. yeah I went to um tempura restaurant the other day and had some ..mushrooms

S: |so it could be

C: and I could swear it was like chicken gristle or something but it wasn't it was mushroom ↘

M: e::w

S: well that's what I don't like about here because they use a lot of chicken with- with the fat and the gristle and the skin which I absolutely hate . so every time I make my own

C: |right

chicken I it's- it's gotta be completely deskinning . and defatted everything and I really

M: |yeah

S: that's what I don't like to sort of bite into a chicken or something an it turns out to have all this meat and stuff – that turns me off a little bit

B: but that's actually supposed to be a delicacy isn't it? in |. -with some forms of beef as

M: |u:f yeah?

well it's the actual –it's the it's the the gristle or lines of fat marbled meat that is actually attractive about the beef

S: yeah that's because um they- they feed the beef beer# and that's what make the marbled effect

B: that's what makes them bloated

<general laughter concerning previous joke>

S: could be but apparently that's how you get the marble-marbling effect in Ko- is it Kobe beef or?

M: they give them beer?

S: yeah they actually feed them a little bit of beer in- in with the food they are organically feed which is Better than any of the supermarket beef you get – organically feed and they are actually given a little bit of beer as well ... and that creates the marble effect in the meat

M: happy cows

S: yeah must |be very happy

B: |a-a-a-and how are they slaughtered? ..by- by knife-weilding Japanese maids?

S: |I have no: idea

S: I don't know I don't know so they do have a different distinctive taste apparently

B: do you eat out much here ()?

S: a:h depends on my work if I'm really busy then I'm out every night otherwise ↘

B: you mean like business dinners |or something like that?

S: |yeah yeah yeah

S: |or if I'm jus' working late

B: |so sometimes you don't have so much control over that?

S: well that's what I mean it depends on my own sort of diary so if I've just got a lots of appointments the I hardly ever ..– I go through cycles when I'm just out all the time

B: m::

S: and then there will be times when I'm at home every night kind of thing so and cook so I like- I like cooking actually . a lot myself . yeah

M: hm hm hm

B: <gestures to Mary>

M: week-ends quite a lot but during the week hardly at all

S: no not with your two and half hour commuting I'm not surprised

M: yeah I usually go home and cook but even by the time I get home it gets to be pretty late so it get's to be a bit of a drag really ... but week-ends yeah .. quite a lot but it depends .. who's around and what's going on

C: I hardly ever go out to eat by myself .. I'm used to just making some rice and buying some vegetables and doing something

M: if you're a vege it's harder though isn't it?

C: hm: yeah

M: 'cause there are not many vege options are there

C: yeah you can-

S: a lot of Japanese food is quite vegetarian though isn't it?

B: no:: is it?

S: well they cook with fish stock a lot so the basics of a lot of things have got fish stock in it to start with

S: I mean do you eat fish or?

C: no:

S: no not fish or anything

C: no you can't really get around that problem . but a lot of the times I can just ask for

M: yeah

something to be taken out an' it's ()

M: yeah

S: yeah

B: yeah but . it's like you know you go somewhere and it says 'veg.table something or other AND it's got MEAT in it

M: yeah

C: yeah that's the worst

S: yeah but that's . -because they usually using Western food -or they have a pizza and they put like bacon on it and they don't realize that it's actually considered meat whereas traditional Japanese food is vegetarian -just and of course a lot of fish but a lot of vegetarian dishes aren't there? .. all the vegetables that they use

B: u::h yeah I gue::s I guess yeah

C: yeah at that tempura restaurant I's .. it's a chain I was interested that everything there actually was predominantly vegetables the only variance# was whether there was shrimp in it or whatever but the vegetables were always there

S: hm hm

B: but whenever i go out with somebody -with friends who are vegetarians you know and not strict vegetarians like they might eat fish but they are constantly ... scrutinizing the menu I mean it becomes a real thing . every time you . - your thinking every time

M: yes

B: obviously they're thinking 'where will I go for som'ing to eat . and can I get what

M: yeah
I want at this kind of restaurant? you're limited in your choice

M: yes

S: m: I have a boss who doesn't eat meat actually and he is a –he he he is very . quite

M: yeah that's a struggle that's a real struggle

S: domineering in the restaurant because he will make the waiter actually change the menu and say look . I want this this and this can you go and do it for me . and they will –you know –ten times –nine times out of ten they will go and do it for him . simply

