

ABSTRACT

MYRICK, CAROLINE MARIE. *Language and Gender Ideologies in Higher Education: An Examination of Faculty Discourses*. (Under the direction of Dr. Martha Crowley and Dr. Walt Wolfram).

Gender inequality persists in workplaces across the country despite growing convictions of gender egalitarianism (Charles and Grusky 2007; Ridgeway 2011). In addition to inequality at the structural level, everyday verbal interactions reproduce gender inequality within institutions as well (Lester 2008; Ridgeway 2011; Schwalbe et al. 2000). Language itself is variable for gender discrimination, with women being disproportionately sanctioned for their speech at work (Carli 1990). Research on language and gender at work, however, has focused on corporate sector, leaving unanswered questions about other workplaces. Universities are important sites for investigation, because they are not only workplaces but also training grounds for students. While we know that language ideologies can reproduce ethnic and class-based inequalities in the university setting (Dunstan 2013; McBride 2006; Scott 2008), we know little about language and gender in higher education. What linguistic pressures or obstacles do women faculty face? How do linguistic practices of faculty reflect men's and women's status within the university? What differences do faculty perceive between the language of men and women students, and what do these observations tell us about their conceptualizations of gender?

To answer these questions, this dissertation investigates the language and gender ideologies—or the beliefs and values related to men's and women's language use (Cameron 2014)—that university faculty subscribe to, through multiple mixed-methods analyses of faculty discourse. First, I examine women faculty's descriptions of experiences with language in higher education, including linguistic pressures they perceive in the university and behaviors of adaptation or resistance enacted as a result. Second, I analyze men and women faculty's

workplace narratives about faculty language as manifested in meetings, at conferences, and in the classroom. Third, I examine faculty perceptions of men and women students' language, including their rationales for differences they do or do not observe. Data come from interviews carried out with faculty members at a research university in the southeast. Using a mixed methods approach, I use quantitative content analysis to illustrate broad and categorical trends in the data, and discourse analysis to explore the ways in which faculty frame their observations.

Results suggest that there may be important work to be done within the university related to gender inequality as it presents itself linguistically. Overall, faculty perceive academia as favoring masculinity and men in many arenas. Women feel pressured to sound masculine more than any other linguistic pressure, and report altering their speech in order to sound more competent at work. Men and women respondents describe men faculty dominating women faculty linguistically; they also highlight the linguistic privilege of men faculty, and the language-related double-standards faced by women faculty. Faculty descriptions of students' linguistic behaviors reflect gender essentialist discourses documented in previous studies of K-12 teachers. Most professors reported observing no differences between men and women students' language—which could suggest a failure to notice gender inequalities in the classroom, or may be evidence of university classrooms becoming more gender egalitarian.

Studies of faculty discourses are important because many educators are unaware of their gender biases, including gender biases they hold with their students (Lundeberg 1997). Furthermore, with the persistent “glass-ceiling” (or “leaky-pipeline”) effect in academia, examinations of faculty experiences and narratives are needed to identify obstacles of linguistic bias or discrimination. As universities continue to search for ways to create more equitable workplaces for women faculty and ensuring fair treatment and assessment of students, my

dissertation and future research can provide important building blocks for institutional initiatives to build upon.

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Language and Gender Ideologies in Higher Education: An Examination of Faculty Discourses

by
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A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
North Carolina State University
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Sociology

Raleigh, North Carolina
2019

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DEDICATION

For my grandmothers.

BIOGRAPHY

Caroline Myrick was born and raised in Prince William County, Virginia. After completing high school in Wilmington, North Carolina, she attended the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. She received bachelor's degrees in Linguistics and Communication Studies, with minors in English and Spanish. In 2013, she received her master's degree in English Linguistics from North Carolina State University. She continued at NCSU to receive a doctoral degree in Sociology, specializing in Inequality and Sociolinguistics. Her graduate research has examined language and gender; dialects of the U.S. and Caribbean; and language, ethnicity, and inequality. Caroline resides in Raleigh, North Carolina, with her husband and cat.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

At the end of this long and grueling journey, I have a number of giants to thank for letting me stand on their shoulders.

First and foremost, I must thank the folks who have been by my side the longest. Thank you to my parents, Bob and Lynda, who nurtured my academic curiosities from a very young age. You encouraged me to read (which I hated), write (which I loved), and ask questions (which I was going to do either way). Thank you for the constant wisdom, which seems to flow from an endless well, and for the agency you have given me in all of my educational decisions. Thank you to my brother, Scott, who—despite our childhood relationship consisting almost exclusively of nagging and arguing—has discretely become one of my biggest cheerleaders. And thank you to my childhood best friend, Audra. As I desperately tried (unsuccessfully) to be cool, you showed me that being a nerd was even better.

This dissertation would not have been possible without the support of my dissertation committee: Martha Crowley, Walt Wolfram, Stefano Longo, and Jeffrey Reaser. To Martha, especially: I appreciate your openness to such an interdisciplinary dissertation, and your flexibility as the project evolved. I feel so lucky to have had four committee members who are not only experts in their fields, but also incredible readers, writers, and proofreaders. You all made my dissertation so much stronger.

Looking back at the start of my graduate experience, I must thank the many Linguistics faculty members who took a wide-eyed 23-year-old and turned her into a budding scholar. The biggest of thank-yous to Walt Wolfram, my advisor, professor, co-author, co-editor, mentor, and lunch buddy. Every idea I've brought to you has been met with "Let's make it happen"—from doing fieldwork in the Caribbean, to co-authoring books. Over the past eight years, you have

modeled for me (and countless others) what it looks like to be a researcher, teacher, advocate for social justice, and kind person. Working with you has been a pleasure.

The majority of my dissertation was written in a broom closet, and I must thank my closet-mate, Jon Forest. You brought such an energy to our office that some days I forgot we didn't have windows. Many friends outside of the broom closet brought light to my life throughout the dissertation process as well, including Abby, Joel, Kelly, Michelle, and Scott. A special thankyou to Kelly, who brainstormed dissertation ideas with me during car rides, walks in the park, coffee, and Scrabble. You have pushed me to think critically and grow emotionally, while showing patience, grace, empathy, and humor.

Graduate school was an amazing experience, but also intellectually, psychologically, and physically tolling. I am thus indebted to the folks at the Student Health Center who helped keep my body and mind healthy. You know who you are. Also crucial to my mental health were KK, who was always a call or text away, and Jess, who was not only like an unofficial dissertation advisor, but also a model of a strong female scholar.

Finally, I thank my partner and husband, Aaron. You encouraged me when I doubted myself, celebrated with me when I was proud of myself, humbled me when I was full of myself, and gave me perspective me when I couldn't see beyond myself. You didn't complain (too much) when I worked on my dissertation on weekends or during vacations. You knew when to suggest I put down the laptop and take a break. You consoled me after difficult writing days. You celebrated all the little milestones. And most importantly, you never let me forget that there is life after graduate school.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Education has been a primary means for women to achieve economic progress since the Equal Pay Act (1963) and Civil Rights Act (1964) (Carnevale, Smith, and Gulish 2018; DiPrete and Buchmann 2006). Women now outnumber men at all levels of postsecondary education enrollment as well as postsecondary degree attainment (U.S. Department of Education 2016). Still, even for highly-educated men and women, there remain significant gender gaps in employment, wages, and leadership. Among highly-educated men and women, there is an 8.5 percentage point gender gap in employment, and highly-educated women earn about 10 percent less than highly educated men (OECD 2016). While the gender wage gap has declined over the past four decades, it has *increased* for graduate degree holders (Carnevale et al. 2018). Despite women's increasing educational attainment, men still outnumber women in high-paying leadership positions. Currently, for example, only 4.8% of *Fortune* 500 company CEOs are women (American Council on Education 2016; Pew 2018; Rutgers 2018).

As linguistic research on corporate women in has shown, language contributes to the reproduction of gender inequality at work. Women are disproportionality sanctioned for their speech at work (Carli 1990; Holmes 2005; Perriton 2009; Wiley and Eskilson 1985) and monitor and regulate their workplace language at rates higher than men (Baxter 2008, 2011). Professional women also face a “double-bind” with regard to their language use (Kendall and Tannen 1997). Women who index femininity in their workplace communication are often viewed as ineffectual due to the conceptualization of leadership and competence as masculine traits (Eagly and Karau 2002; Lakoff 1975; Palomares 2009); on the other hand, professional women are also sanctioned for violating gender norm expectations (i.e. exhibiting masculine behaviors or traits) (Carli 1990;

Lindsey and Zakahi 2006). In other words, when it comes to sounding feminine, a woman is “damned if she does, damned if she doesn’t” (Lakoff 1975:41).

Despite the existing literature on communication styles of corporate women, there is little understanding of gendered language biases in other work contexts, including higher education. Universities and colleges are important research sites because they are not only workplaces, but also training grounds. The beliefs and behaviors of university employees may affect opportunities of employees and students. Although often thought of as helping to provide opportunity to students, higher education is also a place where inequality is both maintained and reproduced among workers and individuals from different backgrounds. Research shows that higher education is a prime site for gender inequality, including unequal pay and biased system of rewards (Abramo, D’Angelo, and Rosati 2016; Aguirre 2000; Doucet, Smith, and Durand 2012; Kahn 2012; Park 1996). Women professors tend to have smaller salaries than men professors, even when rank is controlled for (AAUP 2018). Women are also more likely to have lower-ranking positions (both faculty and administrative) than men. While they make up over half of Assistant Professors, women represent 44.9% of Associate Professors and 32.4% of Full Professors (National Center for Education Statistics 2016). Women professors stay longer at the Assistant Professor rank than men, and are less likely to be promoted, and are more likely to leave academia (Bridgeforth 2014; Modern Language Association 2009; Waljee et al. 2015). And although they make up a little over half of all department heads, women represent less than a third of top executive positions, such as university presidents (Bichsel and McChesney 2017).

Many gender inequalities in higher education can be attributed to the current everyday practices in academia that are centered on preconceived ideas about gender (Fox 2005; Leahey 2006; Long et al. 1993; Meyers 2013; Probert 2005; Williams 1995). A primary way through

which these preconceived ideas are likely reinforced is through everyday workplace interactions (Ridgeway 2011). One of the most common ways that we interact—and in doing so reproduce ideologies—is through language (Bourdieu 1991). In fact, our ideas about language itself often influence and/or reflect our biases towards certain groups (Lippi-Green 1994, 2004, 2012).

Within the context of higher education, we know that ideas about language can reproduce racial, ethnic, and class-based inequalities (e.g., Costner, Daniels, and Clark 2010; Dunstan 2013; Dunstan et al. 2015; Dunstan and Jaeger 2015; McBride 2006). However, no study has yet considered the ways in which language ideologies might reproduce *gender* inequality in higher education—for both workers and students.

This dissertation investigates how *language and gender ideologies*—or beliefs and values related to men’s and women’s speech¹—influence work experiences of women and men professors, as well as their perceptions of and attitudes toward women and men students and other faculty. For the dissertation, I have carried out three mixed-methods studies (detailed in Chapters 2, 3, and 4), each analyzing data from interviews with university faculty. The first study (Chapter 2) focuses on women faculty: whether or not they have adopted or dropped speaking styles in order to sound more competent, and whether or not they have ever been pressured to act or talk more feminine or more masculine. The second study (Chapter 3) examines responses from men and women faculty related to differences they perceive in the communication styles of other men and women faculty. Finally, the third study (Chapter 4) analyzes faculty descriptions of men and women students’ communication styles, as well as their rationales for differences they do or do not observe (including assumptions about essentialized gender traits). In each

¹ Outside of this dissertation, issues of ‘language and gender’ include signed language in addition to spoken language; however, in this dissertation, data come from interview questions that asked only about spoken language, and no interviewees brought up signed language(s). Additionally, outside of this dissertation, issues of ‘language and gender’ pertain to gender identities beyond ‘man’ and ‘woman’.

study, faculty interview data are analyzed first via quantitative content analysis to illustrate broad trends in the data related to faculty members' perceptions of men and women students. Then, these same data are analyzed qualitatively to explore the ways in which faculty discursively and/or theoretically framed their observations, providing insights into the ideologies governing their responses.

Broadly, this dissertation advances understandings of inequality by shedding light on the understudied discursive practices of university faculty, and how those discourses reproduce gender inequality. The examination of language ideologies helps to illuminate ways in which gender inequality is reproduced institutionally through decision-making of those in positions of power (Bourdieu 1979; Fairclough 1989) and navigated locally through the discourses and behaviors of workers (Acker 2006; Hymes 1973; Gal 1989; Goffman 1963, 1967, 1971). Additionally, this dissertation advances sociological and sociolinguistics literatures on inequality. Sociological studies of gender in the workplace have focused on corporate settings; my dissertation extends the existing literature to incorporate the university workplace. It also adds to the recent but growing literature on gender biases in universities (see, e.g., Banchevsky and Park 2018) by extending the previous literature, which has focused on primary and secondary educational settings. Within the linguistics literature, language and gender scholars (e.g., Cameron 2009, 2014; Johnson 2007) have argued that mass media and popular science publications have spread many ideas and values—and myths—about women's and men's language. Some research (e.g., Swann 2003) has revealed how these ideologies have influenced educational policies and teacher behaviors. This dissertation examines the language and gender ideologies held by university faculty, including where these beliefs come from and how these beliefs affect their behaviors at work.

Gender and Work

Gender inequality persists in the U.S. labor force despite growing convictions of gender egalitarianism (Charles and Grusky 2007; Ridgeway 2011). Not only are jobs still segregated by gender, occupations with higher percentages of men pay more than women-dominated occupations (Cohen and Huffman 2003; Hegewisch and Hartmann 2014). This trend owes largely to the historical devaluation of the work performed by women (Cohen and Huffman 2003; England, Allison, and Wu 2007; Levanon, England, and Allison 2009). As a result, women make less than 82 cents to a man's dollar (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2018, Catalyst 2018; Institute for Women's Policy Research 2018). While this pay gap can be attributed, in part, to women working lower paying jobs, inconsistencies still exist when position is controlled for. A recent survey by *Hired* (2018) analyzed job offers from over 10,000 tech companies and found that men were offered higher salaries than women for the same job at the same company 63 percent of the time, with women being offered (on average) 4 percent less than men. Additionally, the fact that women are underrepresented in higher-paying positions of power affects the pay gap as well.

In keeping with sex segregation in and across the labor force, sexual division of labor is highly salient within managerial jobs (Reskin and McBrier 2000). The "glass ceiling effect" describes the barriers faced by professional women trying to move up the corporate hierarchy (Cotter et al. 2001). Employers tend to show hiring preferences toward "the familiar" because the familiar is more predictable (Kanter 1977). Because men made up the majority of managerial positions for the first three quarters of the twentieth century, "most employers are more familiar with male managers than female managers and hence are likely to see a male choice as less risky" (Redskin and McBrier 2000:212). Men are also considered more trustworthy as managers

due to associations between men and leadership (Kanter 1977; Eagly, Makhijani, and Klonsky 1992; Eagly and Karau 2002). Schein (1973, 1975) describes this phenomenon of biased expectations: “think manager—think male”; this association has held more strongly over time for men than women (Schein 1994). As a result of these structural, cultural, and social-psychological obstacles, women are still largely underrepresented in positions of power and leadership. While women make up about half of the paid labor force, they only make up about 40 percent of managers (Catalyst 2018). In positions with more wide-reaching power, women’s representation is even lower; women make up 30.1 percent of university presidents, 20 percent of U.S. congressional positions, and just 4.8 percent of *Fortune* 500 company CEOs (American Council on Education 2016; Pew 2018; Rutgers 2018). Once hired, women in power positions face additional obstacles. Eagly et al (1992) found that women managers were devalued relative to their men counterparts when they led using authoritative/direct communication styles, when they occupied men-dominated roles, and when their evaluators were men. Additionally, many women end up leaving their managerial roles—or the paid labor force altogether—due to corporate organizations favoring an “ideal male worker” who works long hours because he has no family obligations for which he is primarily responsible (Acker 2006; Stone 2007).

Beyond structural impediments, sociology has pointed to micro-level processes occurring in interaction. From this interactionist perspective, the reproduction of social inequalities—even those which are considered systemic—ultimately depends on *face-to-face interaction* (Schwalbe et al. 2000). Focusing on gender inequality at work, Ridgeway (1997) illustrates the idea succinctly: "occupational arrangements and wage outcomes are interactionally mediated" (p. 225). Of course, micro-level processes may be influenced by inequalities at the societal level. Gender-related interactions “draw on widely shared gender status beliefs that are macro-level

cultural phenomenon” (Ridgeway 2011:18). These beliefs, however, are learned by individuals who then—through the expectations and biases resulting from these beliefs—enact behaviors that reproduce inequalities (Hitlin and Pinkston 2013; Schwalbe et al. 2000). These micro-level behaviors can take the form of verbal or nonverbal expression (Mead 1934; Goffman 1959).

Sociological studies do not delve into the specific linguistic aspects of interaction, nor do they consider the role of linguistic ideologies in the reproduction of gender inequality. A linguistic (or language) ideology refers to a system of collectively held beliefs about, representations of, or dispositions toward language (Gal 1989). While few sociologists have considered the implications of language ideologies in the reproduction of inequalities, decades of sociolinguistic research have shown that language ideologies inform beliefs and values about gender, class, race, ethnicity, and more (e.g., Cameron 2014; Lippi-Green 2011, 2012; Milroy and Milroy 2001; Wassink and Curzan 2004). For this reason, the incorporation of a sociolinguistic approach to the sociological study of gender inequality is needed in order to understand how language and gender ideologies are operating in higher education. Language and gender ideologies refer to the beliefs and values related to women’s and men’s speech. These ideologies “are part of the social apparatus which legitimizes and so helps to maintain gender distinctions and hierarchies” (Cameron 2014:293). As with other belief systems, representations of language and gender do not have to be accurate to fulfil the ideological function. As a result, many beliefs about language and gender that were popularized in the 20th century—some despite lacking empirical support—still persist in the 21st century (Cameron 2009, 2014).

Language and Gender in the Workplace

Studies of language and gender at work have examined two primary areas: interactions between men and women in groups, and perceptions of men’s and women’s speech. Regarding

the first, workplace studies of cross-sex interactions suggest that, “in groups, men tend to get and keep the floor more often than women, talk more often and for longer, interrupt more, and... create and maintain asymmetrical alignments between themselves and interlocutors...” while women “tend to get and keep the floor less frequently and for less time, interrupt less, and use language strategies that are more supportive and that minimize status distinctions” (Kendall and Tannen 1997:83). In a workplace study of several large corporations, Tannen (1994) found that men tended to communicate in more agentive and competitive ways, while women communicated in communal and cooperative ways. Tannen (1994) observed men being more likely to speak assertively, provoke attention, and take credit for their accomplishments, while women spoke more succinctly and humbly and apologized more than men (especially during meetings). Tannen (1994)—like other scholars from the cultural difference approach paradigm—attributes these differences to boys’ socialization into competitive behaviors and girls’ socialization into cooperative behaviors. The *cultural difference* approach attributes gender differences in language to childhood and adolescent socialization, specifically in same-sex spheres. This approach treats men’s and women’s speech equally in terms of value, treating the two groups as belonging to different sub-cultures. This differs from the *male dominance* approach (see, e.g., Lakoff 1975), which attributed men’s use of “powerful” linguistic devices (e.g., directives, interruptions) as a result of their having more power in society.

In addition to cross-sex interactions, many linguistic studies of gender at work have focused on evaluations of men’s and women’s speech. Language and gender perceptions are keenly tied to the reproduction of inequality in the workplace. Kendall and Tannen (1994) provide a succinct summary of the phenomena at play:

...the predominance of one sex in institutional positions creates and maintains gender-related expectations for how someone in that position should speak. Such associations

simultaneously are produced by, and serve to reproduce, gender ideologies: socioculturally defined expectations for how women and men should speak and behave. (P. 91)

In a more recent workplace perception study, Brescoll and Uhlmann (2008) found that both men and women evaluators conferred lower status on women professionals who communicated anger than on men professionals who communicated anger—regardless of professional rank.

Many perception studies of gender in the workplace have observed a trend of women being informally sanctioned for communicative assertively. Crawford (1988) found that women who used more direct language—e.g., telling a boss to stop using demeaning labels with them—received lower likeability ratings than men in the same situation; this trend was especially likely when the raters were older men. A study by Wiley and Eskilson (1985) asking students to evaluate managerial applicants found that men students liked a woman applicant more if she spoke tentatively; liking of men applicants was unaffected by speaking style. Similarly, in Carli's (1990) perception experiment, in which men and women participants judged tentative and confident speakers, men participants resisted the influence of confident, assertive women, viewing these women as less trustworthy than tentative-sounding women. Perception and observation studies have also revealed a common double-bind faced by professional women, described by (Lakoff 1990) as follows:

When a woman is placed in a position in which being assertive and forceful is necessary, she is faced with a paradox; she can be a good woman but a bad executive or professional, or vice versa. To do both is impossible. (P. 206)

In other words, women professionals can sound likeable but incompetent/unprofessional (i.e., feminine), or they can sound competent/professional but unlikeable (i.e., masculine). Tannen (1994) observed this phenomenon in her corporate workplace study:

...if [women] speak in styles that are effective when used by men—being assertive, sounding sure of themselves, talking up what they have done to make sure they get credit

for it—they run the risk that everyone runs if they do not fit their culture’s expectations for appropriate behavior: They will not be liked and may even be seen as having psychological problems. (P. 40)

Intersections of Gender and Race at Work

It is important to note that the majority of language and gender research—including that within the workplace—has focused on white women and white men. Important differences have been observed when race is considered intersectionally with gender. A perception study by Shuter and Turner (1997) found, for instance, that professional white women are seen by others as more conflict avoidant than professional black women. An experiment by Livingston, Rossette, and Washington (2012) found that, within the workplace, white women and black men leaders were bestowed lower status when they expressed dominance rather than communality, whereas black women and white men leaders were not. These findings make sense through the intersectional lens of Black Feminism, as Collins (2004) notes that black women have been stereotyped as “aggressive, loud, rude, and pushy” via the controlling image of the Angry Black Woman (p. 123). Some researchers have posited whether this controlling image might help black women climb the socioeconomic ladder (Rosette 2012), perhaps explaining why black women occupy more professional/management positions than black men (2012 U.S. Census Bureau Statistics ACS). Schilt’s (2010) qualitative research on professional trans-men illustrated benefits of black womanness in the workplace: one of the two black participants in the study revealed that once he was viewed as a black man (as opposed to, previously, a black woman), his assertive communication style was viewed as threatening; he saw communicative advantages of being perceived a black woman versus a black man, due to the controlling images of black men as violent and threatening.

Despite (some) optimism regarding the benefits of the black women's associations with assertiveness and self-confidence, black women are still largely underrepresented in professional positions of power. Currently, black women occupy less than 3 percent of board positions in *Fortune* 500 companies and occupy no CEO positions in those companies (Alliance for Board Diversity 2019; McGirt 2017). Furthermore, the overwhelming majority of research and statistics emphasize that black women have remained and continue to remain "at the back of the labor queue" (Branch 2011). With approximately 10 percent of African American women unemployed (US Bureau of Labor Statistics 2014), Branch (2011) posits that "race and gender disadvantages [build] on each other in the context of an interlocking structure of power and oppression that dictated where and when black women could move within the labor market" (p. 151). Black women who do gain employment are likely to be judged by the way they communicate. Popp et al. (2003) carried out a perception study in which they asked participants to rate the communication styles of a black man, black woman, white man, and white woman. They found that gender and race affected perceptions of speech style in the following ways: first, the speech of black speakers was viewed as more direct, less socially appropriate, more emotional, less playful, and more dominant than the speech of white speakers; and second, the speech of women was viewed as more emotional and slightly less direct than the speech of men. To explore these findings in the realm of the workplace, Carlson and Crawford (2012) repeated Popp et al.'s study but with emphasis on the employment sphere. The experiment asked working professionals to rate hypothetical managers (black man, white woman, black man, white woman). Communication styles of white managers were rated more socially appropriate, dominant, and articulate than black managers, while the communication styles of black managers

were found emotional than that of white managers; and women managers were rated as more emotional than men.

An intersectional lens helps make sense of both Popp et al.'s (2001) and Crawford's findings. Collins (2008) says that rather than operating in isolation, various structures of inequality (e.g., gender inequality and racial inequality) reinforce each other; thus, women of color differing experiences of gender oppression than white women. In terms of language prejudice, this principle holds true as well. Black women are held to two levels of linguistic scrutiny: gender-based language bias, and ethnicity/race-based language bias.

Few studies have examined the speech of black women as it relates to employment mobility. However, Massey and Lundy (2001) conducted a study using a scripted telephone audit technique, in which auditors (white middle-class men and women, black middle-class men and women, and black working-class men and women) called inquiring about available housing. Results revealed that white auditors were more likely to get callbacks and have fees waived. Massey and Lundy noted that these racial effects were generally exacerbated by gender and class: working-class black callers experienced less access to rental units than middle-class black callers, and black women experienced less than black men. In fact, out of all demographic combinations, working-class black women made up the subgroup most discriminated against. While Massey and Lundy focused on the housing market rather than the employment sphere, their independent variable was speech style (encompassing ethnicity-, gender-, and class-based dialect), which permeates all institutions. Thus, taking an intersectional approach to how we study language in the workplace may help shed light on the racial and gender-based language discrimination faced by professional black women.

As evident throughout this section, workplace studies of women's speech have focused primarily on white women. These studies have also notably focused corporate managerial contexts, overlooking the majority of working women (Mumby 1988). Additionally, by focusing on the private sector, language and gender research has overlooked or ignored other important workplaces. One work arena that has been given relatively little attention is higher education.

Language in Higher Education

Previous literature focusing on language and gender in the university workplace is limited. Eakins and Eakins (1976) carried out an observational study of faculty meetings and observed that the men faculty spoke more often and for longer periods of time than women faculty, and men interrupted more often than women faculty did. A similar study by Edelsky (1981) also found that men faculty took longer turns during faculty meetings than women faculty. A perception study by Wiley and Crittenden (1992) surveyed tenured men professors about their perceptions of colleagues' explanations of success. Men's causal/assertive explanations of success and women's modest/deflective explanations of success were both rated as confirming gender identity (masculine and feminine, respectively); however, men's responses enhanced their professionalism while women's responses detracted from their professionalism, suggesting that women in academia may have to choose between sounding feminine and sounding professional. The lack of literature on language and gender in the workplace is a significant gap, given that higher education is both a workplace and training ground for future workers. And we know that language is an important part of inequality in both workplaces and educational institutions. A growing body of scholarship on language ideologies and higher education continues to highlight the role of language in the reproduction of social inequalities.

While much attention has been given to language and gender in the corporate workplace, in the media, and in families, little attention has been given to its function within higher education—despite language being hugely influential in universities. Scholars have long highlighted the gatekeeping of language within the university (Bourdieu 1977; Bourdieu and Passeron 1990; Bourdieu, Passeron, and Martin 1996; Custred 1990; Orzulak 2015). Bourdieu wrote at length about the ways in which language functions as a means of regulating in-group membership within institutions of higher education. More specifically, he argued that necessary cultural capital consists of familiarity with the ability to understand and use the language of education:

By doing away with giving explicitly to everyone what it implicitly demands of everyone, the education system demands of everyone alike that they have what it does not give. This consists mainly of linguistic and cultural competence and that relationship of familiarity with culture which can only be produced by family upbringing when it transmits the dominant culture. (Bourdieu 1977:494)

In order to understand these inequalities associated with discourse in academia, it is important to understand academia as a discourse community – or a community with a common purpose centered on the usage of a specific speaking and/or writing style (Swales 1990).

Academic discourse encompasses the forms of oral and written communication that are “privileged, expected, cultivated, conventionalized, or ritualized, and, therefore, usually evaluated by instructors, institutions, editors, and others in educational and professional contexts” and are “normally inculcated within academic communities such as school or university programs and classrooms” (Duff 2010a:175). Oral and written academic discourse is characterized by assertiveness, formality, explicitness, objectivity, standard English, and specialized jargon (Coleman 1997; Elbow 1998; Gravett and Petersen 2007; Tannen 2002; White and Lowenthal 2011). However, as White and Lowenthal (2011) point out, almost all of these

characteristics are based on white Western linguistic norms. As a result, entrance into the academic discourse community can be problematic for those less familiar with the unique discourse required in academia (Duff 2010a; Heath 1983; Walvoord and McCarthy 1990). Very specific cultural, symbolic, and discursive capital and social practices are needed to enter this specific institution (Duff 2010b; Hawkins 2005; Heath 1983). A number of studies have highlighted difficulties for student entrance into the academic discourse community, including feelings of alienation, conflict, and even attrition (Chiseri-Strater 1991; Delpit 2006; Elbow 1998; Mann 2001; White 2007; White and Ali-Khan 2013; White and Lowenthal 2011).

Why is the academic discourse community so difficult to enter? Within a discourse community, language use is not only “a form of social behavior” but also an active “means of maintaining and extending the group’s knowledge and of initiating new members into the group” (Herzberg 1986:1). As Bourdieu et al. (1996) argued, the inaccessibility of academic discourse to outsiders may be deliberate, functioning to reproduce the distance between the experts and the students, advantaging the experts. Some have actively tried to challenge linguistic elitism in higher education. For instance, the National Council of Teachers of English Conference on College Composition and Communication passed the Students’ Right to Their Own Language policy in 1974, arguing for dialect equality within higher education, as well as at the secondary and elementary levels of schooling. Nonetheless, professors’ personal beliefs about language may conflict with the notion of Student’s Right to Their Own Language. For instance, a survey by Costner, Daniels, and Clark (2010), found that community college faculty do not believe African American students should be able to use African American English in the classroom; this belief was held by the majority of both white faculty and faculty of color. While not focused

exclusively on language ideologies, Coster et al.'s (2010) quantitative study revealed language biases held by postsecondary faculty.

A few studies have looked qualitatively at the implications of speaking nonstandard American dialects in the postsecondary classroom. These studies provided evidence of students' experiences at college causing feelings of linguistic subordination and resulting changes in their speech (Dunstan 2013; McBride 2006; Scott 2008). Some of the studies have also suggested that professors hold biases against student speakers of nonstandard English. Dunstan (2013) interviewed undergraduate students from the Appalachia region, who were attending a Southern university outside of Appalachia. Multiple student participants brought up stories of bias and/or discrimination from professors. One of Dunstan's interviewees, an undergraduate Sociology major from Appalachia, said that he "has been somewhat surprised to find that his instructors in the social sciences (who he assumed would perhaps be more open-minded and tolerant than faculty in other fields) have actually been some of the most prejudiced against his speech initially" (Dunstan 2013:116). He later recalls a professor using his accent as an in-class example of a "country person," and in multiple classes, instructors used his dialect as a representation of rural upbringing (Dunstan 2013:116 & 350). Similarly, McBride's (2006) dissertation research on professional women from the Blue Ridge Mountains revealed stories of professors engaging in linguistic subordination. In her prologue, the author includes a personal anecdote of being "openly criticized" by professors at Wake Forest University because of her accent; even the single professor she recalls praising her Appalachian dialect told her she'd "never be taken seriously" unless she learned to speak without it (McBride 2006:2). A study participant who had attended Duke University had also told by a professor that she "wouldn't be taken seriously" if she spoke her "native variety" (McBride 2006:9). After this student resisted

her professor's suggestion that she consider speech therapy, the professor made his language ideology quite transparent:

...the problem is that [Duke] is a quite prestigious university, and all of our graduates are considered scholars. Scholars just don't speak with your accent. So I am requiring you to attend speech therapy as part of your graduate studies. (Qtd in. McBride 2006: 154)

The student enrolled in speech therapy. These studies shed important light on the linguistic experiences of students, as well as (a limited view of) professors' perceptions of and attitudes towards students, but they leave us with questions about the linguistic experiences of faculty members themselves. In Lippi-Green's (1997) *English with an Accent*, the author shares a story of a foreign language professor interviewing for a faculty position, who had her accent laughed at and credibility questioned by the search committee. As a result, Lippi-Green (1997) calls upon researchers to further investigate linguistic discrimination in hiring situations (such as academia). Furthermore, no study has yet examined language ideologies in higher education as they relate to language and gender—despite the historically gendered nature of this institution.

While issues of language have remained largely peripheral or absent in studies of gender inequality in higher education, inequality related to perceived competence and credibility is well-documented in academia. Miller and Chamberlin (2000) found that women tend to be regarded as “teachers” while men are called “professors” due to students' preconceived perceptions of authority level and gender roles. MacNeill, Driscoll, and Hunt (2014) investigated student ratings of an online instructor, whom for half of the participants was presented as a man, and the other half as a woman. They found that, with actual gender and teaching performance controlled for, students rated the perceived-female instructor more negatively than the perceived-male instructor, suggesting that “a female instructor would have to work harder than a male to receive comparable ratings” (MacNeill et al. 2014:301). Other studies have found that students expect

their instructors to uphold gendered traits: they expect men professors to embody masculine traits like professionalism and objectivity, while they expect their women professors to embody feminine ascribed norms such as friendliness and accessibility, and when instructors violate these expectations, they are sanctioned by students (Andersen and Miller 1997; Bennett 1982; Dion 2008; Sprague and Massoni 2005).

The literature on gender and academic discourse, while small, has described academia as “male-oriented,” and as resulting in women being disadvantaged or oppressed (Belcher 1997; Jackson 2002). These studies have looked at gender not from the institutional level, but from an examination of everyday faculty experiences. In interviewing women faculty members at management and business schools, Fotaki (2013) found a common theme of women faculty feeling out of place. One of the interviewees disclosed the following:

I find I don't understand the language that men use sometimes... I understand it when I read it but not when I hear it...and it is almost like when I went to university, I went from my working-class culture to a middle-class culture and I had to learn a new language that I could read but I couldn't speak and I have learnt to speak it but I still have the feeling when I am at conferences that there is another language that I still can't speak and it seems to be the language of male academics. (Qtd. in Fotaki 2013:1263)

Interview excerpts such as these shed light on direct associations between sounding “academic” and sounding “masculine.” This mirrors the perceived connections between masculinity and competence (Eagly and Mladinic 1994; Richeson and Ambady 2001; Laurie A. Rudman, Greenwald, and McGhee 2001) and masculinity and leadership (Eagly and Karau 2002; Jackson, Engstrom, and Emmers-Sommer 2007; Schein 1973, 1975, 1994) that have been documented for multiple decades.

These gender associations, assumptions, and biases—and their connections to language—are likely cultivated before adulthood. Students are molded through student-teacher relationships and the behaviors for which they are rewarded. As a result, inequalities are reproduced via

teachers' treatment of students (Bowles and Gintis 1976; Rist 1970). While we still know relatively little about the reproduction of language and gender ideologies in schools, previous research does shed light on how gender biases and language biases operate (separately) in schools: sociological research has revealed gender biases playing a role in teachers' perceptions of students, and studies in sociolinguistics have highlighted the role of language in the reproduction of class and race inequalities among school children.

Gender, Race, and Social Class in Schools

Sociologists have long argued that schools are one of the largest reproducers of inequality in the United States (Baran and Sweezy 1966; Lucas 1999; Mills 1956). Teachers' judgements about students affect their treatment of them (Bowles and Gintis 1976; Lareau 1987; Rist 1970; Rosenthal and Jacobson 1968, 1992). Regarding gender, studies of teachers' perceptions of students have revealed clear patterns of gender stereotyping: chiefly the "diligent" female student versus the "smart but troublesome" male student. This dichotomous gender essentialization pattern has been documented in many quantitative and qualitative studies.

Jones and Myhill (2004) found that teachers tended to perceive female students as compliant, organized, and prepared, while male students were described as troublesome, disruptive, and immature. Heyder and Kessels (2015) investigated gender stereotypes and pre-service teachers' perceptions of student engagement. Upon given the teachers written descriptions of student behaviors, they found that the teachers were more likely to perceive masculine behaviors as disruptive to the classroom than feminine behaviors. Moreover, they found that male-labelled students were perceived as *less* likely to show "behavior that was beneficial for learning" and *more* likely to show "behavior that would impede learning" than the female-labelled students—these results held true even when the students were characterized by

exactly the same gender-neutral behavior. The researchers noted that their findings were “in line with the stereotype of lazy and troublesome boys” (Heyder and Kessels 2015:478), but without qualitative data, it is difficult to draw conclusions about how teachers might be *framing* their perceptions of students. Morris' (2012) ethnographic research examined various issues of gender in public high schools in an attempt to explain girls' outperformance of boys. Morris observed the trend of the diligent female student and the smart-but-troublesome (and lazy) male student—in student's *and* teachers' perceptions and expectations. Discourses employed by teachers often centered around gender essentialism and boys-will-be-boys tropes, normalizing gender-differentiated behavior (Morris 2012). Morris observed teachers praising boys for their innate abilities and girls for their performance. Morris (and other researchers, e.g., Dweck 2007) posits that these discourses hinder boys' academic performance and reproduce gender inequalities in school. The 'gender gap' was certainly visible in the high school that Morris chronicled. Boys devalued academic achievement and accordingly performed worse than their girl peers. This is because, according to Morris, “social contexts framed school-focused behavior as inconsistent with masculinity” and the teachers' discourses were part of the problem (Morris 2012:170). Still, we know very little about the discourses of teachers about gender—or, more specifically, their gender biases related to language.

Despite the lack of literature on linguistic aspects of gender bias in schools, there is plenty of evidence that language matters in reproducing class and race bias. Researchers have examined primary and secondary school teachers' attitudes towards nonstandard varieties of English, including Appalachian English (Brashears 2014), Gullah (Richardson and Lemmon 2009), Latinx-accented English (Na 2016a, 2016b), Southern English (Cross, DeVaney, and Jones 2001), and African American English (e.g., Blake and Cutler 2003; Bowie and Bond 1994;

Cecil 1988; Cross et al. 2001; DiGiulio 1973; Foster 1992; Orzulak 2015). These studies have revealed troubling issues of teacher bias in favor of Standard English—i.e., the English of the non-regional, white, middle-class speaker (Delpit 2006; Zentella 1997; Zimmerman 2010). Teachers consistently rate standard-sounding students more positively than nonstandard sounding students (Carroll 2007; Corson 1993; Rickford and Rickford 1995). And teachers' perceptions of students' home languages/dialects influence their expectations of these students' abilities (Corson 1993; Giles et al. 1987; Perry and Delpit 1998).

Focusing on cultural capital, sociologists have highlighted the role of language reproducing class inequality in schools. In Lareau's (1987, 2011, 2015) studies of how social class advantage is transmitted through childrearing and child socialization, she observed significant differences in the language practices of middle-class and working-class families. Lareau (2011) found that middle-class children receiving more linguistic interaction with their parents, hearing more advanced vocabulary, and being encouraged linguistically to elaborate, question, and challenge. On the other hand, she observed working-class child receiving less linguistic interaction with their parents, and primarily in the form of directives. As a result, she argues, middle-class children are socialized into using language “as a tool for cultivating reasoning skills... [and to] express feelings or ideas” whereas working-class children use language as “a practical conduit of daily life” (Lareau 2011:146). According to Lareau, middle-class linguistic styles are rewarded at school and in white-collar workplaces; so middle-class parents are instilling their children with linguistic cultural capital that will benefit them academically and professionally.

While Lareau observed the transmission of cultural capital in the home, Rist (1970) observed implications of differing cultural capital within the school setting. In his observation of

a Kindergarten classroom, Rist (1970) observed the teacher dividing students (placing them at one of three tables) based on elements of cultural capital they brought with them from home. Rist concluded that the teacher grouped students at tables based on four main criteria: appearance, interactional behavior, home/family demographics, and language. Regarding language, Rist (1970) observed that the teacher grouped students based on their dialect:

The children placed at the first table... displayed a greater use of Standard American English within the classroom. Whereas the children placed at the last two tables most often responded to the teacher in black dialect, the children at the first table did so very infrequently. (P. 420)

Importantly, Rist noted the effects of this dialect difference on students' in-class participation. He highlighted the inequality resulting from students' differing familiarity with standard English—the dialect used by most teachers”

...the children at the first table were much more adept at the use of "school language" than were those at the other tables. The teacher utilized standard American English in the classroom and one group of children were able to respond in a like manner. The frequency of a "no response" to a question from the teacher was recorded at a ratio of nearly three to one for the children at the last two tables as opposed to Table 1. (Rist 1970:442).

In other words, students' linguistic cultural capital may determine their comfort level participating in class—even as early as Kindergarten. Additionally, Rist determined from his study that cultural capital did not only affect seating arrangement or student participation; it also correlated with teach expectations. After observing multiple classrooms, Rist (1970) concluded that, via the grouping of students based on cultural capital, along with the subsequent treatment of them, “teachers made clear the distinctions they perceived between the children who were defined as fast learners and those defined as slow learners” (p. 444). As a result, a *self-fulfilling prophecy* occurred in which the students who were expected to do well consistently outperformed those students who were not expected to do well, reinforcing Rosenthal and

Jacobson's (1968) findings. While not focused solely on language, Rist's (1970) study revealed implications of language bias on teachers' expectations of (and resulting treatment of) students, and, in turn student performance. In this way, language biases in the classroom reproduces class inequality. Notably, in Rist's (1970) and other sociologists' studies of cultural capital in the classroom, there's been no specific attention given to gender. In addition to understanding more about how language relates to inequality at work, we also need to give more attention to language and gender ideologies in educational institutions. Ideology provides an important theoretical framework for conceptualizing how beliefs and attitudes related to language and gender are formed through (and articulated in) faculty's workplace interactions and experiences.

Ideology

The term ideology has held many meanings as the concept has evolved in sociology (Eagleton 1991). Marx viewed ideology as a belief system that is the opposite of truth—a falsehood which needs to be revealed and opposed (Leopold 2013). According to Marx, purposefully misleading ideologies are constructed and naturalized by the ruling class with the goal of keeping the exploiters in power and keep the exploited oppressed: “the ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relationships grasped as ideas; hence of the relationships which do make the one class the ruling one, therefore, the ideas of its dominance” (Marx and Engels 1970:64). Gramsci (1971) expanded upon this notion of dominant ideology in his writings about hegemony. Hegemony describes the invisible and coercive power that the ruling class has over society, not only materially but culturally as well. Like Marx, Gramsci argued that the most influential worldviews are constructed and naturalized by the ruling class. The connection between ideology and hegemony is made clear by Bates (1975): “[hegemony] means political leadership based on the consent of the led, a consent which is

secured by the diffusion and popularization of the world view of the ruling class” (p. 329).

According to conflict theorists, it is the subscription to these false realities that creates the *false consciousness* which keeps the exploited class exploitable (Lukács 1972; Marcuse 1964).

Other theorists have extended the definition of ideology to include dominant and nondominant belief systems, as well as connecting ideology to attitudes and behaviors (Eagleton 1991; Fine and Sandstrom 1993; Seliger 1976). For instance, in a pragmatic approach to ideology, Fine and Sandstrom (1993) define ideology as “set of interconnected beliefs and their associated attitudes, shared and used by members of a group or population, that relate to problematic aspects of social and political topics. These beliefs have an explicit evaluative and implicit behavioral component” (p. 24). In my dissertation, I follow this definition when using the term ideology. It encompasses beliefs and values, and it involves evaluations and behaviors. Furthermore, I employ a conception of ideology in which the belief system encompassed does not necessarily have to be true (Henning 2007).

While some sociologists have described dominant ideologies being imposed forcefully on the masses, others (e.g., Jackman 1994) have argued that the ideologies from the dominant group are more likely “subtle and insidious than blatant or hostile” (p. 2). Althusser (1971) proposed multiple *ideological state apparatuses* as sites for the dissemination of dominant ideology. These apparatuses include religious, political, cultural, and legal institutions, as well as public and private schools. Postsecondary institutions in particular are prime reproducers of dominant ideology (Althusser 1971; Bourdieu and Passeron 1990; Gramsci 1971). They function as gatekeepers of elitism (Bell 1976; Bourdieu 1977; Freire 1968)) and, more specifically, as gatekeepers of language (Bourdieu and Passeron 1990; Custred 1990; Pauwels and Winter

2006). For this reason, it is crucial for sociologists to better understand the functionality of language and gender ideologies within the realm of higher education.

Importantly, it is not the institution itself that reproduces ideologies, but rather the actors within the institution. For instance, Seliger's (1976) definition of ideology highlights the role of linguistic interaction:

Ideology is a group of beliefs and disbeliefs (rejections) expressed in value sentences, appeal sentences and explanatory statements... designed to serve on a relatively permanent basis a group of people to justify in reliance on moral norms and a modicum of factual evidence and self-consciously rational coherence the legitimacy of the implements and technical prescriptions which are to ensure concerted action for the preservation, reform, destruction or reconstruction of a given order. (P. 119-120)

In other words, ideology is reproduced linguistically by individual actors to establish and maintain a status quo. Under this assumption, this dissertation uses faculty discourse as data to analyze faculty ideologies. This type of examination of micro-level interaction and discourse is necessary to understand how ideologies of inequality are reproduced (Ridgeway 1997, 2011; Schwalbe et al. 2000).

Purpose of the Study

Within sociology, language and linguistic ideologies are missing from studies of gender inequality at work and at school. Despite sociologists acknowledging the influence of interaction in gender inequality at work, as well as the influence of language use in reproducing racial and class-based inequality at school, we still know little about language and gender in the university workplace. Within linguistics, studies of language and gender in the workplace have primarily focused on the corporate sector—overlooking educational institutions, which are workplaces *and* sites of knowledge production and training. And while recent literature has highlighted the experiences of nonstandard English-speaking students, little attention has been given to the experiences of university faculty. Studies of faculty discourses are important because many

educators are unaware of their gender biases, including gender biases they hold with their students (Lundeberg 1997). Because biases influence expectations, and expectations influence interaction (Bowles and Gintis 1976; Stoll 2015)—and because teacher-student interactions influence student academic outcomes (Rist 1970; Rosenthal and Jacobson 1992)—analyses of university faculty’s language and gender ideologies are necessary to identify causes of gender inequality in the classroom. Furthermore, with the persistent glass-ceiling (or leaky-pipeline) effect in academia, as illustrated by the underrepresentation of women in higher-status positions, an examination of the experiences of women faculty (coupled with analyses of men faculty’s discourses) is necessary to identify obstacles of linguistic bias and/or discrimination facing women in the university workplace.

To fill the gaps in the current literature, the guiding questions for my dissertation research are exploratory: what beliefs about and attitudes towards men’s and women’s language are held by faculty, and how do they articulate those beliefs and attitudes? In other words, what language and gender ideologies are held and articulated by university faculty? In approaching these questions, I draw from not only from sociology, but also sociolinguistics and social psychology. This interdisciplinary approach will better equip me to address the following five Project Aims:

1. Identify linguistic features that university faculty associate with men’s and women’s speech, as well as the values placed upon and the explanations given for those features.
2. Uncover ways in which faculty members’ everyday linguistic interactions shape institutional ideologies related to gender.
3. Broaden the discussion of women’s language in the workplace to include university faculty.

4. Reveal language attitudes and implicit language biases held by university faculty that translate into gender biases.
5. Give attention to the ways in which gender intersects with race, class, regional identity, producing unique experiences of linguistic privilege and oppression in the context of higher education

Data and Methods

To address my Project Aims, I have carried out three empirical studies examining the intersection of language and gender in academia through the discursive analysis of faculty beliefs, values, and behaviors. Data for these studies come from semi-structured interviews carried out as part of the Faculty Dialect Study, as larger study examining faculty members' experiences with language in academia. Interviews were carried out with women and men faculty across multiple colleges and departments at a public university in the southeastern United States. Faculty members were asked to participate in the Faculty Dialect Study via two means: email solicitation, and snowball sampling. Regarding the former, a university email was sent to a random sample of 500 faculty members balanced for college, rank (assistant, associate, full), and gender. The email asked for voluntary participation in a study exploring how students and instructors adjust their speech when they become part of an institution of higher learning. The full email can be found in Appendix A.