M: hm

S: because of they way he talks to them and MAKes them go and do it so I think it's –you CAN actually get the to –it's that Japanese mentality where they feel oh –oh if it's not

B: so-
on the menu sorry we can't do it

B: that's not only in Japanese it's a:: other places as well

S: yes I'm sure

B: It's the Jack Nicolson .. ah .you know .. in the restaurant asking for a particular kind of sandwich and they – the waitress saying 'no I can't give you this kind of sandwich it's not on the menu' 'well you just go back and you get two pieces of bread and you take out the .. and then she comes back and and then you go back and you take out THAT thing

M: <laughs>

S: right
right and then you go back and –and then eventually he get's down to what he wants but you know it's a common factor not uncommon I think .. if it's not on the menu then we can't do it

S: hm:: I think it's more sort of pronounced here than – than in other countries I think

B: oh maybe
'cause usually you can say 'oh can you take out the this or that –I don't know what or can

B: hm::

S: you make it with this and they're pretty good usually unless it's a a – you know a um ... kind of pub food where they've got it all frozen and then you just whip it in the microwave then you might have a bit of a problem there but restaurants generally

Appendix 3 Continued: Asylum-Seekers and Immigration

B: there was a newspaper article in the paper I think it was last week-end in Australia ah recently there's been a an election –general election in Australia and on of the issues was immigration

S: oh yeah

B: and ah the government used fear I s'pose of immigration and asylum seekers as a as a topic to win back basically to win back government well to continue government and ah one of the things was that um that there were a large number of Afghani . migrants or migrants from the middle East .Iranian possibly Iraqi maybe and there's a fairly well-worn sort of trail from the Middle East across to Malaysia anywhere Middle eastern people don't need a visa ah down into Indonesia and then across by boat into the Northern part of Australia and ah there was a case where a boatload of immigrants came across and the boat was overloaded and the boat sank and they took some photographs of the boat sinking and and and the the government said these asylum-seekers -

W: | who took pictures

B: the Australian navy I think it was who were sort of standing by and they took some pictures of this even BUT the government said that like a month or three weeks before the election that ah that the parents were throwing there own children into the water right in an attempt to make the navy pick them up or take them to Australia or something like this right and then it came out sort of in the last week or two that that was comPLEtely false that in fact -these photos were published in the paper -in fact the boat had sunk and the the kids were in the water because they had to get off the boat 'cause it was sinking kind of thing so there was this massive scare campaign which the government utilized to get back into power and I guess my - my opinion about the whole thing was how .. disappointed I was in everyone-not everyone -particularly the government of course had used it but also the populous the population who had .. pretty much because of the whole September the 11th thi::ng and because of this fear of illegal -I suppose a ho:ard of illegal immigration coming into Australia had voted this paTHETic government back in to power
S: hm:=

B: = now the opposition was terrible probably terrible anyway. ah as well

S: so what were they actually saying they were saying that um they weren't going to let - they were tightening their immigration laws so that they would allow fewer people to come in to Australia is that basically what they were saying?

B: wel I-I-I-I- guess e:r .. they were saying that we are -Australia is being threatened by um potentially thousands or even hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrants coming across in boats and that they are going to . SWamp us and therefore we will take very extreme measures or very tough measures to keep those people out. and so what they had

S: | hm

been doing is they had been turning away these boats forcing them to go back to Indonesia

S: right

M: well didn't they actually put some people on an island - | they actually paid the island

B: | yes .. they refused

M: to take them instead what was that all about?

B: to to actually -if they -you know when they when they did pick up a um people who had sunk the refused to take them to Australian territory they redirected them or pai Papua New Ginea or New Ginea government or Nehru to actually a::h take

S: | take them

B: them so that these people could not claim asylum because they had not touched Australian .|soil

M: but the Australian government is paying these other places to take-
 B: exactly
 M: it's such a bizarre situation
 B: yeah it is and the other side of that was .. within Australia they have set up these. camps which are migrants camps which are kind of like prisons a::: where they're holding people while they supposedly – and I guess they are processing there claims fro asylum but they are basically prisons in remote areas and the
 M: yeah yeah
 B: processing of this stuff is taking taking years or taking up to two years
 M: yeah
 well I mean I've just been in Australia and it was all over the news the whole situation and being in Sydney I went out on a taxi journey somewhere and the guy had the radio on and there was this woman giving forth about all the immigrants and how they don't integrate into the society and 7when I came to Australia in the 1950's with my family we did this that and the other and we made sure we could sing the national anthem – the Australian national anthem blah blah blah . and why do these people come over here and
 B: hm
 S: but
 and it's that same old story
 S: that really makes me laugh because the thing is when you see Australians or Brits go to another country and HOW patriotic they are about there own country and then they have a go at people who want to just carry on their own traditions or their own cultures . and it's like your so hypocritical . how can you
 M: yeah
 C: yeah
 S: possibly as a first world country you know have such a great lifestyle have so much money you know compared to these other people who are literally trying to survive trying to feed their own children . you know this is –these are the kind of things that they have to put up with and they're trying to get to get themselves and their children a better life . and try to obviously they are going to do whatEVER they can to get to that
 M: hm yeah
 S: place where they can have like a better better life for themselves and their children
 C: yeah
 and then these –these stupid people who are who are ay number one IGnorant they don't –they don't know the real statistics if the government are telling them you know these lies and these half-truths in the first place and it's all about scaremongering – it's all about building up this fear and
 M: it IS it's all about fear yeah yeah
 S: it's happed in England. and this you know it's disgusting
 M: yeah
 B: but you come –but you're (I?) remember you're from England aren't you?
 S: yes I'm from England and I've heard these stories before and think don't be –it's such a pathetic excuse to use these different reasons why you shouldn't allow people who are probably genuinely trying to just 'ave a better life. and and the thing is it's always the first world countries who create these problems in the first place in these third world countries why? ay the countries have huge deficits they can't bring down by

themselves out of these huge deficits we're talking about in Asia we're talking about in the Far East we're talking about you know in Africa as well these are these are the problem areas and they've created these problems over the years and it's like it's like well NO we don't want to have anything more to do with them anymore and they don't want to pay –basically don't want to pay any money to get those countries out of the kind of turmoil that they are in at the moment that's basically all it is it's all about that and then of course they have a huge scare and worry when these people try and come to their own shores to try and get help for the problem

B: but wh-wh what do you-what do you say –what do you say to that lady on the radio though who said that these people are not going to integrate

M: to be FAIR to be fair is actually two sides to this argument one is the Afghan refugees who haven't actually got into Australia yet or are being processed and the other is that there is a lot of um . people who have already come particularly from the middle East particularly from Lebanon and if you come from Lebanon you've come from a very difficult background anyway. because of their political situation over there . their

S: hm hm

M: history of war and violence and whatever . and it-

S: which has usually been created by the US by England or by other first world countries

M: I think what she was ... -to be fair what the woman on the radio was reacting to was actually some of these people from Lebanon –not all of them but a group of them have made up sort of the gangs that they had at home and those gangs are go out –going out and committing crimes and the white Australian public is throwing up it's hands saying 'we've let these people in and look what they are doing now we've let them in and isn't it terrible' .. which you can

B: hm:

M: understand so there are actually two sides to this argument there's the Afghans and there's the Lebanese gangs which do exist and have been committing crimes

B: but but should integration i-i-is that a factor –is that something the government or whatever should take into account .. when . deciding . a: what immigrants should be allowed in to the country . is integration a actor?

S: ...um well what do you actually mean by that are you saying that just because

B: because- people won't integrate or completely become – it's the same situation that you get in the U.S. as well ...

S: 'bout you know –you know um.

C: definitely

S: -pledging allegiance to the flag and all that it's the same sort of stuff –it's the same situation what are you trying to get these people to do? are you trying to get them to completely forget about their past forget about their background their history their culture just to um because they're trying to have a better life? or trying to improve their situation no:: I don't think that's right at all.. because that's what I was saying – you see you see a lot of Western people who go to other countries who insist and persist in have their own culture and will become even more patriotic than they ever were look at the British who go to um to Australia for example you know you have your

own little British community you know they'll eat fish 'n chips and they'll they'll do this they'll do

B: hm::: (questioning)

S: that no it's TRUE

B: -but they're not -they don't maintain -but they -they they don't maintain the

S: it is true and-

B: separateness in the same way that some people

S: what do you mean by separateness though

B: a living-

S: the reasons why these people don't integrate number one is because they have language barriers- =

B: =but they do integrate(very rapid speech) . they marry they intermarry

S: no-no-no- I'm talking -I'm talking about you know the people who come from a-other areas of the world where they can't speak English for example number one that's usually because that's what it is .