Study participants include tenured and tenure-track faculty spanning multiple departments and colleges, as well as SES, regional, and dialect backgrounds. Only faculty for whom English is a first language were included in this study, resulting in an N of 55. Table 1.1 shows a breakdown of the 55 participants' academic field, race/ethnicity, and gender. Broadened academic fields were used in this dissertation so as to prevent identifiability of faculty in small

departments or fields, as well as racial, ethnic, or gender minorities in those fields. Racial and ethnic designations were assigned in one of two ways: faculty participants self-identified as black/African American or Latinx/Hispanic; or faculty were labeled by the Faculty Dialect Study investigators as white. Faculty's gender was assigned by Faculty Dialect Study investigators based on faculty's gender presentation, as well as women faculty's self-identification as women. Throughout the study, the terms *man* and *woman* will be used in place of *male* and *female* due to this dissertation's focus on gender rather than sex, with two exceptions: the terms *male* and *female* will be used in two cases: when discussing literature whose author(s) used those terms, and in adjectival form (e.g. *male students* and *female professor*).

Table 1.1: Faculty Dialect Study participant gender, academic field, and race/ethnicity.

	Men	Women
Academic Field		
Agriculture Science	5	0
Applied Social Sciences	2	4
Business	1	1
Design	1	0
Education	2	2
Engineering	2	1
Humanities	6	5
Life Sciences	4	1
Natural Resources	0	4
Professional Program	2	1
Social Science	5	7
Race/Ethnicity		
Black/African American	1	6
Latinx/Hispanic	0	2
White	28	18

Interviews were carried out by a Faculty Dialect Study investigator (Dr. Stephany Dunstan, Dr. Walt Wolfram, or me). Interviews took place in the office of the interviewee or interviewer, or in a conference room on campus. During the interviews, faculty were asked a series of questions about their perceptions of their own speech; perceptions of the speech of

those from their home community; perceptions the speech of other members of their college campus; perceptions of how their speech has/has not influenced experiences in academia, including the way they may feel it has influenced others' perceptions of them; and influences of their language on their career in academia. Interviews typically lasted between 40 and 60 minutes. All interviews were audio recorded with the participant's consent using a Marantz digital recorder and lapel microphone. Each interview recording was transcribed by an NCSU Linguistics Lab assistant or by a professional transcriptionist, and then hand-corrected by an NCSU Linguistic Lab assistant. Transcripts were loaded into NVivo for open multi-level coding.

For my dissertation, I have examined a subset of answers to interview questions which deal directly and indirectly with language and gender; however, the full set of questions can be found in Appendix B. In my first study (Chapter 2), reports data primarily from faculty members' responses to the following two interview questions:

- Interview Question #17.a: *“As a woman, are there speaking styles that you have adopted or dropped in order to sound more competent?”*
- Interview Question #17.b: *“Have you ever been pressured to act or talk more feminine or more masculine?”*

In my second study (Chapter 3), I examine data primarily from faculty members' responses to

- Interview Question #17.0: *“Have you ever noticed differences in the way that men versus women faculty communicate (casually, professionally, inside/outside the classroom, etc.)?”*

My third study (Chapter 4) examines data primarily from faculty members' responses to

- Interview Question #19.0: *Have you ever noticed differences in the way that men versus women students communicate in your classes?*

In all three studies, responses to other questions where gender-related themes arose spontaneously are also included. For each study, excel was used for quantitative content analysis (QCA), and NVivo was used for discourse analysis.

Summary

This study will be the first investigation of university faculty members' beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors related specifically to language and gender. Findings will include: (1) manifestations of gender equality and inequality in the discursive practices of university faculty; (2) beliefs and attitudes related to language and gender within the university, (3) ways in which women faculty conform to or resist gender expectations and/or stereotypes related to language, and (4) a better understanding the role of spoken language in intersectionality theory.

Commentary about language provides an important, yet understudied, source of data for social scientists to investigate matters of gender. As such, my dissertation's interdisciplinary approach brings an important sociolinguistic component to the sociological investigation of women's and men's work experiences and the gendering of education. Furthermore, my use of quantitative content analysis (focusing on frequencies and relationships) coupled with qualitative analysis of discourse provides deeper insight into the ideological issues at hand – and may serve as a model for future investigations of gender ideologies within institutions and/or workplaces.

CHAPTER 2: LINGUISTIC PRESSURES FACED BY WOMEN FACULTY

Women often face more scrutiny than men for workplace behaviors (e.g., Crawford 1995; Eagly and Karau 2002; Leskinen, Kenosha, Rabelo, and Cortina 2015). A bevy of studies of women in corporate settings have found that women are often disproportionately sanctioned for their speech (Carli 1990; Holmes 2008; Jones 1980; Perriton 2009; Wiley and Eskilson 1985). However, no parallel studies exist for women in academic environments. Colleges and universities currently employ over 1.5 million faculty members, almost half of whom are women (NCES 2017). As women increase their representation in the faculty population of an historically men-dominated institution, it is necessary to examine the academic workplace to understand how women fit into the academic culture (Aguirre 2000).

Universities are prime sites for linguistic gatekeeping (Bourdieu 1977; Bourdieu and Passeron 1990; Custred 1990; Pauwels and Winter 2006; Walvoord and McCarthy 1990). They are also locales for gender inequality (Abramo, D'Angelo, and Rosati 2016; Aguirre 2000; Doucet, Smith, and Durand 2012; Kahn 2012; Park 1996), with many current practices in academia centered on preconceived ideas about gender (Fox 2005; Leahey 2006; Long, Allison, and McGinnis 1993; Meyers 2013; Probert 2005; Williams 1995). Because few empirical studies have explored the linguistic experiences of women in academia, however, we know little about the linguistic pressures faced by women faculty, or how these faculty adapt to those pressures. To fill these research gaps, the current study addresses the following questions: *What expectations, stereotypes, and/or sanctions related to language do women university faculty face? And how do they conform to or resist these expectations?*

Because the study of women educators' discourses has exposed gender inequality in K-12 schools (Moreau, Osgood, and Halsall 2007), the current study extends this line of investigation

by examining the discourses of women faculty in a research university. The current study is theoretically framed from an interdisciplinary perspective. From sociology, theory of gender-role expectations and the extensive literature surrounding gender in the workplace provide important insights into the workplace as a gendered system of rewards and sanctions. From sociolinguistics, a critical look at the Male Dominance and Cultural Difference approaches to language and gender help contextualize current language beliefs and pressures related to women. Finally, the social psychological literature on stereotype threat provides an important framework for examining women faculty members' conceptualization of gender stereotypes, and subsequent behaviors as a result of cognizance of said stereotypes.

Women in the Workplace

Gender inequality persists in the U.S. labor force. Occupations are still highly segregated by gender. Because work performed by women has historically been devalued, occupations with higher percentages of men pay more than women-dominated occupations (Cohen and Huffman 2003; England et al. 2007; Hegewisch and Hartmann 2014; Levanon et al. 2009). It is difficult for women to move into higher-paying managerial positions due to biases related to leadership's association with masculinity (Kanter 1977; Eagly, Makhijani, and Klonsky 1992; Eagly and Karau 2002; Schein 1973, 1975). Additionally, corporate workplaces still favor an "ideal male worker" with no family obligations and who works long hours (Acker 2006; Stone 2007).

Academic jobs mirror corporate jobs in their favoring an ideal male worker (Lester 2008). Not only are faculty jobs consistent with and based on the experience of men (Fisher 2007; Krefting 2003; Martin 1994; Morley 2005), faculty pursuing tenure face evaluation criteria that favor individuals who do not have children or extensive family responsibilities (Armenti 2003; Bailyn 2003). While studies of women in academia have examined division of labor,

publication rates, hiring and promotion, and family-work balance (e.g., Beaman-Smith and Placier 1996; Doucet et al. 2012; Long et al. 1993; Park 1996; Probert 2005; Steinpreis, Anders, and Ritzke 1999; Toffoletti and Starr 2016), issues of language and communication have remained largely peripheral to or absent from these studies. Related research examining gender role expectations, however, provides an important frame for the current study.

Gender Role Expectations at Work

Gender roles are the collection of expectations we associated with men and women. These expectations result in stereotypes about these socially constructed groups. Stereotypes between men and women can be generally categorized into two categories: agentic or communal (Bakan 1966; Eagly 1987; Eagly and Karau 2002). In the United States, agentic characteristics are ascribed more strongly to men: assertiveness, ambition, confidence, dominance, independence, self-sufficiency, and self-confidence. Communal characteristics, on the other hand, are ascribed more strongly to women: affection, helpfulness, kindness, sympathy, and sensitivity (Eagly and Karau 2002; Heilman 2001). While the communal characteristics aren't necessarily undesirable, they can pose disadvantages in professional settings as they run counter to the characteristics of a traditional leader archetype, which is built primarily on stereotypes associated with men. Eagly and Karau (2002) posit, thus, that there is a perceived incongruity between gender roles of women and leadership roles. As such, women often must prove their expertise to earn the same level of respect that men counterparts are automatically assumed to have (for studies related to men's automatic perceived competence, see Conway, Pizzamiglio, and Mount 1996; Eagly 1987; Eagly, Wood, and Diekmann 2000; Fiske et al. 2002; Ridgeway and Correll 2004).

Gender inequality related to perceived competence and credibility is well-documented in academia. Miller and Chamberlin (2000) found that women tend to be regarded as “teachers” while men are called “professors” due to expectations about expertise level. MacNell, Driscoll, and Hunt (2014) found that, with actual gender and teaching performance controlled for, students rated the perceived-female instructor more negatively than the perceived-male instructor, suggesting that “a female instructor would have to work harder than a male to receive comparable ratings” (p. 301). Explanations of the findings of this latter study lie in gender role expectations. Students expect men instructors to embody masculine traits like professionalism and objectivity, while they expect their women instructors to embody feminine ascribed norms such as friendliness and accessibility (Andersen and Miller 1997; Bennett 1982; Dion 2008; Sprague and Massoni 2005). How do gender role expectations relate to language? In order to understand the linguistic expectations to which women are held, we must understand the approaches through which women’s language has been conceptualized by social scientists as well as the general public.

Women’s Language

For the past fifty years, professional women have received conflicting messages about how to communicate effectively (Crawford 1995; Carlson and Crawford 2012). These popular messages are rooted in the changing theoretical approach to language and gender, specifically the Male Dominance approach and the Cultural Difference approach. These approaches, in turn, have mirrored and influenced the expectations that women face at work.

Approaches to Language and Gender

Within the second wave of feminism, the Male Dominance approach to language and gender places patriarchy as the central explanatory for gender differences related to speech.

Lakoff's *Language and Woman's Place* (1975) is a prime example; the book addressed the ways men silence and control women (via, e.g., interruptions), women are spoken about (via sexist discourse), and women themselves communicate (via what she calls "woman's language"). Lakoff argued that women's language² is "weak" because it shows higher frequencies of linguistic features that index timidity and qualification, including tag questions (*you know?*), hedges (*if you don't mind*), high rising intonation (question-like intonation for declarative sentences), qualifiers (*sort of, kind of*), and "empty" intensifiers (*so, very, totally*). Other communication styles that have been classified as women's speech include the following: hypercorrection (i.e., using overly standard speech), lack of sense of humor, direct quotations (i.e., quoting the speech of others, *he said-she said*), special lexicon (i.e., linguistic innovation, "trendy slang"), super-polite forms (i.e., minimizing face threatening acts), speaking in italics (i.e., drawing out the duration of syllables, putting heavy emphasis on syllables), and asking questions. Despite the book's lack of empirical support, its overarching message to professional women was clear and powerful: in order to be successful professionally, women should talk more like men. That is, professional women should drop weak/feminine features (e.g., hedging and tag questions) and adopt strong/masculine features (e.g., direct language).

In the 1980s, a shift toward explaining gender differences as a result of childhood socialization arose. Rather than placing inequality at the center of language differences, this approach positioned men and women as belonging to two distinct *subcultures*. Maltz and Borker (1982) claimed that—as a result of separated spheres of socialization as children and adolescents—(white) women display a greater frequency of question-asking, positive minimal responses (e.g., "mmhmm"), and conversational facilitation, while (white) men are more likely

² It is important to note that while Lakoff purported to be describing the language features of women in general, she was likely describing the language of *white* women.

to interrupt, dispute their interlocutor, ignore their interlocutor, control the topic, and make direct declarations. Cultural Difference heavily influenced sociolinguistic approaches to gender over the next two decades. Tannen (1991, 1994) documented many of the patterns posited by Maltz and Borker, observing women's linguistic interactions in professional and in-home settings. Holmes (1993) proposed multiple "universals" related to language and gender: women and men develop different patterns of language use; women tend to focus on the affective (i.e., emotional, relational) function of an interaction more often than men do; and women tend to use linguistic devices that stress solidarity, while men tend to interact in ways which will maintain and increase their power and status. Claims from Cultural Difference, even when not empirically supported, spread in popular culture. Books like Gray's (1992) *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus* and Tannen's (1994) *You Just Don't Understand*—which attributed conflict between men and women to communication differences (and offered solutions)—were on bestsellers lists for multiple years. The popularity of these books aided in public dissemination of Cultural Difference and associated language and gender stereotypes (Cameron 2009).

Each approach has its limitations. Male Dominance treats men's/masculine speech as the standard, better form of communication, invoking a deficit model. The Cultural Difference approach has been criticized for ignoring issues of gender inequality. Both approaches have been accused of perpetuating gender essentialism, attributing certain linguistic forms to all men and all women; they also both treat gender as a binary. Nonetheless, Male Dominance and Cultural Difference have made a lasting impact on our society's current language and gender ideologies, including public discourses about the subject (Cameron 2009, 2014; Elrich and Meyerhoff 2014; Philips 2014). Combined with other gender stereotypes, they continue to influence our

expectations of and reactions to women's behaviors, including their speech. The following section discusses gender role expectations as they relate to women's language at work.

Women's Language at Work

Many perceptual studies of gender in the workplace have found that men and women speakers are sanctioned for violating gendered conversational "language norms" (Carli 2001; Eagly and Karau 2002; Lindsey and Zakahi 2006; Palomares 2009). These expectations tend to affect women more negatively, as women are disproportionately sanctioned for their speech in general (Carli 1990; Holmes 2008; Jones 1980; Perriton 2009; Wiley and Eskilson 1985). Many researchers have found that when (white) women deviate from stereotypes of femininity at work, they may be judged more negatively than men. For instance, Crawford (1988) found that women who used more direct language—e.g., telling a boss to stop using demeaning labels with them—received lower likeability ratings than men in the same situation; this trend was especially likely when the raters were older men. A perception experiment by Carli (1990) asked men and women participants to judge tentative- and confident-sounding speakers (i.e., users of feminine language, and of masculine language). Men resisted the influence of confident, assertive women—rating these women as less trustworthy than tentative-sounding women. Similarly, a study by Wiley and Eskilson (1985), which asked students to evaluate managerial applicants, found that men students liked a woman applicant more if she spoke tentatively; liking of men applicants was unaffected by their speaking style.

As a result, professional women often find themselves in a 'double bind' (Kendall and Tannen 1997): they are sanctioned for indexing femininity as well as for violating gender norm expectations (Carli 2001; Eagly and Karau 2002; Lindsey and Zakahi 2006; Palomares 2009). This trade-off facing women (between being perceived as likeable-but-not-competent versus

competent-but-not-likeable) has given fodder to the self-help genre. Hollands' (2001) popular trade book *Same Game, Different Rules: How to Get Ahead Without Being a Bully Broad, Ice Queen, or "Ms. Understood"*, for example, warns its readers:

You are a smart, ambitious, no-nonsense businesswoman with her eye on the prize, a two-fisted, go-getter who always gets results. Your superiors openly praise your competence and brains, and you are beloved by your company's clients.

Now for the bad news: those same qualities that, so far, have earned you so many kudos could very well destroy all your chances of future success.

This danger of destroying chances of success may not solely be a marketing ploy to entice readership. In a study of men's and women's workplace strategies, Catalyst (2011) found that, while men benefit from adopting proactive strategies, when women "did all the things they have been told will help them get ahead" (using the same tactics as men coworkers), they still "advanced less than their male counterparts and had slower pay growth" (p. 1). These are likely structural effects of men and masculinity being stereotypically associated with leaders and leadership (Eagly and Karau 2002). But how do gender role expectations operate within the educational realm, an institution widely described as feminized (Moreau et al. 2007; Morris 2012)? Do gender role expectations affect the ways in which we expect scholars to *sound*? The literature on gender and academic discourse, while small, has described academia as "male-oriented," resulting in women being disadvantaged (Belcher 1997; Jackson 2002). These studies have looked at gender not from the institutional level, but from an examination of everyday faculty experiences. In interviewing women faculty members at management and business schools, Fotaki (2013) found a common theme of women faculty feeling out of place—including some feeling linguistically out of place. One interviewee disclosed: "I still have the feeling when I am at conferences that there is another language that I still can't speak and it seems to be the language of male academics" (Fotaki 2013:1263). Interview excerpts like these shed light on

associations between sounding academic and sounding masculine. If this association between masculinity and scholarly is common, do women faculty feel pressured to alter their speech? Do women choose to sound more masculine in order to sound scholarly, but risk being sanctioned for violating gender norms? Or do they uphold expectations of feminine speech, but risk being viewed as incompetent? Stereotype threat theory provides an important basis for understanding how women faculty might recognize and internalize gender expectations, and weigh the potential risks involved with conforming or resisting.

Stereotype Threat

Stereotype threat (Steele and Aronson 1995) refers to the phenomenon of individuals feeling at risk of confirming a stereotype (specifically about a social group to which they belong) as a self-characterization. Stereotype threat can lead to drops in performance in stereotype-relevant domains (e.g., Steele and Aronson 1995; Steele 1997; Spencer et al. 1999; Keller 2002; Spencer 1999). With regards to gender stereotypes, Smith and White (2002) found that women who were reminded of the stereotype that women are less capable than men in mathematics performed worse during math testing. Spencer et al. (1999) found that women test-takers who were told that women and men perform equally on the math test at hand performed better than women test-takers who were told nothing. While stereotype threat often results in decreased performance, in certain situations stigmatized individuals can behave in opposition toward the activated stereotype; this process is called “stereotype reactance” (Kray, Thompson, and Galinsky 2001). Stereotype reactance can occur when individuals possess sufficient resources to alter their behavior and react against a negative stereotype. For example, Kray et al. (2001) found that women participants reacted against the stereotype that women perform poorly in negotiation

tasks by engaging in counterstereotypical behavior; as a result, women cognizant of this stereotype actually outperformed men participants in a simulated situation.

Stereotype threat has been theoretically applied to spoken language in Baugh's (2009) discussion of "linguistic stereotype threat" focusing on speakers of African American English. While linguistic stereotype threat as it relates to ethnic dialects has yet to be tested empirically, the connection between stereotype threat and communication style has been tested recently. A study by von Hippel et al. (2011) examined the effects of stereotype threat on women's communication style within a leadership context. Their findings were consistent with stereotype reactance (Kray et al. 2001), in that women threatened by the stereotype that "men are better leaders" adopted a more masculine communication style (i.e., more direct, less hedging) compared to women in the control condition. They also found this effect to be moderated by the motivational process of self-affirmation; that is, women who experienced stereotype threat but engaged in a self-affirmation³ maintained a more feminine communication style (i.e., less direct, more hedging) compared to women who did not self-affirm (von Hippel et al. 2011:1320). In explaining their findings, the researchers argued that women's underrepresentation in leadership positions may serve as "a chronic reminder of the stereotype that women are undervalued in the leadership domain," and that this reminder (i.e., stereotype threat) may, in turn, hinder women's upward mobility (von Hippel et al. 2011:1321). While von Hippel et al. considered the effects of stereotype threat in a corporate setting, the connections to leadership and representation are ones that parallel academia. Nonetheless, because no study has yet examined stereotype threat in university faculty, many questions remain unanswered: How does stereotype threat manifest

³ Participants in the affirmation condition picked and discussed a characteristic that they valued, from a list of 11, such as their athletic ability, musical appreciation, or relationship with friends, including why they valued it as important

itself in the university workplace? Are women faculty cognizant of certain stereotypes related to the speech of women? Do they perceive professorial language and women's (or feminine) language as incongruent? How do they adjust their speech in order to conform to or resist expectations, pressures, and/or stereotypes?

The Current Study

In this study, I examine verbal data from interviews conducted with faculty at a public research university utilizing a mixed-methods analysis. First, I examine faculty responses via content analysis in order to illustrate perceptual trends related to language-related expectations, stereotypes, and/or sanctions faced by women faculty. Then, I analyze the qualitatively to explore the ways in which women faculty discursively and theoretically frame their reactions to these expectations, via discourses of adaption and/or resistance. In doing so, I highlight the major discursive themes that emerged from the data, including those related to age, race/ethnicity, and social class background.

In the following section, I detail my methods for data collection, coding, and analysis. I then provide the results of the content analysis, followed by the qualitative analysis of discourse. I conclude with a summary of the study and implications for the field.

Data Collection

Data for this study come from semi-structured interviews with 26 women faculty at a public research university in the southeastern United States. The interviews were collected as part of the Faculty Dialect Study, a larger project investigating the language-related experiences of tenured and tenure-track faculty. Faculty members were asked to participate in the study via email solicitation and snowball sampling. A university email was sent to a random sample of one-third of the university's tenured and tenure-track faculty balanced for college, rank

(assistant, associate, and full), and gender. The email asked for voluntary participation in a study exploring how instructors adjust their speech when they become part of an institution of higher learning (see Appendix A for full email). Participants spanned multiple departments and colleges, and represented a variety of SES, regional, and dialect backgrounds. Because the current study is centered on the experiences of women, only the interviews carried out with women faculty are analyzed. Table 2.1 shows the demographic breakdown of the 26 women participants whose interviews are used in the current study. Broadened academic fields were used so as to prevent identifiability of faculty in small departments or fields, as well as racial, ethnic, or gender minorities in departments or fields.

Table 2.1: Study participants' academic field and race/ethnicity (N=26)

	Participants
Academic Field	
Applied Social Sciences	4
Business	1
Education	2
Engineering	1
Humanities	5
Life Sciences	1
Natural Resources	4
Professional Program	1
Social Science	7
Race/Ethnicity	
Black/African American	6
Latinx/Hispanic	2
White/Caucasian	18

The Faculty Dialect Study interviews were semi-structured, designed to explore faculty members' language attitudes and experiences before academia, during the journey towards academia (i.e., college and grad school), and within academia. Women faculty were asked 26 questions, two of which were asked exclusively to women. Only four interview questions addressed gender specifically, and these questions did not occur until over half-way through the

interview; thus, interviewers were not led to believe that this was a study about gender specifically (which it wasn't). All interviews were audio-recorded digitally with the faculty members' consent using a Marantz recorder. Over 50 hours of audio were recorded and transcribed. Each interview was transcribed and then hand-corrected (by two different transcriptionists).

The current article reports data primary from faculty members' responses to the following two interview questions:

- “As a woman, are there speaking styles that you have adopted or dropped in order to sound more competent?”
- “Have you ever been pressured to act or talk more feminine or more masculine?”

Because some participants talked about gender in other parts of the interview, faculty responses to other questions where relevant gender-related themes arose spontaneously are also included in this analysis. Transcripts were loaded into NVivo for open coding; Excel was used for quantitative content analysis (QCA), and NVivo was used for qualitative analysis of discourse.

Content Analysis

A series of four quantitative content analyses (QCAs) were used to investigate the two research questions: *What linguistic stereotypes/expectations related do women faculty face in relation to language? And how do they conform to or resist these expectations?* This was done via an analysis of perceived pressures and reactions to those pressures, as well as perceptions of specific linguistic features and the social values attached to those features. The coding schema used for each QCA are detailed in each of the following subsections.