B: hm hm

S: then you've got a lot of prejudice if you're coming into a country where you know already there's a lot of you know people worried about them scared about them you know instantly you know you see somebody wearing traditional dress and it's like oh no they must be oh we've got to be careful got to not be anywhere near them you know it's

B: m m:

just because they're different it's got nothing to do with them not wanting to integrate

B: but it does for example in ()-

S: so you're saying that these people who have their religious beliefs should then go around wearing you know Western clothes . because-

B: no-no-no-no-no-no

you can't exaggerate -no don't exaggerate -don't exaggerate my:: suggestion to make your point try and look at it you know .. objectively for example recently um Jack Straw in the UK has criticized Muslim or Indian communities for their . cultural practice if you like of going back home to get brides so they're-they're- they're basically not marrying outside their own group right? they're maintaining if you like there own separate culture within England so the question is how or to what extent is that good or bad? you don't need to say they should drop all their cultural traditions a: that they should go round wearing topless bras that's an exaggeration the question is <chuckles at his mistake> or-topless -topless-whatever are you - are those people

S: < chuckle>

B: British -well they are British are those people being part of a community is a state or a government -well not a government but the state a country a comMUnity or is it a collection of different cultural groups who are not talking to each other and NOT integrating I don't think

S: that's necessarily true aGAIN I think you're -you're looking at the extreme there there may be certain groups who do totally keep to themselves OK we'll use England as an example you know the I-the Indian population the Muslim

B: m

S: population whatever has been there for a long time and to say that they haven't integrated is a complete lie of course they have BUT they have also maintained their cultural differences and I think it's important for them it's not just about culture it's about their religion and about their belief of course uh you know a Muslim . you know husband or wife or whatever -family are not going to allow their child to marry a Christian person because it doesn't coincide with who they are or what they believe

B: hm::

S: so to say that -that they should not go back to their homeland to get themselves a bride I mean I don't know -I mean for me -for ME as a Muslim person that's not what I would do but there are SOME people in the community who feel that they have to do that beCAUse it maintains their -their true belief their true culture that's about maintaining their -their -their um history their background | it's not about wanting

B: | hm::

S: to um become part of | England at all

B: | but you see the result of some of that is for example you have recently the riots in some of those . ah towns in uh where you've got people living

S: | hm

S: separately -just as in the States -just as in the States -it's not an integrated country

S: | yes but

B: | but no

B: | you've got -you look at the statistics -you look at where people live you look at

S: | but no

B: the schools where they go to | it's not an integrated | country

S: | but again | no-no-no-no but then again

S: you're still looking at an extreme you're telling me that everywhere you go in England you don't see um you know people mixing together of course you do . yes of course-

B: | you to London -and London is not England

S: no-no-no- .. I didn't say that but I'm saying around England there are plenty of communities which are integrated but which are of COURse in any sort of society like that where you have so many different people living in that country you're going to have some people who wish to be by themselves . that's natural that's about being human that's about wanting your human right to be able to live that way .. so that's all that is . but to say that people -just because they are coming from another country or whatever that they will not integrate is false that's th-that's a fallacy that the government likes to . | to bring up

M: | ye-ye-yeah -it-it's the fear that- | -but I'm

S: | exactly it's the fear | that they bring in

M: also sort of with what I think you're trying to say that there's deGREes here what are we saying is the bottom line they should learn English? they should learn English to go shopping? or they should learn English to be able to have fluent conversations? ... or um they should dress differently? or they should take part in certain activities?

M: what -what -what degree are we saying is - THIS is OK under it is not OK above it is

S: | exactly | yeah where do you -where do you believe is full integration?

M: you know . -how -how do we measure it and say this is where these people are at an

S: | yeah exactly

M: acceptable level of behavior or whatever . to actually function in this society and it's

S: hm hm
 -it's where you draw the line and .. I think the lady on the radio was drawing a much higher line than the actual community that she was talking about was

S: hm

M: prepared to do and that's where you can play on the fear there's a gap there and that's where you can ()

B: yeah well I think you've got to acknowledge those people on the radio
 I think you have to acknowledge the extremists because . they are tapping into fears

B: that a lot of people have () in fact they're not extremists even the run-of-the-mill

M: yes oh it's very real

B: population they voted for that government because they had those fears and if you

M: yes

B: don't acknowledge those fears -you don't have to approve them but if you don't

M: yes

B: acknowledge them. -then -then you a:: you are going to suffer a backlash or if you try

M: you've got to address them
 and do something that goes against them you're going to suffer some kind of backlash so .. you want - it's very difficult to counter that kind of fear those kinds of opinions but I do think you have to admit that a lot of people hold them and you have to somehow accommodate what those-where those fears are coming from that's why I'm

M: yeah

B: asking what do you say to the lady on the radio?