Perceived Pressure

What gender-related linguistic pressures did women faculty face? For the first QCA, faculty responses were coded for specific linguistic features (dropped or adopted to sound more

competent), and any perceived pressured to sound more/less masculine or more/less feminine. I followed the following coding schema:

- If interviewee said she had felt pressured to sound more masculine OR less feminine = *Pressure to Sound Masculine*
- If interviewee said she *had* felt pressured to sound more feminine OR less masculine = *Pressure to Sound Feminine*
- If interviewee said she had dropped/adopted feminine feature(s) to sound more competent = *Pressure to Sound Masculine*
- If interviewee said she had dropped/adopted masculine feature(s) to sound more competent = *Pressure to Sound Feminine*
- If interviewee said she had not felt any pressure to sound more/less feminine/masculine = *No Pressure*
- If interviewee said she had not dropped any features to sound more competent = *No Pressure*

Results of the first QCA are shown in Figure 2.1. (Five faculty members were not asked this question or did not give an answer that answered the question; responses for 21 faculty were analyzed). The majority of women faculty (14 respondents) perceived pressure to be more masculine, while 6 reported feeling pressured or expected to be feminine in academia. Six faculty reported no pressure perceived, although their rationales and/or framing of this lack-of-pressure varied greatly, and connected importantly to issues of race, ethnicity, and social class; thus, the No Pressure responses will be discussed further in the qualitative section.

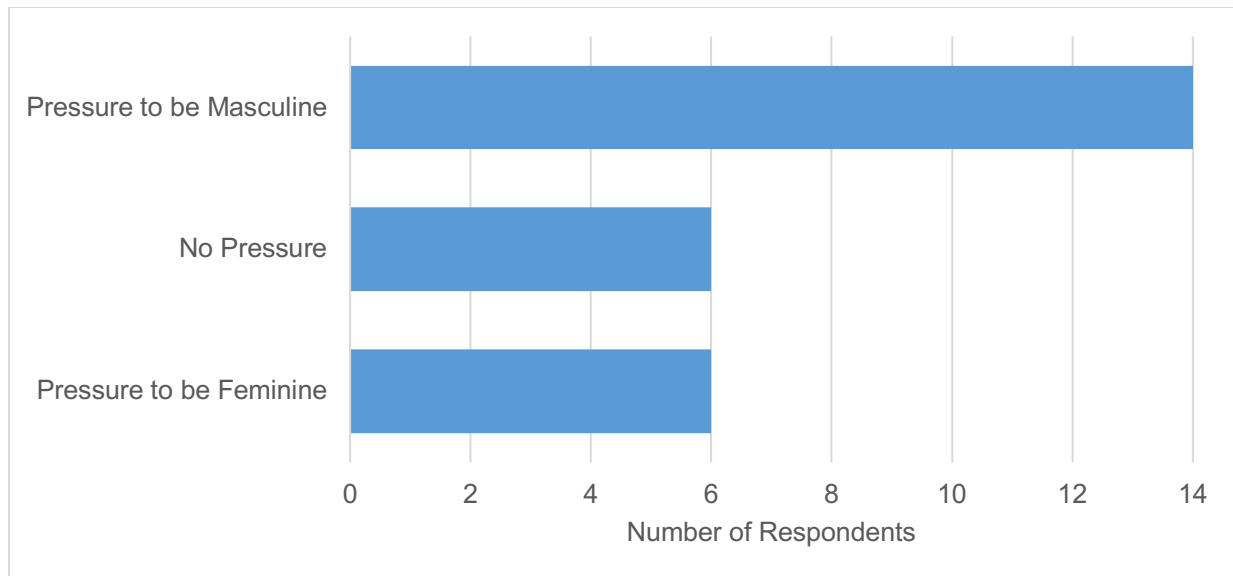


Figure 2.1: Linguistic pressure perceived by faculty women

Resisting and Conforming to Expectations

What did faculty do in the face of linguistic pressures? For the second QCA, faculty responses were coded for themes of resistance and conformity to linguistic pressures as follows:

- If interviewee mentioned conforming to pressures to sound more masculine OR less feminine = *Conform to Masculine*
- If interviewee mentioned dropping feminine linguistic feature(s) to sound more competent = *Conform to Masculine*
- If interviewee mentioned conforming to pressures to sound more feminine OR less masculine = *Conform to Feminine*
- If interviewee mentioned dropping masculine linguistic feature(s) to sound more competent = *Conform to Feminine*
- If interviewee mentioned resisting pressures to sound more masculine OR less feminine = *Resist Masculine*
- If interviewee mentioned conforming to pressures to sound more feminine OR less masculine = *Resist Feminine*
- If interviewee did not mention any pressures OR any behaviors of conforming to or resisting = *No Pressure*, and omitted from QCA

Results of the second QCA are displayed in Figure 2.2. The most commonly mentioned behavioral reaction was that of conforming to masculinity, with 11 faculty reported doing or having done; only 3 faculty reported resisting masculinity. This trend suggests that, not only is the pressure to be masculine perceived quite pervasively, conformity to this expectation is also pervasive. In other words, the pressure to be masculine is persuasive/effective! Responses to pressures to be feminine were split, with 3 reported resisting and 2 reported conforming. The discursive framing of these behaviors will be discussed more in the following section to gain insight into what ideologies are guiding these behaviors.

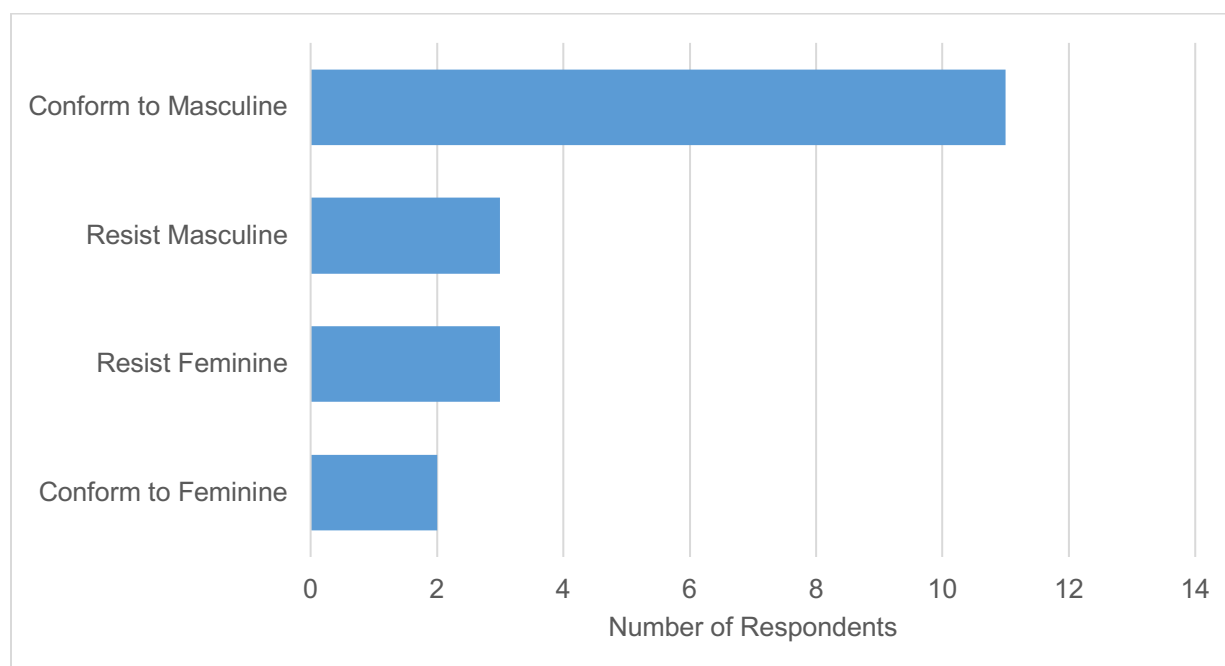


Figure 2.2: Women faculty members' behavioral responses to perceived linguistic pressure

Adopting and Dropping Linguistic Features

In order to sound more competent as an academic, did women faculty drop or adopt specific linguistic features? For the third QCA, faculty responses to the question “*As a woman, have you dropped or adopted any features to sound more competent?*” were coded as follows:

- If interviewee said she had dropped feature(s) = *Dropped Feature(s)*
- If interviewee said she had added feature(s) = *Added Feature(s)*
- If interviewee said she had neither added NOR dropped feature(s) = *Neither Dropped nor Added*

Results of the third QCA are illustrated in Figure 2.3. While 6 faculty reported neither dropping nor adopting linguistic features to sound more competent, a startling 15 faculty reported that they did. Of these 15 faculty, the majority (13 faculty) reported dropping linguistic features, while only 2 reported adopting specific features. This finding is important, considering the Male Dominance – specifically, promises connected to altered speaker (e.g., “Women will succeed if they [use these linguistic features]”) and threats connected to non-altered speech (e.g., “Women will not succeed if they [use these linguistic features]”) (Lakoff 1975). The high number of faculty reporting having dropped features suggests that linguistic threats may be more effective than linguist promises. More research on this specific trend could shed more light on the subject.

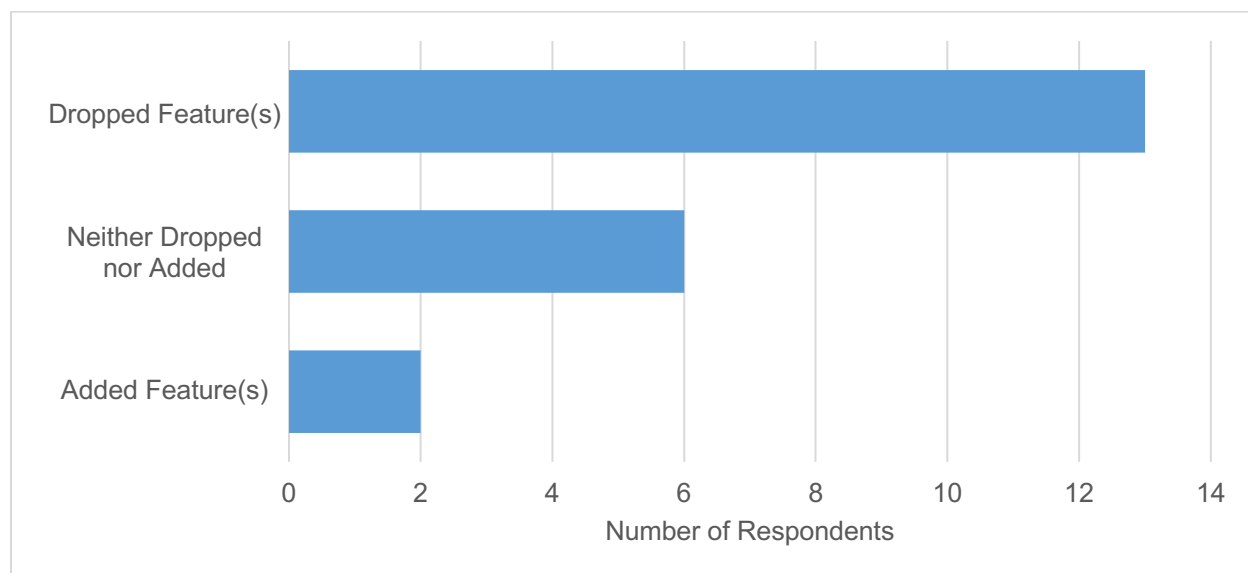


Figure 2.3: Linguistic choices made by women faculty in order to sound more competent

Values Associated with Linguistic Features

What linguistic traits do faculty view as masculine and feminine? And how are these traits valued within the university? For the fourth and final QCA, interviews were coded using open coding to identify linguistic features mentioned by faculty. A total of 23 traits were identified. These features were then coded as being emblematic of masculinity or femininity, as well as being a sanctioned or rewarded behavior, using the following coding schema:

- Linguistic feature/style/attribute + attributed to masculinity + (dropped by the respondent to sound more competent OR framed as being undesirable or detrimental) = *[Name of feature] / Masculine / Sanctioned*
- Linguistic feature/style/attribute + attributed to femininity + (dropped by the respondent to sound more competent OR framed as being undesirable or detrimental) = *[Name of feature] / Feminine / Sanctioned*
- Linguistic feature/style/attribute + attributed to masculinity + (adopted by the respondent to sound more competent OR framed as being desirable or expected) = *[Name of feature] / Masculine / Rewarded*
- Linguistic feature/style/attribute + attributed to femininity + (adopted by the respondent to sound more competent OR framed as being desirable or expected) = *[Name of feature] / Feminine / Rewarded*

Results of the fourth QCA are displayed in Table 2.2. Notably, many of the features listed can be found in Lakoff's (1975) list of women's language features. For instance, uptalk (question-like intonation on declarative sentences), fillers (e.g., *um, like*), and tag questions (e.g., *you know?, right?*) are labelled as women's language by Lakoff. Additionally, the study respondents' classification of profanity and directness as masculine aligns with Lakoff's assertion that women avoid strong swear words and use lexical hedging for indirectness.

Overall, women faculty identified 12 negatively sanctioned features, including 5 masculine features and 7 feminine features. The most commonly mentioned negatively sanctioned features were higher pitch, uptalk, verbal fillers, and more emotion. Fillers mentioned

included *like, um, you know, and uh*, while features classified as “More Emotion” included enthusiasm, discouragement, and the general voicing of emotions. Professionalism, mentioned more than any other feature or trait, was mentioned by 5 women faculty as a linguistic trait for which women faculty are rewarded. All five women framed professionalism specifically as masculine, or juxtaposed it against femininity, mirroring the previous literature suggesting that femininity is incongruent with professionalism (e.g., Eagly and Karau 2002). This theme of professional-speech-as-masculine, as well as how faculty discursively engaged with such blatant gender inequality, will be discussed in detail in the following section. Finally, we can see from the data in both columns of Table 2.2 that women faculty perceive a double-bind related to emotion. Women report being sanctioned for linguistically showing “less emotion” as well as showing “more emotion.” Other faculty report being *rewarded* for the same two conflicting features. This double-bind will be discussed in the qualitative section.

Table 2.2: Linguistic features for which women faculty perceive negative sanctions or rewards. (Parenthetical numerals denote number of participants who mentioned feature, beyond one).

Linguistic features for which women faculty are negatively sanctioned	Linguistic features for which women faculty are rewarded
Masculine features	Masculine features
Directness(2) Profanity(2) Less emotion(2) Profanity(2) Sarcasm/humor(2)	Professionalism(5) Less emotion(2) Taking up space(2) Louder volume Academic language(2) Talking sports
Feminine Features	Feminine Features
Higher pitch(3) Uptalk(3) Verbal fillers(3) More emotion(3) Tag questions(3) Vocal fry	Approachability(2) Nurture(2) Demureness Indirectness

The quantitative portion of this paper reveals important trends. In addition to numerous reports of pressure to be masculine, conforming to masculine expectations, and dropping certain linguistic features, faculty responses reveal a range of masculine and feminine linguistic features that are perceived as being rewarded and negatively sanctioned in the university setting. Nonetheless, quantitative analysis has explanatory limitations, especially related to participants' feelings, perceptions, and discursive conceptualizations of the subject at hand (Blaikie 2007; Denzin 2001). Thus, in order to better understand the patterns that emerged in the QCAs, qualitative analysis was carried out.

Qualitative Analysis

Using the entries coded for the QCAs, open coding was carried out in order to label broad themes related to respondents' discursive framing of responses. These themes were then consolidated into the following shared tropes, which will be elaborated upon in the following subsections: normative masculinity, expected femininity, avoidance of stigmatized features, the double-bind of emotions, age/time considerations, and intersectional identities.

Normative Masculinity

As illustrated by the QCA results, a majority of women faculty reported perceived pressure to sound more masculine. Most faculty articulated a common theme of *normative masculinity* in the university. Professor 18, a white woman in Business, described masculinity as an expectation from her students:

I think women always have problems because the expectations of students is very masculine, and I would say that here, uh, as well as [my previous university] as well as [my university before that]. I've taught all three places.

Professor 18 went on to explain what this expected masculinity looked like within the Business School at her previous university; coming back into academia after working in the nonprofit sector, she experienced stark differences in terms of what was expected of her linguistically:

And so, when I got to as the Business School it was like, you're not supposed to show any emotion. You're not supposed to show any feminine characteristics. You're never supposed to be discouraged. You're never— if somebody asks you how [you're doing], they don't really want to know. They want you to say, "Oh everything's great." They want to have this superficial, uh, attitude. And that was really a switch for me. I mean, here I had been— I had been, you know, directing a not-for-profit... Working with parents, professionals, and business people supporting the mentally handicapped. And then I was put in this environment and— and the implication [was] that to show any feminine characteristics was not professional.

Here Professor 18 equates emotional language with feminine language, and explains that this feminine language is discouraged (on the verge of not being tolerated) within the Business School. Non-emotional language—although superficial, in her opinion—is considered masculine and professional, and thus appropriate for a university setting.

Equating masculine language with professional language was a common theme in the interviews. Professor 11, a white woman in Social Science, was well-versed in gender theory; and yet, she still said the following regarding dropping linguistic features to sound competent:

The whole construct of how we process masculinity and femininity in interaction is- is- at an academic level, I can talk about how problematic it is; but as a person living in it, I do find that it is a high wire act. So, because femininity is associated with incompetence if I'm going to behave professionally, I need to not behave femininely.

Here we see a professor who is familiar with gender as a social construct, as well as something one does rather than something one has (West and Zimmerman 1987); and yet when faced with the association of masculinity and professionalism, she—like many other interviewees—adapts rather than resists.

While many professors associated masculine language with professionalism, others brought up issues related to prosody, such as pitch. Professor 51, for instance, a white woman in

Applied Social Science, recalls being conscious of the pitch of her voice when asked about sounding competent, saying:

I became aware of... not wanting to be like nails on a chalkboard to people. And that's how I feel when I hear my own voice. Just so painful. Uh. And I did some- I recorded some online lectures, and I wanted to speak a little more low and professional sounding...

Discursively, Professor 51 frames two important issues in her discussion of her pitch. First, she associates low pitch (traditionally associated with men's voices and masculinity) with professionalism; she admits lowering her pitch to sound more professional. Secondly, she alludes to lowering her pitch to appease others ("not wanting to be like nails on a chalkboard to people"). Professor 51 was not the only one to bring up others' expectations when talking about pitch.

Professor 4, a black woman in Applied Social Science, said the following when asked if she felt pressured to drop or add linguistic features to sound more competent:

This is so weird, because I have recently been working on, um, trying not to have such a high pitch. Um. There was someone on—I don't know maybe a news—someone on TV, a famous person has a particularly high [pitch] and it was being talked about a lot. Um. So, I definitely try to—because I can hear it sometimes when it's, like, this really loud pitch and—I try to, like, bring it down, because I'm thinking that people don't like that <laughter>.

Like Professor 51, Professor 4 didn't overtly state that students or other faculty expect her to sound masculine; she stated that "people" don't like high-pitched speech, a trait typically associated with women's voices and femininity.

The association between higher pitch and women's voices may come from the trend of adult women showing higher F_0 (fundamental frequency) levels than adult men. According to (Thomas 2010), American women's F_0 values tend to fall in the range of 170 to 220 Hz, while American men's F_0 values tend to fall in the 90 to 140 Hz range. Nonetheless, as Thomas (2010) points out, many men and women speakers' values fall outside those ranges, and "any speaker

with a normal voice can vary his or her F_0 well beyond” those aforementioned ranges (p. 31). Liberman (2007, 2013), and other sociolinguists, posit that this ability to emphasize or exaggerate pitch can be a result of “individual choice or societal tendencies. Analyzing data from the telephone speech of American men and women and Japanese men and women, Liberman (2007) suggests that Japanese male and female speakers are more polarized in pitch than American males and female are. More specifically, “the male Japanese speakers are pitching their voices somewhat lower (overall) than the male Americans, while female Japanese speakers are overall somewhat higher-pitched than female Americans” (Liberman 2007:1). This illustrates the interaction of biology *and* social elements in our construction of pitch. While men are capable of reaching high F_0 levels—especially for pragmatic functions—high pitch continues to be associated with women (and sometimes queer men) (Gaudio 1994; Podesva, Roberts, and Campbell-Kibler 2001).

While some responses alluded to masculinity covertly (discussing pitch without mentioning gender, or using coded language, like the term *professional*), many respondents described masculine expectations much more overtly. Professor 35, a white woman in Applied Social Science, who had been in the field for multiple decades, recounted the following overt pressure:

I think in my profession it’s been— there’s been tremendous pressure to be more like men. And there’s been a lot of, uh, dissension—if you will—along these lines. Because women thought they were underrepresented, they were not given equal treatment in the field, they were not getting promotion in the same kind of way. And so, some of the commentary was, “Well, you just need to act like the guys.”

Perceptions of overt expected masculinity were not restricted to older faculty. Professor 34, a young white woman in Natural Resources, was fresh off the job market at the time of her

interview, having just begun the first semester of her faculty career. She said the following when asked whether she felt pressured to sound masculine or feminine:

Professor 34: Sure. Um. Yeah. I think all of the advice is to speak more masculine.

Interviewer: Just kind of across-the-board?

Professor 34: Yes. I don't know that I agree with that as a value but, um, I think that's— it's pretty consistent that, uh— my understanding is our culture tends to value, uh, confident alpha-male type personalities, and so the advice to women is often to act more like an alpha-male <laughter>...

Professor 34's response supports Tedrow and Rhoads' (1999) findings that women often receive indications early in their careers that promotion hinges on their ability to act like men. Moreover, it shows that, while older professors noted improvements related to gender equality at work over the past decades, they perceive the notion of “expected masculinity” in the university as persistent.

Pressure to Sound Feminine

While participants overwhelmingly commented on the masculinity of academia, many women mentioned feeling pressured to adhere to gender role stereotypes of feminine speech.

Professor 16, a white woman in the university's Professional Program, described the pressure she felt when starting at the university, and which she still believed to be a current problem:

I, uh, started here twenty-five years [ago] and things were not in a very good state. I mean, we still have a very long way to go, but twenty-five years ago things were even worse... You made a decision. You either fit in, in the way people expected you to fit in, or you decided you were going to be who you were – and in that case, that felt like a chip on your shoulder, because you felt like you were defying the expectations. And so that came off in my speech. It came off in my everything, uh... So, there's always been an expectation for me to speak a certain way as a woman. Um. I am so comfortable in my own shoes that I just – I don't feel it anymore. I used to feel it, and I used to—I think—defy it.

As Professor 16 described the university setting in the early 1990s, she explained that women were expected to “act a certain way as a woman,” including speaking style. Her decision to defy

these expectations resulted in her self-label of having a “chip on her shoulder.” This phrase often appears in social scientific literature⁴ and popular media⁵ that have quoted men and/or women describing women in positions of power and/or feminist women. The term has been used to frame women’s observational claims of inequality as overblown or their desire for equal status as over-the-top or militant. Thus, Professor 16’s use of the term may suggest that she views her resistance against gender expectations in the workplace as militant, or that she is humorously noting *others’* views of her actions as militant. (Notably, a white man in the Faculty Dialect Study also used the phrase “chip on their shoulders” to describe the first women entering his academic field a few decades ago).

In line with the theme of women’s straightforwardness being seen as aggressive, multiple professors brought up avoidance of profanity when discussing expected femininity. This was unsurprising; despite empirical evidence of women and men reporting similar rates of swearing within the context of shared group enterprises (e.g., Stapleton 2003), (white) women’s use of less profane language is one of the most persistent prescriptive gender stereotypes (Cameron 2009). Professor 19, a white woman in Humanities, said the following about profanity when asked about dropping or adopting any linguistic features:

[I don’t] feel pressure to speak a different way, you know. Uh. I mean, yeah, okay, true with swearing, right? Every once in a while, I’ll let one slip and, um, you know, when I

⁴ In Moreau, Osgood, and Halsall’s (2007) study of UK schoolteachers, an interviewed head teacher said, “I also see many female heads who are aggressive, also they have a chip on their shoulder... I think they perhaps feel they’ve got a point to prove” (p. 245). Rhode (2002) reported similar discourses used by lawyers, citing “assumptions among male attorneys in gender bias surveys are that ... if women will just ‘concentrate on the job and get the chip off their shoulders ... they should do fine in today’s society’” (p. 1002). Rhode noted that the “chip” discourse is not only used by men lawyers, referencing a *New York Times Magazine* piece in which a woman lawyer at prominent Wall Street law firm characterized colleagues with a “chip on their shoulder,” referring to their claims of workplace gender discrimination as having no substance.