C: well I don't disagree with anything you've just said but I think ... I guess thinking from my . well maybe it's my American perspective . my thought about government has always been that it's OK and it makes sense for you to .. it makes sense what you said about: um acknowledging the extremists acknowledging everybody's viewpoint but I don't think it's the governments business to set those kind of standards . unless it's at a really very basic level

S?: ()

B: this isn't a very American viewpoint <laughs>

C: well .. -fair enough

B: no what is the—w-w-w what do you mean? it's not the governments.. (job(?))

C: well talking about the different thresholds . of what should people do:: how high

S: hm hm

C: should it be:: the same problem in America . and talking about language especially

S: hm hm

C: where in Southern California um students are . taught . um .. let's say . um Hispanic students are told . you have to go . um .. no matter what age they are or how much

B: hm

Spanish they've already learned in their home they have to go to school and be taught only in English . and- yeah ah the Moon's

B: hm this is one of these propositions of er ()

C: initiatives and or whatever ↘

B: ahuh . and do you think that's good or bad?

C: well I think that's ignoring who the people are because you're setting the standard of well you have to be like this even if you never really have a chance to – if you didn't start in this place that the people who. are more easily in this category | (um did(?))

M: you mean it's setting them up to fail?

C: in a way yes . um –you're not –you're not giving them the same opportunity|. at all so

S: hm

C: because you are viewing them differently than you are viewing everyone else but you're not -you're not REalizing that it's because you're putting them-

B: | is that - is that- is that the experience? Is that what happens? .. they fail

C: | that is what- because they are being forced to learn in English?

C: pretty much .. because they don't understand English at all.. um but that is just one example I'm thinking um from what we were talking about before the kind of xenophobia that some extremists have . isn't something that the government should be endorsing of course . and certainly should be acknowledged# but setting standards that

S: | hm

C: are –are for everyone without looking at the specific situation of everyone is

S: | hm

C: something that I don't think governments should ever do you know

S: hm and in fact they should be more on the liberal side in that they should be encouraging people to talk to each other and integrate in terms of actually having dialogue or communication channels open rather than saying no in order to become an American citizen you have got to do this or that do you understand?

C: | right

B: | but what – but hang on –what does 'keeping dialogue open' these kind of general phrases mean –what does it MEAn?

S: well –well that's what I mea::n keeping dialogue open between GROUPS I'm talking about between the government and certain leaders of certain groups for example OK so at least these at least these –the government you know waxing on lyrical about certain situations or saying something isn't necessarily going to mean anything to these smaller comm.unities-

B: | but the government has an important place because it provides the money for

S: | they have – they have-

B: the | –for example for the Hispanic classes . or for the new migrants who don't have

S: | well-

C: | right

S: | well yes:::

B: | English -if it provides the money and resource it can make a big difference

S: | but what I mean is | -yes of course . but-I mean they've got to communicate with the community leaders . so that –it's gotta have a channel

M: assuming that that there are
community leaders

S: yeah well- usually –usually the- you know if you look at certain areas you will always

M: in terms- yeah

S: have some some leaders or some –someone there

M: well I’m thinking of New York which is a huge melting plot –pot of
communities and I’ve only been there a couple of times but it is QUIte clear that it is

S: hm

M: segregated and here you’ve got the Dominican community and here you’ve got the
Chinese community and here you’ve got some other type of communities and they are
actually –and these people live in these little blocks and these people live in these little
blocks and they have their own restaurants and they have their own kind of
communities and they deal with each other – this is in Manhattan and it happens well
in other suburbs as well

C: and that’s the way the United States really is –is overall ↘

M: yeah but New York is
probably the most extreme of –of those set ups and um I think . what you’re saying is
that the American government does is take it’s hands off and go well this is nothing to

C: do with us

C: well I’m not sure that that is what the government does . . but that’s what I think it
M: and they-

C: should do
<general laughter>

M: yes because I don’t think –the –the mayor of New York or whoever deals with those
communities and those community leaders as such I think that they’re just left to get
on with it and sort it out them selves which is the other approach . –and if you

C: yeah

M: walk down the street in New York you hear people swapping in and out of Spanish
and English or Chinese and English or whatever it happens to be and it it kind of
works itself out but it’s there are a lot of hiccups along the way and there’s a lot of ..
tensions along the way but people kind of sort it out themselves

C: right

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