⁵ For example, Yahoo CEO Marissa Mayer was featured in a documentary, explaining why she does not identify as a feminist: “I certainly believe in equal rights. ... But I don’t, I think, have sort of the militant drive and sort of the chip on the shoulder that sometimes comes with that. ... I think that there’s more good that comes out of positive energy around that than negative energy” (Woodruff 2013)

was younger people would say, “That's not how ladies speak.” Well it's a good thing I'm not a lady then, you know? <laughter>

Professor 19's response, which includes an immediate answer followed by an amendment, tells two important stories. First, “that's not how ladies speak” clearly tells us that she perceives profanity as viewed as masculine; secondly, even though Professor 19 claims to not be “a lady” (insinuating that she resists conforming to this expectation), her phrase “let one slip” implies her avoidance of this feature within the university, and thus adherence to gender expectations related to swearing.

Professor 16 (the Professional Program professor quoted early) also brought up profanity. When asked about any current pressures to adhere to expectations of femininity, the professor said the following:

Here at the university, I still feel that if I used—you have to understand, I have a pretty foul mouth when I'm just being me—and I still feel that, if I use [profanity] in the university, that will be- that will- people will perceive it differently than if my male colleague does. Period. I- If I dropped those words and a male colleague drops those words, they are perceived entirely differently...

Here Professor 16 noted a perceived double-standard related to language men versus women are permitted to use in the university. The notion of profanity as incongruent with femininity reflects Lakoff's description of women's “avoidance of strong swear words.” Of course, culturally, profanity is often perceived as unprofessional, especially in educational settings (Sobre-Denton and Simonis 2012); nonetheless, it is important to note that the respondents brought profanity up specifically when asked questions about gender.

Professor 16 was not the only faculty to bring up profanity as a gender violation. Professor 51 (the Applied Social Science professor quoted earlier) noted that her swearing—along with her sarcasm and straightforwardness—have often resulted in negative sanctioning

from her students. In response to a question about miscommunication with students, Professor 51 said the following:

[Besides communication issues with international students], I think it's been fine and— but just being— being aware of, you know, my tone with things, and when I sound harsh. I've— I've worked on softening my language to some degree. I don't want to, like, give in and totally like feminize myself for— not that I'm not feminine but, uh, you know— fulfill whatever gender stereotype that some people might want me to. But at the same time, I don't want students to think that I'm being mean or harsh or something, or sarcastic toward them, when it's— that's not it at all. So, I think I've become aware of that? So, just trying to soften language because there has been the misperception that I'm cold.

Here we see Professor 51 changing her behavior (i.e., trying to “soften” language) as a result of stereotype threat. She later elaborates briefly on being perceived by students as “cold,” “harsh,” and, in one memorable student evaluation, “cunt-y” (a clearly gendered, if not sexist, sanction).

When asked to clarify a reference she made to double-standards, Professor 51 provided additional commentary related to student evaluations, this time citing research:

Interviewer: So, is the perception there that... if you acted exactly the same way that you do, and teach the same way that you do, and had the same syllabus, but you were male, you might not get the same feedback from students about being cold or power differentials /unintelligible/?

Professor 51: Yeah.

Interviewer: Is it—and I don't want to put words in your mouth, but—is it sort of—do you think that whole, you know, “women are supposed to be more nurturing”?

Professor 51: Yes, yeah, and there's research to back it up in terms of evaluations. Women instructors that are rated high, often the comments used to describe them are “warm,” you know, “caring,” whereas men who get high evaluations, the comments are “smart,” “funny,” “knows his stuff.” So, I do think there's different standards there...

Using research to back up her claims, Professor 51 argues clearly that men and women professors are rewarded (i.e., receive positive evaluation ratings) for adhering to gender role stereotypes. Indeed, empirical research has shown that women teachers are rewarded for being

nurturing, while men are rewarded for being competent and witty (e.g., Statham, Richardson, and Cook 1991; Sprague and Massoni 2005).

Other professors alluded to students expecting gender adherence from their professors.

Professor 10, a white woman in Humanities, she said the following when asked if she felt pressured to sound feminine:

...my students come to me with personal problems that I don't think they take to my male peers. So, I think they're more likely to bring their personal issues to me—and their needs that they see could be met by a caregiving type person, um—than they would [bring] to my male peers.

Here Professor 10 clearly articulates her students' expectation of her to be approachable and nurturing due to her being a woman, by comparing their behavior with her versus her men colleagues. The emotion work discussed by Professor 10 leads into the next two themes brought up by many faculty respondents: double-binds (i.e. linguistic paradoxes facing women, especially in relation to emotional language) and emotional labor.

Double-Binds

Together, the previous two sections have illustrated a double-bind perceived by women faculty: the expectation of masculinity in academia versus the expectation for women to sound feminine. While most professors brought up one expectation or the other, many women did bring up double-binds in their responses. For example, multiple participants in men-dominated fields, such as Engineering and the Sciences, brought up the double-bind of expected masculinity in their fields versus gender-role adherence. For instance, in her discussion of gender differences in academia, Professor 9—a white woman in Natural Resources—brought up the men-dominated nature of academia (historically) and of her field. The interviewer followed up by asking if the men-dominatedness had caused any adaptation on the respondent's part, which led to the following conversation:

Interviewee: ...has [men-dominatedness] been a challenge or something you just adapted to?

Professor 9: I think it's something that I've been more – that's a – it's a – it's, I mean, I mean, have – I may adap[t]– I think it just kind of fits me and my background, and that I haven't really seen those as barriers. I, like [I was], you know, kind of, was always a tomboy, and so I've just pushed through that even if that, you know...

At first, Professor 9 responds by saying that, as a woman, her masculine nature has been helpful for her in terms fitting in. The number of false starts her response contains, should be noted, as they may represent either her trying to parse her experience together as she narrates it, or perhaps apprehension or careful talk. While Professor 9 highlights her tomboy (or masculine) background as being an asset in academia/Natural Resources, she clearly also recognizes the paradox of her masculine traits helping but also being a hindrance for her in her field, as she continues her response.

Professor 9: ...I guess on the flip side of that, I'm sure there are times where I'm sure my male colleagues expect my behavior to be different, as a woman, and I'm not. And so they're kind of like, "*Wow*," you know? Whereas if I were a guy, they probably wouldn't have that type of response. You know, typical stuff.

In this continued segment, Professor 9 lays out the double-bind clearly: masculinity may be expected, but women who enact masculinity may be sanctioned. Based on her discourse, she obviously views this trend as fairly standard, as she notes (and even downplays/minimizes) this double-standard as “typical stuff.”

Additionally, a double-bind related to emotions—or more specifically, emotional language—was brought up by multiple faculty, and was framed in numerous ways. The most salient descriptions took the form of contrasting dichotomies. That is, women professors who described emotional language and behaviors as feminine fell into two camps: emotions signal volatility (a negatively sanctioned trait), or emotions signal warmth (a rewarded trait). Either

way, one theme was clear: women faculty faced a double-bind when it came to verbally expressing emotion.

Notably, the Faculty Dialect Study interviews took place during the 2016 U.S. presidential race, and many faculty (both women and men) brought up Hillary Clinton and/or Donald Trump in their responses to questions related to gender. Many women faculty brought up Clinton when discussing the double-bind of emotions, such as Professor 11, a white woman in Social Science. She described the damned-if-you-do/damned-if-you-don't aspect of the double-bind: "So, Hilary Clinton gets criticized for not being emotional enough. She gets seen as cold. And- and women can't be cold, but women can't be warm either." Here we see Professor 11 keenly aware of the double-bind related to emotions. This description mirrors what Vassallo et al. (2016) call the "Goldilocks problem". In their 2016 survey of more than 200 senior-level women in Silicon Valley, their results highlighted "the Goldilocks problem of never being 'just right:' 84% of women have been told they are too aggressive, and 53% have been told they are too quiet," and many women being told that they were both too aggressive *and* too quiet.

For many professors, navigating the double-binds of academia was a struggle. Professor 51 (the Applied Social Science professor) described the dilemma she faced during her early career, trying to be compassionate while also trying to sound competent:

I feel like the students that get to know me and, you know, do seek help, I think they realize that I do genuinely care about them and want to help, and will go out of my way to do so. But I have had a couple comments from students about me being, um, "cold" or there's seemingly being "a power distance" or "a higher power distance" than with some of their other instructors. Uh. Those comments were when I was a PhD student... I felt a lot of pressure then, especially worrying about the job market, and then about, like, is it not enough to know what you're talking about? Is it not enough to you know have some sort of expertise in a topic area, be fair, be organized, be a good instructor?... And I met with my department chair about it you know just trying to figure it out, like, am I supposed to change? Or can I... can I say, like, "Fuck it," like, "that's your problem"?

Here we see Professor's 51—who described herself as “more masculine” and even mentioned being told by an advisor that her “syllabus sounded masculine” (perhaps due to its straightforward language)—negotiating the risks of stereotype threat versus stereotype reactance. She faces the option of being herself (and being disliked) or being what her students wanted (and feeling inauthentic): a personal double-bind. As an early-career professor, the violation of students' gender-role expectations could result in negative sanctions, specifically in the form of teaching evaluations.

Professor 51 was not the only one to bring up sanctions when discussing the double-bind. Professor 18 (the Business professor) was one of the handful of participants who brought up gender in the interview before being asked a question related to gender. When asked about her students' perceptions of her speech, Professor 18 brought up gender and described the double-bind quite colorfully:

In my opinion, uh, males can be real tough and manly and all that, and all that's acceptable. But if a woman acts like that, she's a “bitch.” <laughter> Then on the other side, if a guy's thoughtful and considerate and sensitive, that's great. But if a woman is, she's a “mother figure” and they expect you to react like their mother and give them whatever they want.

Professor 18 highlights a documented double-standard: women are labelled *bossy/bitchy* for engaging in behaviors that are tolerated when enacted by—and even *expected* from—men professionals (Kanter 1993; Tannen 1995). Furthermore, the “mother figure” brought up by Professor 18 was something that multiple professors alluded to, and mirrors Tierney and Bensimon's (1996) finding that women faculty members feel pressured to perform “mom” work (i.e., maintaining a nurturing demeanor). Multiple researchers of gender in the workplace have found that the “mother” role is one of few acceptable roles of authority that women can enact in the workplace (e.g., Holmes 2005; Koller 2004). Nonetheless, some faculty members viewed the

mother persona as a positive attribute, not a marker of inequality. The following section discusses this positive framing of emotional labor discussed by women faculty.

Emotional Labor

As the previous section illustrated, emotions were brought up by numerous faculty members in their discussion of gendered language practices at work. Discussions of emotion led multiple faculty women to discussions of emotional labor. Coined by Hochschild (1985), emotional labor refers to the exploited “management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display” within a professional setting, more often undertaken by women. While no faculty interviewee used the term “emotional labor” in their responses, they did discuss the expectation that they be emotionally supportive to colleagues and students.

Professor 16 (the Professional Program professor) offered the following reflection about her nurturing nature, evoking the mother persona in her discussion:

I’ve noticed I am a very nurturing person, and I don’t have any problem- I must say at least once a week to my junior faculty, my students, my somebody-I-just-met who’s interviewing, “Oh, I’m mom to everybody.” And so it’s not [solely my language] as much as it’s the whole package. I have no issue with presenting myself as the nurturing person and that’s- I mean, that gets back to my trying to put people [in] their comfort zone, you know.

Professor 16’s self-description of a being “mom to everybody” showed that she viewed her warmth and nurture as linguistic traits that were positively perceived and welcomed within her department. Discursively, however, we see that Professor 16 views it as *her job* to “put people in their comfort zone.” These multiple facets of Professor 16’s response support finding by Tierney and Bensimon (1996): that women faculty are expected not only to take on more “mom work” (i.e., the emotional labor of being nurturing, forgiving, and self-disclosing), but also to take on more “smile work” (i.e., the emotional labor of presenting oneself as being pleasing and agreeable for the sake of others).

Other faculty discussed pressure to perform emotional labor via their juxtaposing of men colleagues who are not expected to perform such labor. These findings support Holmes and Marra's (2004) observation that relational practices like support work are considered “women's work.” Professor 43, for instance, a white woman in the Humanities, noted the following difference:

I tend to be pretty sympathetic. I think a lot of my other female colleagues are too, you know. It's like, a student comes in who's upset about a grade or, like, has a situation or something, and—especially if it's a female student—will come in and sit in my office and cry. And I will be, “It's okay. Okay. So let's calm down and talk about what”—But I know other male colleagues will say, “In this office, no tears. If you're that upset, then come back when you're calm.”

Professor 34 contrasts how women professors' warmth and empathy may benefit students while men professors' lack of compassion may turn students away. Importantly, Professor 34's response mirrors existing literature that suggests women faculty take on more emotional labor than their men counterparts (e.g., Bellas 1999; Eveline and Booth 2004; Filipan 2017; Gardner and Blackstone 2013; Schell 1998). Because women are traditionally considered innately nurturing, emotional labor done by women is normalized and goes unnoticed (Eveline and Booth 2004:294).

Avoiding the Stigmatized

As the results of the QCA showed, the majority of interviewed women reported dropping linguistic features in order to sound more competent. Unsurprisingly, the features mentioned tended to be ones historically and/or currently socially stigmatized. Uptalk, mentioned by many faculty members, is one of the most policed features of women's speech (Tyler 2015; see popular articles such as Davis 2013, Horowitz 2006). Despite the fact that uptalk is used at similar rates by both men and women at similar rates (Ritchart and Arvaniti 2013) for multiple discursive, pragmatic, and interactional purposes (e.g., Gunlogson 2001; Ladd 2008; McConnell-Ginet

1978.; McLemore 1991; Pierrehumbert and Hirschberg 1990; Podesva 2011), uptalk continues to be stereotyped as just as Lakoff (1975) described it over forty years ago: a marker of women's uncertainty or timidity. It is thus unsurprising that multiple women professors brought up uptalk when discussing features they had dropped or avoided, as well as when responding to other interview questions.

Professor 15, for example, a white woman in Humanities, said the following when asked if she thought she'd be perceived differently by students if she spoke differently:

I mean, if I also engaged in a lot of uptalk, I think that that is a bad model for- for, you know, for- particularly for female students, but for all students too. It's a way of not owning your- your language, owning your thoughts, um, suggesting a lack of commitment to your concepts, to your analysis. Uh. So I think that is one- something that I- I think that people who do that insistently can easily be perceived as not—whether they are or not—as being, uh, less competent in- in their expression in their ideas. Um. So I don't remember ever having to had to be corrected about that, though.

Professor 15's response suggests a subscription to the Male Dominance trope of uptalk signaling timidity, as she clearly describes uptalk as non-committal. She also alludes to high stigmatization of the feature, stressing that, while she does not perceive uptalk as necessarily denoting incompetence, she believes many people do. This shows a clear awareness of stereotype threat—i.e., not wanting to embody a non-committal woman, or an incompetent woman.

Multiple women professors mentioned the stigmatization—and dropping—of verbal fillers (e.g., *um*, *you know*, *so*) and tag questions (e.g., *right?* *you know?*), often conflating the two. While most research points to men and women using fillers and tag questions roughly at roughly the same rate, many professors specifically brought these up as features that made women sound tentative. Take for example, the following exchange with Professor 11 (the Social Science professor):

Professor 11: When I do teaching observations and when I'm teaching myself I coax people out of *you knows, uhs*. You have probably a technical term for them. /unintelligible/.

Interviewer: Right. Typically we'll call them, usually, verbal fillers. But it depends on their function.

Professor 11: *You know? You know what I mean?* And so I've tried very hard to drop those from my speech, even though it means sometimes I pause between words, and this makes people very nervous. But I'm withholding my impulse to fill that space with some utterance that requires a response. So when someone says "You know what I mean?" they're looking for a nod. They're looking for some affirmation that they're on the right track or they're being heard or understood and encouraged to continue. So— so I have been trying to teach myself to not do that...

While Professor 11 began talking about verbal fillers, her clarification of "utterances that require a response" and latter examples of "you know?" and "you know what I mean?" show that she was also referring to tag questions. Ample research has demonstrated that tag questions can fulfill multiple functions beyond confirmation-seeking and facilitatory functions, including challenging, antagonizing, insulting, and other linguistic power-moves (Algeo 1990; Holmes 1995; Tottie and Hoffmann 2006). However, it is clear that Professor 11 subscribes to a Male Dominance explanation of this linguistic features, as her claim that tag questions are speaking signaling a need for "affirmation" and "encouragement" mirrors Lakoff's (1975) claim that tag questions signal insecurity. Moreover, it is clear that stereotype threat—specifically the fear of embodying the stereotype of an insecure, unassertive woman—is causing her to deliberately change her speech. This suggests that many of the other women in the study who reported making changes to their speech (either via dropping or adding features) may have done so as a result of stereotype threat.

Like tag questions and uptalk, women's use of vocal fry (or creaky voice) has been heavily policed in the media. Despite U.S. women and men using vocal fry at very similar rates

(e.g., Irons and Alexander 2016), many media outlets have highlighted the “annoying” nature of women’s vocal fry⁶ as well as telling women they should drop the feature if they want to be taken seriously at work.⁷ Unsurprisingly, vocal fry also came up during the Faculty Dialect Study interviews. While multiple professors mentioned it when discussing their women students, vocal fry was only mentioned as a dropped feature by one professor. Nonetheless, its discursive framing highlighted its stigma within society at large, as well as within the university. Professor 51 was quoted earlier in the *Normative Masculinity* section discussing the lowering of her pitch. In the portions of her response that preceded and followed the earlier quote provided, however, she also discusses her avoidance of the stigmatized feature of vocal fry:

I think it comes and goes as far as when I’m aware of it. Uh. But I also– I often think about my vocal fry because...it became such a thing in the media with the Kardashians and some people. I don’t even know if that’s a real thing, um, but I know what they mean when they’re talking about it. So, I guess I became kind of aware of that, and not wanting to be like nails on a chalkboard to people, and that’s how I feel when I hear my own voice... [*anecdote about being recorded teaching*] ...When I was a PhD student teaching, I think I was more worried about it than I am now, and I’m like, “I got the job. I got the PhD.” I’m no expert or anything, but I’m competent. I know what I’m talking about when I’m teaching, and if they’re going to judge me based on my–. It’s just too much work. So, I think I’ve– I think I’ve moved past it a bit, and I’m sure there’s some older scholars that don’t like the way I present at conferences, but maybe, maybe not. I know what I’m talking about though.

Professor 51 addressed multiple important issues related to vocal fry in her response. First, she mentioned how widespread the discussion of vocal fry has become, and how many have begun associating it with pop-culture’s Kardashian family (although she questions this connection).

Professor 51 then iterated that she recognizes *other people’s* disdain for it, though not necessarily her own, explaining that she avoids vocal fry because she doesn’t want “to be like nails on a chalkboard to people.”

⁶ e.g., the 2013 *Slate* article, “Why old men find young women’s voices so annoying”

⁷ e.g., Naomi Wolf’s 2015 op-ed in *The Guardian*, “Young women, give up the vocal fry and reclaim your strong female voice”; or the 2018 BBC article, “Your vocal quirks could be costing you jobs”

Contrasting her behaviors before and after receiving a professorship, Professor 51 also made two important age-related observations: she noted the likelihood of “older scholars” that don’t like the way she presents (with creaky voice), highlighting the role of age in perceptions of (and likely policing of) women’s language; and she alluded to her own age (coupled with her degree attainment) playing a role in her ability to have “moved past” worrying about her voice—which could be characterized as a type of stereotype reactance. Regarding this second theme, however, the Professor 51’s multiple discursive qualifications are quite noteworthy. She gave multiple reasons qualifying why she felt she was allowed to use vocal fry now: (1) finishing a graduate program of study, (2) holding a PhD, and (3) knowing what she’s talking about. These qualifications tell us two important things. First, her qualifiers tell us that vocal fry is associated with unintelligence, non-professionalism, and incompetence. Secondly, her qualifiers tell us that she believes in a merit-based system in which educational status overrules stigmatized linguistic features. The theme of age, time, and professional status played a role discursively in many of the women faculty members’ responses, and will thus be discussed in more detail in the next section.

Age and Status

While none of the participants were asked their age, nor any questions about implications of age, many brought it up. Professor 34 (the Natural Resources professor quoted early as saying “all of the advice is to speak more masculine”) went on in her response to bring up the significance of age and professional status. After saying “the advice to women is often to act more like an alpha-male,” she laughed and continued:

I think there’s also room to consider, um, including other ways of evaluating people, but <laughter> but at the beginning of your career, um, you’re in probably less of a position to change the system.

The significance of age and professional status with regard to linguistic flexibility was mirrored by Professor 2, a Latina woman in Life Science, who said (in response to the question about dropping or adopting features to sound competent):

Professor 2: Oh I don't think consciously. But I got tenure last summer—

Interviewer: Mm hm. Congrats—

Professor 2: and um—thank you!—and I think I'm more comfortable in my skin now. Maybe a little bit, um, just with age...

Similarly, Professor 35 (the Applied Social Science professor quoted earlier recounting women in her department being told to “act more like the guys”) also brought time as well as professional status into the equation, as she continued her narrative:

I think it has changed, you know, since I started in the field... [*anecdote about her first year of teaching*] ...Now on the other end of that, at- at this point in my career, it doesn't matter as much.

Here Professor 35 insinuates that the reason for her decreased pressure to be masculine is two-fold: first, her field has become more progressive, and secondly, the older she has gotten the more linguistically secure she has become. Professor 9, a white woman in Natural Resources, also articulated her age-related linguistic security; following a statement about not feeling the need to “talk football” like the men faculty, she continued:

I think I'm probably old enough now that I'm more comfortable just being authentic. I mean, if we were ten years ago, it'd probably be a different conversation.

While Professor 9 focuses on factors of age and the passage of time, it is important to note the strong likelihood that “ten years ago” she was a lower ranking professor.

The themes of “caring less” and “being more comfortable” as age and rank increases mirrors trends found in other studies: satisfaction-related issues have been shown to affect nontenured women faculty more pervasively than tenured women faculty, and attrition is more

likely at the lower ranks (August and Waltman 2004; Finkelstein and Lacelle-Peterson 1992; Olsen and Sorcinelli 1992; Rausch et al. 1989; Rothblum 1988). August and Waltman (2004) found collegial peer relations to be a significant factor for nontenured women, but not for tenured women, suggesting that “by the time faculty achieve tenure, they have found their niche and are more able than their junior colleagues to understand and adapt to the idiosyncrasies of their fellow department members”—positing that tenured faculty have found “the lay of the land” (p. 189). Their hypothesis is supported by the multiple participants in the current study who voiced feeling more comfortable, confident, and/or unapologetic after achieving tenure.

Intersecting Identities

Individuals are members of more than one category or social group; they can simultaneously experience advantages and/or disadvantages related to those groups (Collins 1990). As a result, when asked about gender, many faculty members brought up (and connected gender to) other social categories, such as social class, race, ethnicity, or regional identity. Professor 19 (the white Humanities professor quoted earlier) came from a working-class background, and made the following observation about social class and femininity:

Interviewer: Have you been—have you ever been pressured to act or talk more feminine or more masculine?

Professor 19: Huh... I do not know the answer to that. So, thinking about how gender operates—. So, working class women aren't thought of as feminine. So that's—really if I—. If, you know, people perceive me as working class, it's just kind of not an option for me, you know, to be feminine. And so in some ways, that middle class femininity that, um, is such a drag on many women just, uh, doesn't bother me. [*Discusses being a “tomboy” growing up, as well as homophobic slurs given to tomboys*]... I always figured that, um, that sort of ‘tennis bracelet femininity’ was not something I was ever going to—ever—never going to be a part of. And so—and also because I, I can use tools and things like that I—I think people sometimes think I'm dude-like. And— and it's like, “Okay that's fine,” you know? Um. So, yeah, the whole the femininity thing, that's a [tough question].

Professor 19 makes an important distinction between middle-class and working-class femininity – or, more specifically, working-class women’s lack of access to femininity. Scholars have noted the classed aspects of femininity (e.g., Day, Gough, and McFadden 2003; McDermott 2006; McRobbie 1978; Skeggs 2001) and how that “the historical discursive location of femininity” makes it very difficult for working-class women to be (or be perceived as) feminine (Skeggs 2001:299).

While no other women faculty brought up social class intersecting with femininity or masculinity, other professors did note important intersections between gender and *race* – including how those intersections affected their linguistic choices. Professor 57, a black woman in Humanities, was in the early stages of her faculty career at the time of her interview. When asked about gender pressures, she discussed gender and race together:

Interviewer: And then more specifically, have you ever felt pressured to either act or talk more feminine or less feminine?

Professor 57: No. <laughter> No. And I say that because—I don't know—I feel like there's this stigma attached to black women, that we're more aggressive and more on the line of the more masculine type of-. And I feel like, whether I spoke more feminine or not, that would still be attached to me. So it doesn't really matter. <laughter> Um. So, no. I don't really adjust or change or switch it up, because I don't need to. <laughter> Like I don't need to, right?

The stigma that Professor 57 mentions of black women being perceived as masculine is more than anecdotal evidence; the stigma is well-documented in sociology and ethnic studies research, which demonstrate the ways in which societal images of black women differ from those of white women (Bell 1992; Fordham 1993; Goff, Thomas, and Jackson 2008; West 1995). The societal images and expectations of black women tend to be traits associated with masculinity, including dominance, aggression, and promiscuity (Bell 1992; Fordham 1993; Thomas, Witherspoon, and Speight 2004;). Professor 57 is astute in her observation of this stigma. She sees changing her

speech as pointless, because she feels the stereotyping she receives as a black woman outweigh the stereotypes she receives as a woman alone. Her observation aligns with a primary tenant of Black Feminism: that black women face discrimination that is unique from that of white women and from that of black men (Collins 1990). Her comment also mirrors Harlow's (2003) findings that black women professors feel pressured to prove their competence and authority in the classroom, as they confront “the burden of negotiating both femaleness and blackness” (p. 357). It is important to note that the two professors in the current study who brought up the intersection of race and gender (Professor 56 and Professor 57) were both women of color.

In addition to social class and race, regional background and/or accent was brought up by multiple professors in their discussions of gender-related themes. Professor 18 (the white woman in Business quoted earlier), said the following when asked if she dropped or adopted linguistic features to sound more competent:

Professor 18: ...I would say that, yes, I speak more professionally. I— I type emails and things more professionally. And I would say that’s probably good. I mean, I was just a—you know—a [Southern] girl. So, I mean, I probably needed to be more professional. ...[*discussion of being conscious about vocabulary*] ...Surely when I’m teaching or doing— when I’m giving a presentation, I’m more conscious and being more careful what I say, and that I don’t sound like a *hick*.

Interviewer: Okay. So when you are in those environments, you do think about accent?

Professor 18: Oh yeah. Okay. At least from the sense that I don’t want to sound like a ‘hick,’ okay? So I would not say terms that I might casually say to my sister.

After labeling herself a Southern girl,⁸ Professor 18 also uses the term “hick”—a derogatory term towards Southerners, similar to “redneck”—twice. She juxtaposes these terms against notions of speaking professionally and using academic vocabulary. In these three instances, we see

⁸ In order to protect her identity, Professor 18’s reference to a specific U.S. state changed to ‘*Southern*’ in order to conceal the specific southern state she grew up in

Professor 18's conceptualization of the "Southern woman" character type: someone who is not professional, not well-versed, or does not possess good speaking skills.

An intersectional approach to the experiences of women in positions of power necessary to power uncover findings that may be overlooked by looking at a single attribute; more specifically, it reduces the possibility of "downgrading traits and actions merely to one attribute such as gender" which could over-emphasize genderization and stereotypification of leaders (Richardson and Loubier 2008:155). Further intersectional studies of language and ideology are needed to better understand and theorize about the intersectional themes found in this study.

Discussion

This study marks the first mixed methods analysis of women's language-related experiences, pressures, and behaviors in the university workplace. Findings reveal a number of linguistic expectations women faculty perceive as normative in academia, and how and why they conform to or resist these linguistic expectations. Decades of workplace research have suggested that women's language in the corporate workplace is policed more than men's due to the unmarked, ideal worker being male and masculine. This study has revealed that the inequality and disparity present in the corporate world is perceived by faculty woman as present in academia as well.

Results of the QCAs showed that the majority of women interviewed perceived pressure to sound masculine within the academy. Furthermore, 15 out of 21 women reported adopting or dropping certain linguistic features in order to sound more competent. Interestingly, while the majority of women voiced perceived pressures to sound *more masculine*, the behavioral responses to pressures reflected pressure to sound *less feminine*. That is, the majority of women who changed their speech to sound more competent did so by dropping feminine features (as

opposed to adopting masculine features). This aligns with role congruity theory, specifically the notion of femininity and competence being incongruent. It also points to the stigma of feminine features being a stronger influencing factor than the prestige of masculine features, which suggests an influence of stereotype threat at play.

How did women decide which features to use and which features to avoid? Both QCA results and discourse provided important answers. In terms of whether or not masculine language is rewarded or sanctioned when used by women, as well as whether or not femininity is rewarded or sanctioned when used by women, results of the QCA provided a complex answer: it depends largely upon the specific linguistic feature being employed. Results revealed that women perceive negative sanctions or stigmatization for feminine language features such as uptalk, tag questions, and hedges, while they perceive reward or prestige for feminine features like indirectness/politeness and nurturing language. With regards to masculine language usage, women perceive sanctions for use of masculine features like profanity and aggressive language, while they perceive rewards for using professional language and academic jargon. These findings shed new, nuanced light on the double-bind—or perhaps quadruple bind in this case—women faculty face. Rather than thinking about the double-bind as a dichotomy (illustrated below in Figure 2.4) we might instead think about it as two intersecting axes creates four quadrants (illustrated below in Figure 2.5).



Figure 2.4: Illustration of the double-bind, as described by Kendall and Tannen (1997) and Eagly and Karau (2002).

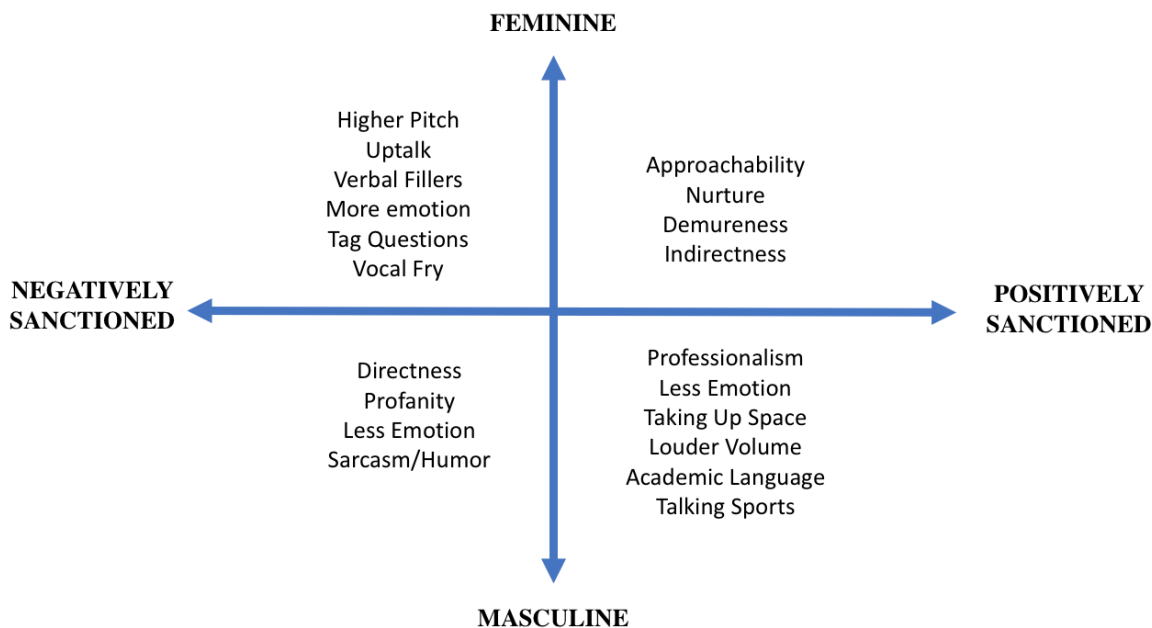


Figure 2.5: Conceptualization of the perceived expectations and sanctions of masculine and feminine features used in the academy (based on findings shown in Table 2.2).

The use of a mixed-methods approach proved integral for this study. Qualitative analysis of shed light on how and why women dropped or adopted certain features. Multiple women were told by mentors during graduate school to adopt or drop certain features, especially uptalk and tag questions. Mass media also played a role, as multiple women cited news pieces about how the general public dislikes certain features, such as uptalk, high pitch, or creaky voice. Many professors employed Male Dominance tropes of feminine language features as weak. They cited dropping features like tag questions, rising intonation, and indirectness in order to sound more confident and self-assured. These are, of course, the kinds of features Lakoff (1971) noted in her early, impressionistically based study almost a half-century ago now. Implicitly, she offered hope that dropping these features would make women seem more competent and confident.

Unsurprisingly, the most common theme identified in the qualitative analysis was normative masculinity, or the idea that sounding masculine is considered sounding both

professional and academic. But despite perceived normative masculinity in the university, women still discussed feeling pressured to adhere to gender norms at the same time, including expectations of women to be linguistically indirect, collaborative, and nurturing. These findings align with the previous literature suggesting that professional women are expected to adhere to gender role norms while maintaining competent professional roles, highlighting the notion of the double-bind women academics are embedded in: they feel expected to sound masculine and feminine. Similarly, women faculty perceive a double-bind related to emotional language: on the one hand, they actively avoid being labelled as too emotional; however, they also take conscious measures to avoid being perceived as cold or harsh for not being emotional enough. This adds complexity to stereotype threat theory, by showing that women are not only aware and afraid of embodying stereotypes of women; they are not only aware of and fear embodying the stereotype of an excessively feminine woman (e.g., *overly emotional*, *a cry-baby*) but also of an excessively masculine woman (e.g., *cold*, *a bitch*). The influence of age and status also became salient in the results of this study, with women's age and professional status influencing how much they care or worry about linguistic expectations. Furthermore, multiple women brought up performance of emotional labor (with women being expected to perform "mom work"), although most women framed this type of labor as positive, despite the fact that their men colleagues were not expected to perform this work.

Conclusion

This study examines women's linguistic experiences in academia, including perceived pressures to sound more masculine or more feminine, as well as the adoption or avoidance of linguistic features in order to sound more competent. As such, the study expands our understanding of language and gender in the university workplace. Overall, findings reveal

significant obstacles perceived by professional women that may perpetuate gender inequality in the university workplace. Findings of this study strongly suggest that more work may need to be done in academia to critique and remodel everyday discourses about women's language within the academy. While many interviews in this study revealed gender-related progress made over the past few decades, most of this progress related to decreases in overt sexism. Findings of this study highlight a prevalence of perceived benevolent or covert gender biases that persist in the academy.

This study also expands our understanding of the micro-level processes that reproduce gender inequality at work (Ridgeway 2011). A number of women faculty in the study reported modifying their natural speech (via adding, dropping, and/or avoiding features) in order to be perceived as a competent scholar. This remains not only a problematic social imposition, but also a likely contributor to lack of women in leadership positions in universities *as well as* the continued association of masculinity and scholarliness. As such, in line with previous research on workplace gender inequality, the current study adds a sociolinguistic piece to the "culture problem" puzzle. Optimistically, the linguistic pressures and expectations identified in this study provide new fodder for the efforts of feminist scholars attempting to uncover workplace interactions that reproduce inequalities in order to dismantle the status quo.

CHAPTER 3: GENDER INEQUALITY IN ACADEMIA REVEALED THROUGH WORKPLACE NARRATIVES ABOUT LANGUAGE

Gender inequality persists in the U.S. labor force despite growing convictions of gender egalitarianism (Charles and Grusky 2007; Ridgeway 2011). Jobs are still largely segregated by gender, and occupations dominated by men tend to pay more than occupations with high percentages of women (Cohen and Huffman 2003; Hegewisch and Hartmann 2014). In addition to structural inequalities, everyday verbal interactions can reproduce gender ideologies inequality in the workplace (Lester 2008, Ridgeway 2011). Research on communication in the workplace has revealed that perceptions of colleagues' and managers' communication styles reflect traditional gender role expectations (e.g., Holmes 2008; Holmes and Stubbe 2015). These studies have been helpful in uncovering cultural- and structural-level inequalities in the workplace. Nonetheless, the majority of these studies have examined corporate workplaces, ignoring other important institutions—such as the university.

Universities are ideologically powerful organizations, maintaining and disseminating dominant ideologies related to social categories (Bernstein 1977; Bourdieu 1971; Young 1971). One means by which this is done is through everyday raced, classed, and gendered discourses (see, e.g., Sue 2010; Sue et al. 2007). While studies have examined gender inequality in higher education via qualitative analysis, few have examined discourses specifically about language and gender—that is, metacommentary about men's and women's speech (or signed language). As a result, we know very little about men and women faculty members' perceptions of their own language use and that of their colleagues, or the ways they conceptualize, value, and make sense of these language practices.

To fill these gaps, the current study asks: (1) What differences between men and women faculty members' communication styles do university faculty perceive? (2) How do these perceptions reflect or challenge traditional gender role expectations? (3) What do these narratives reveal about organizational norms of femininity and masculinity in the university? To address these research questions, interviews were conducted with 55 tenured and tenure track faculty at a research extensive public research university in a Southern metropolitan area. As part of a larger study, men and women faculty were asked to participate in an audio recorded interview (~45 minutes), during which they were asked a variety of language-related questions, including perceptions of their own speech, the speech of others, and how their speech has or has not influenced their experiences in academia.

The current study focuses on faculty responses and narratives related to language and gender in the workplace. Organizational narratives are especially important in the study of gender in the workplace, because these stories serve as insightful indications of perceived reality (i.e., the way things are) within an organization (Boyce 1996; Lester 2008). Accordingly, a discourse-analytical focus is given to respondents' narratives in order to extrapolate the underlying ideologies that appear to inform the perceptions. As such, a mixed-methods approach is used to analyze the faculty responses: first, a quantitative content analysis (QCA) pertaining to the broad patterns across the interview responses examined; then a qualitative analysis of discourse to examine the ways in which participants framed and ascribed value to their responses.

In what follows, I theoretically frame the study with a review of the literature related to workplace discourses and narratives (with a focus on those related to issues of gender), as well the literature pertaining to perceptions of men's and women's speech (with a focus on past

empirically-based and popular explanations for gender differences in speech). I then provide a detailed overview of the data used in this study, including the data collection process, followed by the analyses and results.

Workplace Narratives

Gender plays an important role in how we make sense of ourselves and others in workplace settings. Individuals' judgements and behaviors at work are framed by their beliefs about gender; these behaviors, in turn, provide a powerful mechanism for the spread of gender ideologies. According to Ridgeway (2011), "the use of gender as a framing device spreads gendered meanings, including assumptions about inequality embedded in those meanings, to all spheres of social relationships" (p. 7), thus preserving gender inequality in the workplace despite socioeconomic transformations. Sociological studies do not delve into the specific linguistic aspects of workplace interaction, nor do they consider the role of linguistic ideologies in the reproduction of gender inequality. An examination of language practices, however, is crucial to understanding ways in which inequalities are reproduced at the institutional level (Bourdieu 1979; Fairclough 1989) and the interactional level (Acker 2006; Gal 1989; Goffman 1959, 1982, 2008; Hymes 1989)). Institutional discourses have the power to perpetuate power, inequality, and ideology (van Dijk 1993b; Fairclough 1993, 2013; Gal 1989). At the interactional level, a number of studies have provided evidence of everyday discourses reproducing stereotypes and inequalities related to race and ethnicity (e.g., Bonilla-Silva 2017; Bonilla-Silva and Forman 2000; van Dijk 1993a) as well as social class and region (e.g., Mallinson and Brewster 2005). Likewise, discourses about gender both reflect and reproduce ideas about gender and gender roles (Philips 1998, 2014).

Employee narratives have been studied by social scientists in order to better understand workplace cultures and specific organizational processes (e.g., Boland and Tenkasi 1995; Czarniawska 1998; Martin 1982; Mumby 1988). Workplace narratives warrant social scientific study due to their "pervasive and continuing influence in our culture, and because narrative is an especially powerful vehicle for the dissemination of ideological meaning formations" (Mumby 1988:102). Workplace narratives can be especially important within the scope of gender due to their ability to disguise and perpetuate gendered organizational practices (Ely and Meyerson 2000; Olsson 2000). More specifically, narratives about gender and gendered traits "create a sense of an 'objective' reality" about gender, and serve as "an indication of reality or 'the way things are' in the organization" (Lester 2008:281–82).

Most studies of workplace narratives related to gender, however, have examined corporate organizations. Only a limited pool of literature has focused specifically on workplace narratives in higher education. While these sites differ for multiple reasons, a salient one is that universities are considered to be very socially progressive (Gross and Simmons 2014)—and rightfully so, with a larger ratio of liberal-to-conservative professors than in the general population (Gross and Fosse 2012; Gross and Simmons 2014; Langbert, Quain, and Klein 2016; Rothman, Lichter, and Nevitte 2005; Zipp and Fenwick 2006). How do these trends affect faculty discourses of gender?

A few studies of gender in higher education have employed analyses of workplace narratives. At a community college, Lester (2008) carried out a qualitative study of six women faculty, including observations and one-on-one interviews. Lester found that women professors performed a variety of stereotypical feminine gender roles (such as administrative duties, caretaking, and other emotional labor); analysis of the professors' narratives revealed that the

practices were not only a result of these women's socialization experiences external to the college, but also a result of their socialization within the college's organizational culture.

According to Herrick (1999), workplace narratives can provide us with “some of the richest and most productive sites for learning about and understanding the relationship between gender and power at work” (p. 282). Analysis of workplace narratives pertaining to *language use* may be particularly important due to the crucial role that language plays in constructing gender (West and Zimmerman 1987; Butler 1988, 2011; Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2013).

Nonetheless, no study has examined faculty members' discourses and narratives about language and gender in the workplace. A wealth of literature on perceptions of men's and women's language, however, provides important context for the current study.

Perceptions of Men's and Women's Speech

Before reviewing the literature on perceptions of men's and women's language, it is important to first answer the questions: what is men's language, and what is women's language? Up until the past few decades, men's language was not discussed in social scientific literature; instead it was treated as the default. Thus, twentieth-century scholarship tends to discuss women's language more than men's language. Lakoff's (1971) *Language and Woman's Place* is one of those texts. A second-wave feminist, Lakoff was one of the first language and gender scholars to place unequal power dynamics at the center of the explanation for men's and women's speech differences. In *Language and Woman's Place*, she addressed the ways men silence and control women (via, e.g., interruptions), the ways women are spoken about (via sexist discourse), and how women themselves communicate (“woman's language”). What *Language and Woman's Place* is most well-known for, however, is its description of women's language. Lakoff asserted that a number of specific linguistic items are used more frequently by

women, many of which are still popularly associated with the speech of women today (list from Holmes 2001:286):

- lexical hedges or fillers (e.g., *you know, sort of, well, you see*)
- tag questions (e.g., *she's very nice, isn't she?*)
- rising intonation on declaratives (e.g., *it's really good?*)
- 'empty' adjectives (e.g., *divine, charming, cute*)
- precise color terms (e.g., *magenta, aquamarine*)
- intensifiers such as *just* and *so*
- 'hypercorrect' grammar
- 'superpolite' forms (e.g., *indirect requests, euphemisms*)
- avoidance of strong swear words
- and emphatic stress (e.g., *it was a BRILLIANT performance*)

Lakoff claimed that these linguistic features signal women's uncertainty and lack of confidence, and argued that a woman's use of these weak feature could be used to keep a her socially subordinate to men. Countless studies have since empirically and theoretically challenged Lakoff's claim that the features of "women's language" signal weakness,⁹ as well as highlighting the limited empirical basis for her claims. Nonetheless, Lakoff's writing has influenced and continues to influence popular and scholarly discussions of gender.

⁹ For example, almost a dozen alternative classifications of tag question functions have been identified, including informational, confirmatory, facilitative, softening, attitudinal, peremptory, and "punctuational" tag questions (Algeo 1990; Holmes 1995; Tottie and Hoffmann 2006). Researchers have linked tag questions to increased levels of independence (Winefield, Chandler, and Bassett 1989), while others have shown how tag questions can challenge, antagonize, and insult (Algeo 1990; Holmes 1995; Tottie and Hoffmann 2006) – functions quite different tentativeness or uncertainty. Studies shown tag questions used by men and women equally in power positions (e.g., Cameron et al. 1988).

With a paradigm shift in the 1980s, gender differences began to be explained on the basis of differential (*subcultural*) socialization. This approach centered on the idea that men and women use language differently due to socialization in same-sex spheres, and that these differences inevitably lead to cross-sex miscommunication. In fact, Maltz and Borker (1982) argued that cross-gender miscommunication mirrored that of cross-ethnic miscommunication. Their emphasis on subculture marks an important update: the inclusion of *men's* language in the discussion of language and gender. With regard to specific linguistic features of men and women, Maltz and Borker (1982) claimed that women display a greater frequency of question-asking, positive minimal responses (e.g., *mmhmm*), and conversational “shitwork” (their term to describe conversational facilitation), while men are more likely to interrupt, dispute their interlocutor, ignore their interlocutor, control the topic, and make direct declarations. Adding to the list of features, Tannen (1990, 1994, 1995) claimed that women are indirect and supportive communicators, while men are direct and information-based communicators; she also claimed that women and men use questions, backchanneling (‘mm-hmm’), and nodding for different reasons, and that miscommunication between men and women is the inevitable result of their differences in communication styles. Many empirical studies¹⁰ have since challenged the claims of Tannen, Maltz and Borker, and other Cultural Difference scholars. Nonetheless, Cultural Difference has had a lasting impact on academic scholarship, popular culture, and our society’s public discourses about the subject (Cameron 2009, 2014; Elrich and Meyerhoff 2014; Philips 2014).

While the literature on gender perceptions and gender and communication at work is expansive, we know relatively little about the language and gender experiences of university

¹⁰ Regarding question-asking, a study Freed and Greenwood (1996) showed little to no difference in the number or type of questions used by women and men.

faculty. A limited number of studies have examined the speech of men and women professors. Eakins and Eakins (1976) carried out an observational study of faculty meetings and found that men faculty spoke more often and for longer periods of time than women faculty, and men interrupted more often than women faculty did. A similar study by (Edelsky 1981) also found that men faculty took longer turns during faculty meetings than women faculty. A perception study by Wiley and Crittenden (1992) surveyed tenured men professors about their perceptions of colleagues' explanations of success. Professors rated men colleagues' assertive explanations of success as confirming masculine gender identity, and rated women colleagues' modest and deflective explanations as confirming feminine gender identity. However, while men's responses enhanced ratings of professionalism, women's responses detracted from their professionalism—suggesting that women in academia may have to choose between sounding feminine and sounding professional. The lack of literature on language and gender in the academic workplace is a significant gap, given that higher education is both a workplace and training ground for future workers. Because research has revealed that language attitudes can reproduce racial and class-based inequalities in higher education (e.g., Costner, Daniels, and Clark 2010; Dunstan 2013; Dunstan et al. 2015; Dunstan and Jaeger 2015; McBride 2006), we must consider the ways in which language ideologies might reproduce gender inequality in higher education. Research into the social processes that maintain gender inequality in the workplace—such as gender beliefs and perceptions—is crucial for achieving gender equality (Ridgeway 2011).

The Current Study

In the current study, I analyze workplace narratives and responses from interviews conducted with faculty at a public research university in the south. First, I examine faculty responses to questions about language and gender using content analysis to illustrate broad

trends in the data related to faculty members' perceptions of men and women faculty; this analysis addresses my first research question: *What differences between men and women faculty members' communication styles do university faculty perceive?* I then analyze faculty members' workplace narratives using qualitative analysis to explore the ways in which faculty discursively and theoretically frame their observations; this analysis addresses my second and third research questions: *How do these perceptions reflect or challenge traditional gender role expectations? What do these narratives reveal about organizational norms of femininity and masculinity in the university?*

In the following section, I detail my methods for data collection, coding, and analysis. I then provide the results of the content analysis, followed by the qualitative analysis of discourse. I conclude with a summary of the study and implications for the field.

Data Collection

Data for this study come from semi-structured interviews with 55 faculty members at a large research university in a metropolitan area of the southeastern United States. The interviews were collected as part of the Faculty Dialect Study, a larger project investigating the language-related experiences of tenured and tenure-track faculty. Faculty members were asked to participate in the study via a randomly based email solicitation and snowball sampling. Regarding the former method, a university email was sent to a random sample of one-third of the tenure-track faculty members at the university, balanced for college, rank (assistant, associate, full), and gender. The email asked for voluntary participation in a study exploring how instructors adjust their speech when they become part of an institution of higher learning, as well as their dialect experiences from childhood to their present position as a professor. The full email and questionnaire can be found in the Appendices.

Study participants included tenured and tenure-track faculty spanning multiple departments and colleges, as well as SES, regional, and dialect backgrounds, and was balanced for gender. Table 3.1 displays the demographic breakdown of the 55 participants whose interviews were used in the current study. Broadened academic fields were used so as to prevent identifiability of faculty in small departments or fields, as well as racial, ethnic, or gender minorities in those fields.

Table 3.1: Study participants' gender, academic field, and race/ethnicity (N=55)

	Men	Women
Academic Field		
Agriculture Science	5	0
Applied Social Sciences	2	4
Business	1	1
Design	1	0
Education	2	2
Engineering	2	1
Humanities	6	5
Life Sciences	4	1
Natural Resources	0	4
Professional Program	2	1
Social Science	5	7
Race/Ethnicity		
Black/African American	1	6
Latinx/Hispanic	0	2
White/Caucasian	28	18

The Faculty Dialect Study interviews were semi-structured, designed to explore faculty members' language attitudes and experiences before academia, during the journey towards academia (i.e., college and grad school), and within their current position in academia. Faculty were asked 24-26 questions (two questions were for women faculty only). Only a few of these questions addressed gender specifically, and these questions did not occur until over half-way through the interview; thus, interviewers did not believe that this was an interview about gender specifically (which it wasn't). All interviews were audio-recorded digitally with the faculty

members' consent using a Marantz recorder. Over 50 hours of audio were recorded and transcribed. Each interview was transcribed and then hand-corrected (by a different transcriptionist). Transcripts were coded in NVivo for the quantitative and qualitative analyses.

This chapter reports data primarily from faculty members' responses to Interview Question #17: "*Have you ever noticed differences in the way that men versus women faculty communicate (casually, professionally, inside/outside the classroom, etc.)?*" Because some participants talked about faculty and gender in other parts of the interview, however, responses to other questions where gender-related themes arose spontaneously are also included.

Content Analysis

Using NVivo, interviewee responses were coded for perceived differences in men and women faculty members' speech (i.e., linguistic features and/or communication styles that faculty identified as being more common in men or women faculty). Responses related were coded as follows:

- If interviewee mentioned linguistic feature/style/attribute = [*Name of Feature*]
- If interviewee reported observing no gender differences = *No Differences*
- If the interviewee did not answer the question = *NA*, excluded from analysis

Results of the first QCA are displayed in Figures 3.1 and 3.2. First, Figure 3.1 graphs the language features (mentioned by at least two respondents) attributed to men faculty. The most common feature was interruptions, followed by directness. Interestingly, these two traits, as well as vulgarity and informality, all appear in previous Male Dominance and/or Cultural Difference lists of men's language features. Next, Figure 3.2 shows the language features (mentioned by at least two respondents) attributed to women faculty. The most common trait was indirectness; this

included features such as hedges. The next most common trait for women faculty was politeness, which included apologies, compliments, and general politeness.

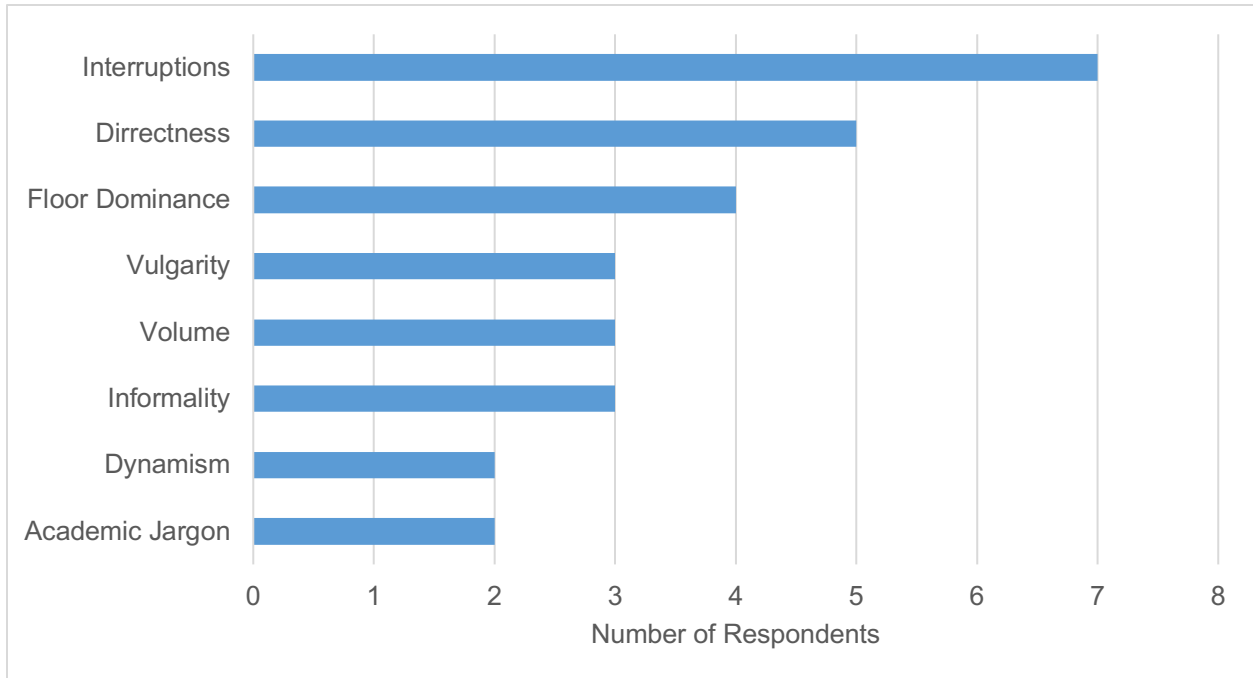


Figure 3.1: Linguistic characteristics of men faculty, as described by faculty respondent

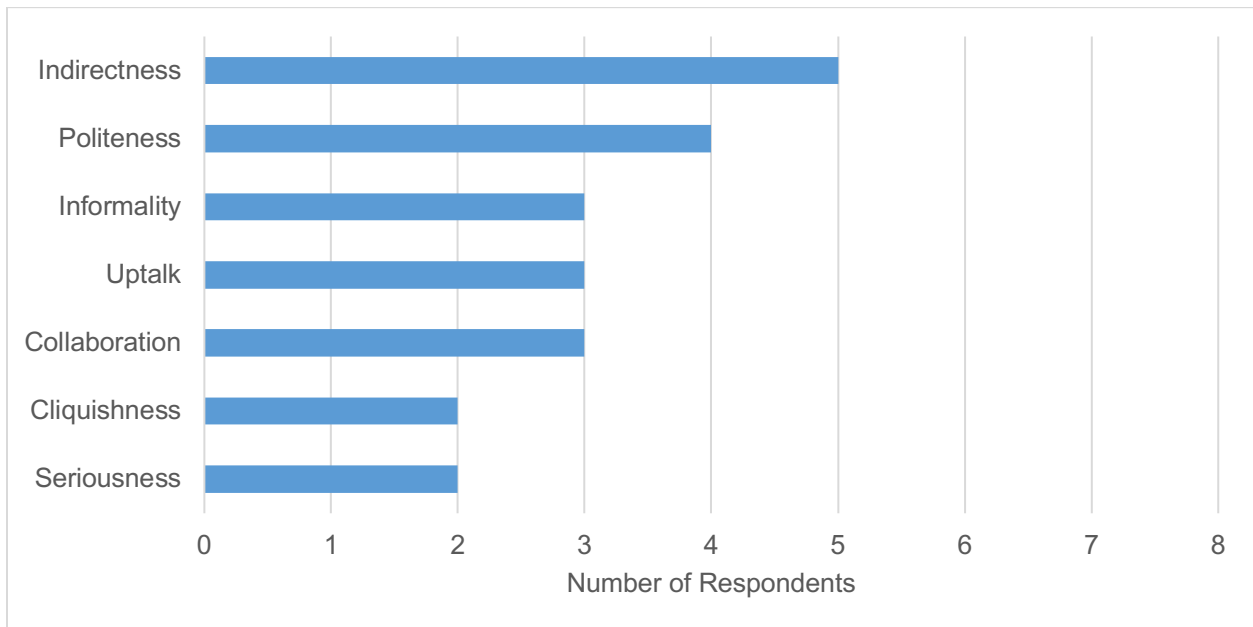


Figure 3.2: Linguistic characteristics of women faculty, as described by faculty respondents.

While participants were specifically asked about communication styles and/or linguistic features, many described other differences between men and women faculty, including dispositions and attitudes. These were also coded for in a second QCA, results of which are displayed in Figure 3.3. Many respondents brought up themes of women being sanctioned more than men (and, similarly, men being sanctioned less than women) for various linguistic practices. Additionally, the theme of women being interrupted or being ignored were brought up multiple times. Concerning dispositions, faculty tended to focus on women; they mentioned women being insecure, women being compassionate, and women having a chip on their shoulder.

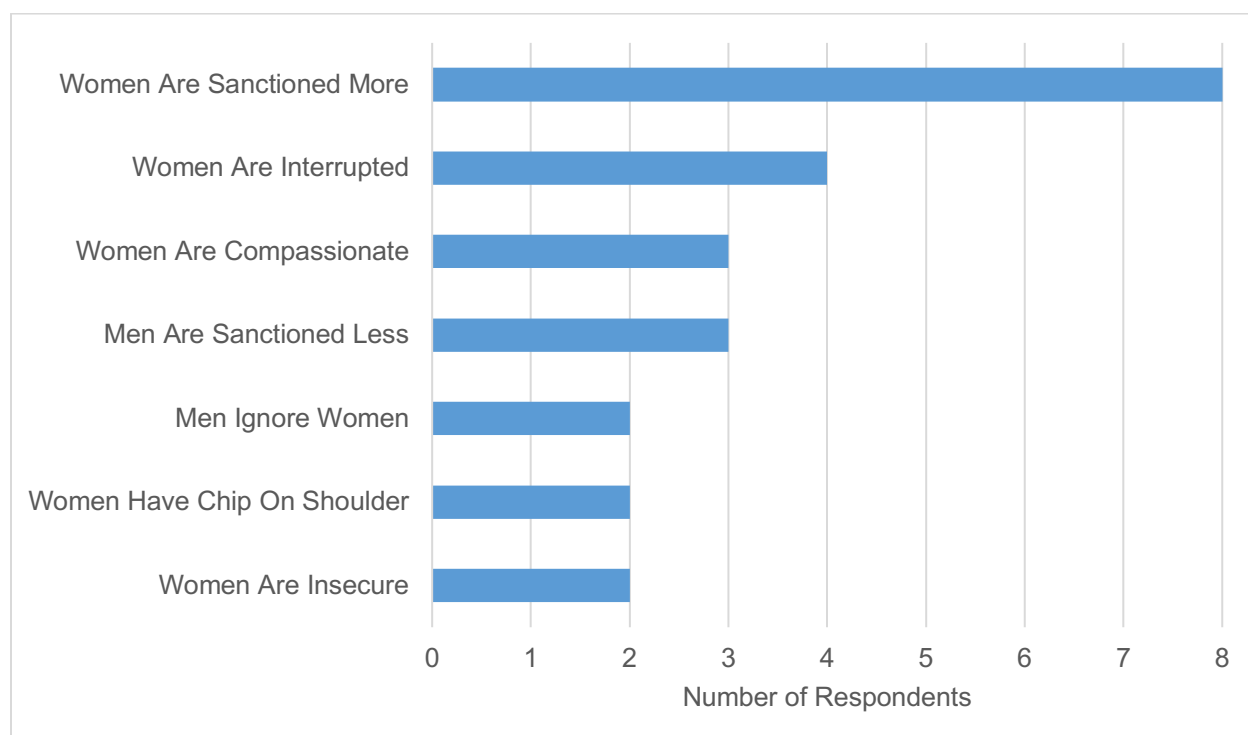


Figure 3.3: Linguistic comparisons of men and women faculty, as described by faculty respondents.

While no large patterns emerged in the first QCA related to respondent gender (i.e., at least one man and one woman mentioned each linguistic feature listed), some gendered patterns did arise in the results of the second QCA. For instance, only men mentioned women having

chips on their shoulders or women being insecure. As a result, in the following QCA, which examines response type, respondent gender was also coded for.

The third and final QCA examined responses typologically in order to answer the following questions: Do more respondents see differences than not? Do respondents focus more on women, men, or both? How many brought up themes of inequality (e.g., double standards or male dominance)? The following coding schema was used:

- If interviewee only mentioned a feature/style/attribute of WOMEN faculty's speech = *Focus on Women*
- If interviewee only mentioned a feature/style/attribute of MEN faculty's speech = *Focus on Men*
- If interviewee mentioned men dominating women OR women being dominated linguistically = *Men Dominating Women*
- If interviewee mentioned double-standards and/or women being sanctioned for engaging in the same linguistic practices as men = *Double Standard*

Results of the third QCA are displayed in Figures 3.4 below. Broadly, Figure 3.4 illustrates the number of interviewees who focused on women's speech, men's speech or both; who reported no observed differences; who mentioned linguistic double-standards; and who mentioned men faculty linguistically dominating women faculty. These data show that more respondents observed gender differences than not: 15 interviewees reported no differences, while 31 did report gender differences (with 16 interviewees observing linguistic traits of women and men, 10 focusing on traits of women only, and 5 focusing on traits of men only).

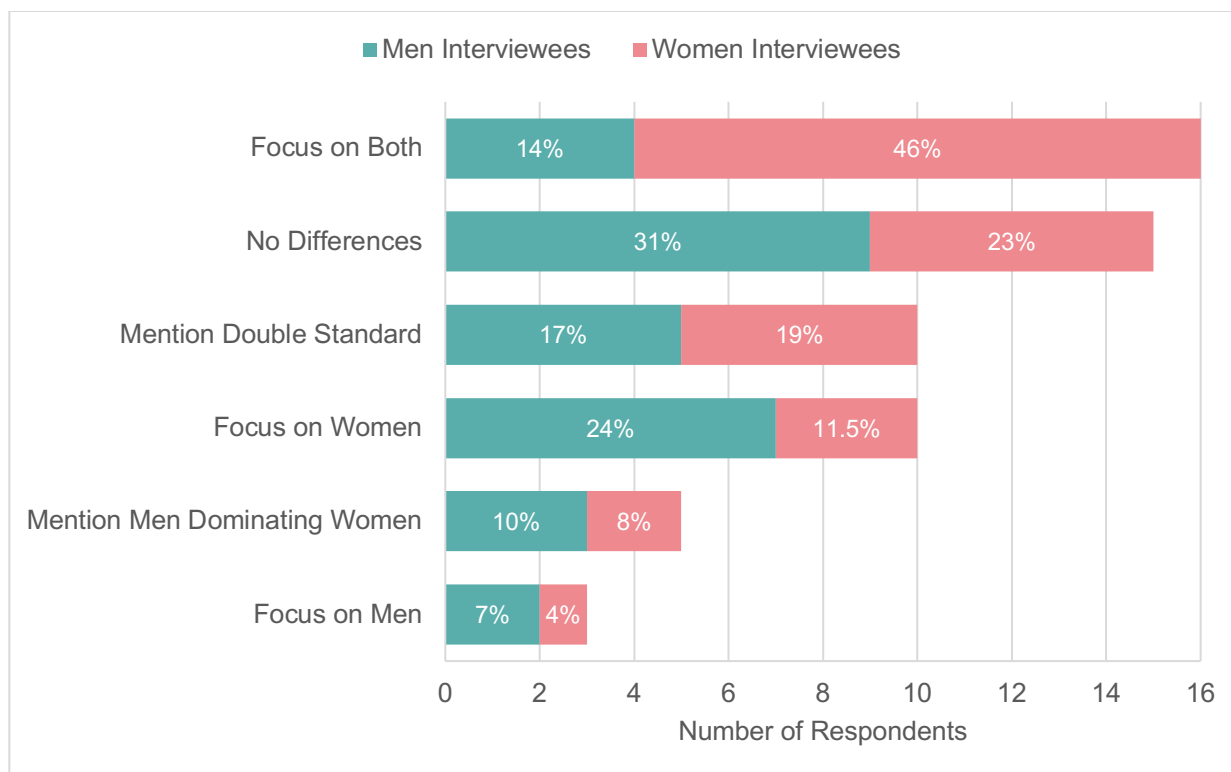


Figure 3.4: Response foci and themes related to men and women faculty's language, broken down by respondent gender (with percent labels denoting percentages of total men respondents and percentages of total women respondents)

In order to compare the responses of men and women faculty, Figure 3.4 shows the data broken down by respondent gender (illustrated by color). For normalization purposes, percentage labels inside the bars represent the percent of total men respondents and percent of total women respondents. These data reveal that no response type was exclusively men or women, although a higher percentage of women respondents focused on both men and women in their responses (i.e., *Focus on Both*), while higher percentage of men respondents focused on one gender or the other (i.e., *Focus on Women* or *Focus on Men*). While some literature suggests that men are more likely to overlook or downplay instances of gender inequality in the workplace (Basford, Offermann, and Behrend 2014; Becker and Swim 2011), a higher percentage of men respondents brought up perceptions of men faculty linguistically dominating women faculty. Nonetheless, a

higher percentage of women respondents brought up themes of double-standards faced by women faculty. In order to provide context to these trends as well as the features displayed in Figures 3.1-3.3, qualitative analysis is provided in the following section.

Qualitative Analysis

Multiple themes emerged when faculty members described differences in women's and men's communication. Many of the features displayed in Figures 1 and 2 were discussed in tandem with one another to tell thematic stories, such as men faculty commanding the room, or women's language being policed more than men's language. The following sections examine the discourses employed by interviewees when recounting narratives and anecdotal observations related to these themes.

Confident Men Faculty

One of the most commonly brought up themes in faculty responses was that of men faculty's perceived linguistic dominance. These were generally framed in one of two ways: positively (e.g., commanding the room) or negatively (e.g., hogging the floor). In terms of specific linguistic features, faculty members brought up men's linguistic dominance primarily via one of three features: volume, talk time, and interruptions.

Men faculty's volume was brought up by several respondents. Some professors described men's loudness neutrally or pejoratively. Professor 29, for instance, a white woman in the Social Sciences, said bluntly: "Men are more prone to yell." Professor 2, a Latina woman in Life Science, however, saw men's volume as a positive attribute. When asked about differences in the way that men and women faculty communicate, Professor 2 immediately brought up differences in the classroom:

I think we have extraordinary outstanding faculty award winning faculty—um, male faculty—that you know even with doors closed in a classroom, you can hear them. And

it's like an entertainment thing, right? And they're powerful and loud and, you know, funny. ... Usually I can hear them from [my office] ... And the students love it. They love that stuff. They eat it up. ...[*anecdote about how one of the professors has a radio show, and how she herself is not an entertainer*] ... Oh my goodness, I wish you could hear [the men instructors]. It's- it's like, I want to go in. I want to go in there and listen. It's so cool. It sounds awesome.

Professor 2's description of the men faculty members' command of their classrooms is one of praise. She describes their ability to entertain their students, holding attention with their volume and dynamism. On the flip side, Professor 38, a white man in the Social Sciences, framed men's use of volume, along with interruptions, as a form of dominance rather than engagement:

I mean, one of the things that I noticed—that I'm kind of keyed into—is about interruptions. About how men tend to interrupt women a lot and, uh, I see that all the time, you know, when we're in meetings or things like that. Um. Or, like, raising of voices in order to kind of talk, uh, over people. It's definitely men that are much more often doing that than women.

Here, Professor 38 describes men faculty's use of louder volume as a tool to interrupt and steal the floor from women faculty.

Professor 38 was not the only faculty respondent to bring up men faculty's interruptions. In fact, men's interruptions were the most commonly brought up linguistic feature in the data—brought up by both women and men faculty. Multiple reasons. Why were interruptions so salient? Multiple reasons could be at play. First, it is important to note that the Faculty Dialect Study interviews took place during the 2016 U.S. presidential race, and many faculty (both women and men) brought up Hillary Clinton and/or Donald Trump in their responses to questions related to gender. Many women respondents brought up Clinton when discussing double-standards, as well as interruptions. It is possible that there was a saliency effect of this topic being covered by multiple mass media during or recently before the interviews took place. For instance, the week after the first 2016 presidential debate, almost every major (and many

other) online news outlet ran a story about Trump interrupting Clinton during the debate, with many outlets providing counts of Trump's versus Clinton's interruption rates.¹¹

Another reason that interruptions came up more than any other linguistic feature might be explained by Politeness Theory (Brown and Levinson 1987). Based on Goffman's (1955) notion of *face* and *facework*, Brown and Levinson developed a model of politeness based on the proposition that some speech acts are intrinsically threatening to face: they call these *face-threatening acts*. Interruptions are positive face-threatening acts, because they—along with belittlement, complaints, and accusations—are speech acts that threaten the addressee's positive face (or self-image). It is not surprising, then, that interruptions were brought up by so many faculty members; as opposed to other linguistic features, such as rising intonation or directness, interruptions violate turn-taking norms. According to Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson (1974), our turn-taking system has “a set of rules” that facilitate smooth and ordered conversation: no gaps (i.e. no long pauses), and no overlaps (i.e., no interruptions). Thus, interruptions are salient because they are impolite (Brown and Levinson 1987) and deviant (Sacks et al. 1974).

Nonetheless, some respondents were less sure about interruptions being a power move (a la Male Dominance) so much as a cultural difference related to gender *or* region. For instance, Professor 52, an African American woman in Education, provided multiple rationales related to men's interruptions:

... You see a lot more of the males, um, maybe, um, interrupt—interrupt the women—or sometimes the other men, you know, just interrupt, um, or talk over the women faculty. And the women faculty tend to let others speak over them. ... The women faculty tend to

¹¹ Examples include *USA Today*'s “Clinton got interrupted how many times? Debate night by the numbers” (Solis 2016); *Vox*'s “Trump interrupted Clinton 51 times at the debate. She interrupted him just 17 times” (Crockett and Frostenson 2016); *TIME*'s “Donald Trump interrupted Hillary Clinton and Lester Holt 55 times in the first Presidential Debate” (Wilson 2016); *MSNBC*'s “Donald Trump's interrupting problem” (Maddow 2016); and *PBS NewsHour*'s “For many women, watching Trump interrupt Clinton 51 times was unnerving but familiar” (Lush 2016).

be more polite in their speech. But I think also that's kind of a Southern thing as well. Um. But I also think it also depends on where the faculty members are from.

First, Professor 52 reports observing men interrupting and talking over women; she says this twice. She then qualifies her observation by saying that women faculty “let others speak over them”; she says this is because they are more polite. This rationale shifts the explanation from one of Male Dominance to one of Cultural Difference. The cultural element is expounded upon further, as Professor 52 makes intersectional connections between gender norms and regional norms.

Professor 36, a white man in Business, brought up educational higher-ups (including university presidents and a vice provost) in his discussion of gender differences. He began discussing the reason why his daughter decided to go to an all-women's college, and then elaborated on the issues of men's interruptions and floor-holding:

It's kind of accepted for, you know, a man to interrupt, but not for a woman to interrupt. Um. Yeah. Clearly, you know, [with women] there's more of this *taking turns*. And I've noticed it being on [a certain faculty committee]. Um. Just dealing with the various presidents of the university we've had. You know [a former female president] would come and listen to faculty. [A previous male president] would come in, boom out! He didn't want- he didn't care what you had to say. Um. And even- some of the things that's been impressive about [the current female president], you know, I had my reservations, but she is a listener.

In his narrative, Professor 36 juxtaposes two former university presidents (a man and a woman) as exemplars of their gender. He describes how the woman would “come and listen,” whereas the man would “boom out” (likely meaning he would hog the floor via talkativeness, floor hogging, and/or volume). Turning his focus to interruptions, Professor 36 continued:

I used to love [the former female vice provost]. She was in the provost office here. She had been a [an administrator elsewhere], and she came over here. And when anybody tried to interrupt [her], she'd say, “I'm not finished yet.” She would scold them for doing that because, uh, you know, I guess that's what happens. People don't feel like it's wrong to interrupt someone. But she always told them, “When I'm done, then you can talk.” Uh. And I always- I always loved it, you know. ... I think that's the big difference, um, is

there's just different habits. [With women], everybody gets their turn, whereas men tend to try to hog the conversation. Uh. It's a cliché, but I think it's true. <laughter>

The discourse of this narrative—including what Professor 36 says, and what he omits—is quite interesting. Professor 36 explains that the former vice provost, a woman, used to scold (a positive face-threatening act [Brown and Levinson 1987]) “anybody” that tried to interrupt her; he does not say she scolded “men faculty” despite the fact that he was just talking about men’s tendency to interrupt in meetings. Next, his rationale for the vice provost being interrupted so often was simple: “I guess that’s what happens.” This explanation normalizes the interrupting of women, reflecting data that suggest women are interrupted more often than men are interrupted (Hancock and Rubin 2014; Zimmerman and West 1996). Furthermore, Professor 36’s description of the provost’s standing up for herself—including the verb *scold*, as well as his reflection “I always loved it”—is one of amusement, and seems to trivialize the provost’s feminist act of reclaiming the floor (Ford 2008). Finally, his framing of men’s and women’s “different habits” is highly reminiscent of the essentialist Mars-and-Venus trope of the Cultural Difference approach.

Professor 36 was not the only one to draw upon humor when discussing women faculty being interrupted by men. Professor 56, a black woman in the Social Sciences, brought up her own experience with being interrupted by men:

Not so much in meetings, because meetings tend to be very structured, and with faculty meetings, you know, since I'm the head I, you know, I lead the faculty meetings. But *hall talk*, in which, you know, there's a group of my colleagues—male colleagues and me—and you know people are just kind of talking, throwing ideas and ... I try to make comments, right? But, like, they don't hear it, or they just, you know, it [gets cut off], you know, whatever. And there've been times in which I've just said, “Well, wait a minute now” <laughter> “I'm trying to say something here.” And- but the problem is ... if you do that, you have to say something really profound or really <laughter> funny. I've gotten their attention and then, you know, I make my little statement, [and then] it's like, “Why'd you interrupt us?” <laughter> “For this?”

Like Professor 36, Professor 56 tries to explain away the interruptions (saying the men “don’t hear” her comments). She also jokes about her reclamation of the floor; she stresses humorously that if she does indeed reclaim her talk time, she had better have something exceptional to say. Notably, this was not a pressure that she placed on the men interrupters.

Additional explanations (and excuses) for men faculty’s linguistic dominance arose in the interviews. For instance, Professor 14’s, a white man in Agricultural Science, provided the following explanations about men’s and women’s participation in faculty meetings:

At meetings [the men] tend to be a little more vocal. And again, we, you know– we certainly– males– it doesn’t seem to matter what the topics is. They’re going to have to interject their opinions. Um. But it seems to me like, you know, a few of the females are also- maybe feel comfortable enough to speak up. So, so, I feel pretty good that somebody not speaking up is– I don’t think there’s any reason other than they may just not have anything to say. ... I’ve kind of seen where some of the females will certainly voice their opinion on something.

In the beginning of his response, Professor 14 describes men faculty as being “more vocal.” He then says that “a few of” the women faculty “feel comfortable enough to speak up,” discursively painting a faculty meeting in which men dominate and women may feel like they need permission to speak. Then, however, he changes his position; he decides that women who are quiet are not quiet because they feel *silenced*, but rather because they have nothing to say – painting a more egalitarian meeting picture, one in which everyone feels equally comfortable participating.

It was not only men professors who provided excuses for men’s dominance; women faculty did, as well. For instance, Professor 52, a black woman in Education, made the following comment while discussing men faculty’s tendency to interrupt and talk over women:

...the women faculty tend to let others speak over them. Um. The– I see the women faculty tend to be more polite in their speech. But I think also that’s kind of a Southern thing as well.

While Professor 52 importantly notes that gender may be intersecting with region when it comes to conversational norms, she still places the burdens of men's interruptions and dominance on the women faculty. Like Professor 14 above, this insinuates that women are quieter by choice – painting, again, a more egalitarian meeting picture.

Direct Men Faculty

Another commonly mentioned theme was men faculty's directness, with narratives reflecting the Cultural Difference trope of men being direct communicators and women being indirect communicators. Again, Politeness Theory helps explain the salience of directness in faculty responses. Like interruptions, directness is considered by Brown and Levinson (1987) to be face-threatening, as opposed to indirectness, which they consider face-saving. This is because directness often takes the form of criticisms, disagreements, or boasting (all positive face-threatening acts), as well as directives, requests, warnings, and suggestions (all negative face-threatening acts, as they require some sort of response and/or action on the part of the addressee). On the contrary, indirect speech acts—hedges, apologies, passive language, and plural pronouns—are considered face-saving acts.

Interviewees who described men faculty as direct tended to describe them as *straightforward* (as opposed to hedging). For instance, Professor 52, the black woman in Education, described men's direct communication during faculty meetings:

I definitely notice that, you know, [in] a lot of meetings you'll have some with the alpha male talk in terms of the-. They talk more definitively. "This is what it is."

Here Professor 52 describes men's speech style as definitive. This mirrors the Male Dominance and Cultural Difference tropes of men using authoritative language. Professor 18, a white woman in Business, seconded the associations of masculinity with frankness. In her discussion of her field's expectations, she said the following:

In the Business School, the- the- um- warm and fuzzy is not acceptable. Okay? In Liberal Arts you may find that. But here, they want you to be manly. Sound like, you know – tell everybody, “This is how it is.”

While Professor 18 does note that there is variation across the university in terms of what it means to sound academic or professional, she adheres to traditional gender stereotyping, in that the liberal arts are seen as more feminine (“warm and fuzzy”) and business is seen as more masculine (telling it “how it is”).

Professor 34, a white woman in Natural Resources, also described men faculty as being more direct, by juxtaposing it with women faculty’s more collaborative style:

Women [faculty] tend to be more collaborative and have more conversations to arrive at decisions, and men [faculty] tend to be more, um, I think it’s titled *executive*. So they just tend to tell you and then– and make decisions...

Professor 34’s juxtaposition of women and men faculty’s styles directly mirrors trope of the Cultural Difference approach: women are more collaborative and more verbal, while men are more focused on information and directives.

Other interviewees highlighted men’s directness through the exceptionalization of straightforward women. While describing the historically men-dominated nature of her field, Professor 54, an early-career professor in the Social Sciences, noted some exceptional women in her department:

I would say I have some pretty strong women examples in my department. Again, being junior faculty, I’m the only junior faculty, or assistant professor, who’s a female. Um. But I’ve got some pretty strong examples of, like, forthright and holding their own, you know, among their faculty peers.

Similarly, Professor 17, a white man in Engineering, recalled a professor who violated gender role expectations. Specifically, he recalled a woman faculty in his department who experienced repercussions for being too direct; she ended up changing her linguistic behavior as a result:

I'm thinking of one particular faculty colleague who's been here for longer than I have actually—female—who is well known and has been very successful, you know. And she, early on, was sort of in there with the guys and would get into sort of back-and-forth with male colleagues that were of her rank and age. And I remember it being quite contentious. And now, over time—I'm trying to answer the question—she's taken a different approach, in the sense of not direct confrontation but more sort of, you know, holding back and then waiting [for the dust to settle], and then sort of coming out with some, you know, statement about— not giving up, but not trying to get into a sort of testosterone-driven argument about something. It has more to do with, you know, finding the right opportunity to make the point.

Professor 17 noted that the woman professor's direct linguistic behavior resulted in contentiousness. As a result, the professor adopted an indirect approach to confrontation. While Professor 17 noted that the woman professor didn't "give up" (as if to say she "wasn't silenced"), she was still forced to change her communication style as a result of gender role expectations.

While descriptions of direct women as exceptional were indicative of the expectation of women to be less direct, many interviewees described this indirectness overtly. The next section discusses this theme in detail.

Indirect Women Faculty

As the previous section illustrated, many faculty members juxtaposed men's directness with women's indirectness. However, respondents framed women's indirectness in two ways: as nonconfrontational or as passive aggressive. Sociolinguistic literature (especially that of the Cultural Difference approach) has suggested that women are indirect/nonconfrontational because of their conversational goals being collaborative and noncompetitive. However, this was not the rationale given by faculty; almost all respondents who described indirect or nonconfrontational women faculty did so through narratives of women being indirect as a result of workplace pressure.

For instance, Professor 44, a white woman in the Social Sciences, said the following when discussing faculty differences:

Women faculty are more indirect. They work around what they want to say, and I think what gets me in trouble sometimes is that I'm more direct, you know? I say exactly what I want to say. I don't try to go around it. And particularly when you're talking to male faculty, you know, they want you to be more indirect and more soft. And I tend not to do that.

Here we see Professor 44 grappling with issues of linguistic description versus prescription. She first observes that women faculty are more indirect; she then qualifies this statement by adding that this indirectness may not be an inherent quality of women's speech, but rather the result of a prescription placed on them. Further, she notes that she experiences sanctioning for violating this gender role expectation.

Professor 38 (the white man in the Social Sciences quoted earlier), brought up women's indirectness in a narrative about women's nonverbal reactions to being interrupted and/or talked over:

I guess I've seen non-verbal recognition of these things in meetings, though, before, where one of my female colleagues would say something and then, um, they get kind of drowned out, and then you see them raise their eyebrows or, you know, they recognize what's happening too, and I can see- I can see what's going on.

Here Professor 38 illustrates and alludes to faculty women as more likely to react via covert nonverbals (e.g., raised eyebrows, or perhaps rolled eyes), rather than directly—and verbally—confront the man doing the interrupting.

Professor 52 was not the only faculty member to note women's indirect communication via nonverbals. And some narratives stood out as more peculiar than others, such as one narrative from Professor 37, a white man in Design:

My mentor is female, and she's taught me some sign language and this one—I'm making a gesture of drawing my hand with four fingers and thumbs slightly extended across my forehead okay as if I'm wiping my brow—that's for use in a faculty meeting, and that

means you have bitch written all over your face. So, it's kind of like baseball signals between the catcher and the pitcher. I've never seen men do this, but women have visual signals that they use in these meetings, and they're very useful, and I'm just getting educated...

Here Professor 37 highlights women faculty's indirectness via a narrative of women faculty secretively using sign language, rather than make assertive claims aloud, during faculty meetings. While no other interviewees (men or women) brought up this secret use of iconic signing during their interviews, Professor 37 did note that it is used exclusively by the women faculty in his department. Whether accurate or not, it at the very least highlights a possible expectation of women to not speak up (at least orally/auditory) during meetings.

Like Professor 37, some professors interpreted women's indirectness as a form of passive aggression. When asked about differences in women and men faculty's communication styles, Professor 46, a white man in Education, recounted his experience at a previous university:

My most dramatic experience with that is that most of the field faculty that I work with in [a Western state]—well, well, almost all of them—were female. For whatever reason, some of it is the culture, the very individualistic and self-reliant—um, to the point of defensive—culture there. Some of it is the combination of traditional male gender roles and female [gender roles] – really exaggeration of what those are. I mean, even when some of these women were dealing with very reasonable and respectful men, they would still get the defensive posture that, some place or other, they had picked up. ...*[anecdote about why he left that university]*... A lot of passive aggression. A lot of talking down to people. A lot of excluding. I mean, I thought I'd seen some pretty bad examples of that [at a different Southern university], again, working with almost all female faculty and students... But, um, they (the women at the Western university) really took it to another level. Um. And it was a really toxic environment. You know. It's, like, what they said, and what they didn't say. A lot of what they said behind your back. You really struggled to be straightforward and just ask the simple questions. That's partly culture, but obviously, language was the tool in that culture. ...Whenever cultures are like that, whether it's men or women, whether it's, um, blacks or whites, or older or younger, it just isn't a good place to be.

Within this narrative, Professor 46 engages in multiple problematic discourses about women.

First, he describes the women as “defensive” – even when they are “dealing with very reasonable and respectful men.” This chip-on-their-shoulders discourse has surfaced in multiple qualitative

studies about perceptions of women faculty and faculty of color (e.g., Rhode 2002; Jenkins 1984; Zamudio and Lichter 2008). Secondly, Professor 46 engages in gender essentialist discourses of Cultural Difference approach, even using the term “culture” multiple times (though somewhat ambiguously). Finally, though, his narrative takes a turn towards abstract liberalism (Bonilla-Silva 2010). Professor 46 says that the behaviors he has just described as characteristic of women are toxic “regardless of” sex/gender, race, or age. While Professor 46’s I-don’t-see-gender discourse contradicts the first half of his narrative—in which the focus was on the problematic nature of multiple women-dominant departments—Bonilla-Silva (2010) has cited this type of “semantic move” used by white respondents discussing race. In his analysis of interviews about racial inequality, Bonilla-Silva found that, because the expression of racist views is frowned upon in our post-civil rights era, many educated, middle-class whites will often employ disclaimers, qualifications, and contradictions as “rhetorical shields” to save face when discussing race. Professor 46 (and others) seem to be employing the same “semantic moves” when discussing gender. This supports Stoll, Lilley, and Pinter's (2017) proposition that *gender-blind sexism* as an extension of Bonilla-Silva’s theory of color-blind racism, is a suitable theoretical framework for understanding the production and reproduction of gender inequality.

Linguistic Double Standards

Language-related double standards were brought up by many faculty members. Multiple respondents told stories of or alluded to women faculty being policed more than men for their linguistic behaviors—often for the same behaviors that men professors engaged in sans repercussions. Professor 39, a white woman in Natural Resources, brought up double standards during her discussion with the interviewer about her field being a “man’s world.” She was astute in her observation of the gendered segregation of professional/academic fields and associated

bias. Banchevsky and Park (2018) found that women in men-dominated fields are not only outnumbered by men, but they are also more likely to encounter men colleagues with alienating beliefs that marginalize women, such as men believing fields should be segregated—hence, a “man’s world.” Noting the expected gender-role adherence within her department, and considering her own non-feminine behavior, Professor 39 hypothesized:

I’m sure there are times where—I’m sure my male colleagues expect my behavior to be different as a woman, and I’m not. And so they’re kind of like “Wow,” you know? Whereas, if I were a guy, they probably wouldn’t have that type of response. You know, typical stuff.

Here, Professor 39 describes being negatively sanctioned for behaviors which would go unnoticed if performed or spoken by men. Shockingly, Professor 39 refers to these double standards as “typical stuff.” When the interviewer asked Professor 39 to be more specific, she brought up confrontation of men faculty:

Well, you know... when they decide on something that I think is [wrong], or something happens that shouldn't have happened, and I'm like, “You know, this is”—I don't want to use bad language—“this is a bad situation. It shouldn't have been and, you know, you need to be accountable for it” and... If you've had more traditional roles with your wives, and stuff, then you're not perhaps used to that! <laughter>

Professor 39 makes an astute connection between language and gender and gender roles. In positing that men who support traditional gender roles in the home are likely to support them at work as well—a connection that has been observed empirically by researchers (e.g., Cikara et al. 2009)—Professor 39 notes the connection between traditional perceptions of roles (i.e., women as homemakers) and traditional perceptions of speech (i.e., women as indirect/demure).

Unlike women professors who felt pressure to adhere to traditional gender role expectations (or, at the very least, avoid directness), Professor 39 viewed engaging in masculine directness as cost-effective:

There are times when you are realizing that you have to be assertive, because that's what the other gender is going to understand in terms of establishing boundaries. Otherwise you're going to find yourself being bullied.

This stance blends the miscommunication tropes of Cultural Difference with the linguistic power tropes of Male Dominance. Professor 39's statement that men will only understand women if they are assertive is straight out of the Cultural Difference literature; in fact, Cameron (2009) argues it's one of the most dangerous aspects of the Cultural Difference approach, since it lays all of the communicative burden on women, and excuses men for taking advantage of women (under the pretense of pure misunderstanding). However, Professor 39's follow-up statement, that non-assertive women will find themselves bullied, is very reminiscent of Lakoff's (and other Dominance Approach scholars') assertion that women need to adapt to men's linguistic norms to be taken seriously. Thus, many theoretical underpinnings are packed into this two-sentence response.

A few women faculty members brought up research when discussing the double standards. For example, Professor 11, a white woman in the Social Sciences, said:

I mean the conventional research would argue that, um, that men could get up in front of a classroom and say any old thing about themselves—and with impunity—and their students won't think less of them for it. And that women have to be very careful about indicating any weakness. So standing in front of a room I teach my students: don't apologize for yourself, don't apologize for your data... Accept compliments from people who are making queries of your work. Say "thank you very much." Don't say "oh that old piece-of-shit work I did?"

Obviously familiar with current gender scholarship, Professor 11 brings up the double standard facing women related to men's automatic authority (Eagly 1987). Decades of research have indeed shown that women often must prove their expertise to earn the same level of respect that men counterparts are automatically assumed to have (see Conway et al. 1996; Eagly 1987; Eagly

et al. 2000; Fiske et al. 2002; Ridgeway and Correll 2004 for studies related to men's automatic perceived competence).

Professor 11's framing of the issue, however—specifically regarding her proposed solution of avoiding apologies and taking compliments—is very Male Dominance-influenced. According to her response, she sees the solution to this gender inequality as the responsibility of the women speakers (i.e., “don't apologize” and “use direct language” were arguments made by Lakoff). Politeness Theory tells us that compliment responses are potential face-threatening acts, because if the recipient gives an inappropriate response, for instance, his or her positive face is damaged (Brown and Levinson 1987; Herbert 1990). Furthermore, Herbert (1990) notes the difficulty in agreeing with the speaker and accepting the force of a compliment while also *avoiding* seeming to praise oneself. Most studies on gender and compliments during the 1980s and 1990s (the height of Cultural Difference) found that women are more likely than men to accept complements with agreement (i.e., “thank you”) as a result of women's conversational goals of cooperation and social harmony (e.g., Holmes 1988, 1986). Recent media coverage of women's language in the 2010s has had a heavy focus on compliment responses and deflection of compliments as a sign of insecurity and low self-worth (especially for women)¹². Thus, the recency of these Male Dominance-influenced popular media may depictions have played a role in Professor 11's response.

A double standard related to directness was brought up by Professor 18, a white woman in Business. She said the following about men faculty members' use of direct language:

...and somehow they get away with it. But if I say it, I'm opinionated and- <laughter> So it's like... students just automatically react to this confidence. They call [men]

¹² For example, Bustle's “7 tips for accepting compliments – because it's a feminist issue” (Thorpe 2015); Today's “Why women are terrible at taking compliments” (Mapes 2016); PopSugar's “Why I (and everybody else) should learn to take a compliment” (Fuhr 2017).

“confident” and “knowledgeable.” But if I say the exact same thing, it’s “opinionated” and “bitchy.”

Here, Professor 18 illustrates the double-bind reported by Carli and Eagly (1999) in their study of workplace communication: women “experience a ‘double bind’ when it comes to their perceived competence: either it is questioned, or it is acknowledged but at the cost of losing likeability and influence” (p. 212). In other words, women are forced to choose between sounding competent or being liked. While men who use direct language can achieve both of these perceived attributes, women who use direct language are labeled *bossy* or *bitchy*. On the other hand, if women employ indirect language they may be viewed as incompetent, unsure of themselves, or even – as shown in a previous section – passive aggressive.

Within academia, this double-bind can have very tangible consequences, as Krefting (2003) explains:

Prescriptive stereotypes opposing women’s competence and likeability filter individuating information in ways that leave women less well rewarded than men for comparable achievements, including delayed tenure and promotion to full professor and lower salary. Such prescriptions also help explain the micropolitics of academic women’s struggle for perceived competence and inclusion and the hostility academic women often face... (P. 269).

In other words, cultural-level inequalities—such as stereotypes about women—could have a major impact on structural (in)equality in the academy and in higher education.

Many discussions of double-standards focused on men’s linguistic privileges. These included narratives of men faculty having more flexibility to be casual in the classroom, as well as the assumed expert status of men. For instance, Professor 42, a white man in the Humanities, noted that men can “get away with” sounding more casual, although he does not see this as an issue of inequality:

Well men can get away with sounding more colloquial, generally. I don’t know if it’s more a matter that they can get away with it, but-. Listen to who says, you know, the -

ing/-in variation [e.g., *walking* versus *walkin'*], and a lot of male faculty—obviously including me—don't have too many qualms about using the *-in'* variant [e.g., *walkin'*]. ...The female faculty, um, they have to be awfully relaxed before they'll use it, I notice. And then, you know, they really try to avoid it in front of a class, unless they're doing it deliberately.

Obviously familiar with sociolinguistic topics, Professor 42 knew that men tend to use nonstandard language variants (like *runnin'*, *ain't*, or *y'all*) at higher rates than women (Cheshire 2002; Labov 1972; Trudgill 1983). However, while Professor 42 begins with an inequality-centered explanation, saying that men can “get away with” the colloquial, he then changes his framing to give the women speakers complete agency over their linguistic choices, saying that women “avoid” the colloquial as if it is a matter of preference.

Professor 35, a white woman in the Applied Social Sciences, also noted men's ability to be more casual while women (chiefly young women) were held to a higher standard of professionalism:

Women unfortunately have to take a more professional stance in the classroom than men do, for a lot of varied reasons like gender equity, perceptions. Uh. And for that reason, I think men can be more casual in a classroom than women can, particularly when they're younger. Not so much me at my age now. But early in my career it was very clear to me. You had to dress a little bit different. You had to comport yourself in a little bit more professional manner than the guys who could like go in in jeans and- and be more casual. And does that translate over to the way you speak? I'm sure it does.

While it is important to note the intersection of age and time with gender, as Professor 35 is discussing her “early career,” it is worth noting that many other interviewees brought up the double standards of women needing to dress more professionally than men in tandem with needing to speak and behave more professionally. When the interviewer asked Professor 35 why she thought there was a difference in standards, she provided the following explanation:

Oh, I think it comes from gender perceptions. I think it comes from, at least in my field, in political science, you still have le- certainly less than fifty percent, and maybe twenty to thirty percent of women in the field actively. We still have a- there's a gap with women getting to full professors. You know, all the things that come along, you know,

within that realm. And I think women, uh, for that reason have to really ... set the boundaries a lot tighter than men do in a classroom setting, whether they want to or not.

While not directly referring to structural inequalities within academia, Professor 35 is keenly aware of them. She notes the lack of women achieving full professor, and cryptically attributes this to “all the things that come along” within “that realm,” likely referring to gender inequity within promotional practices and/or the trend of women taking on more teaching responsibilities, emotional labor, and service, as well as unequal responsibilities at home (Misra 2011; Misra, Lundquist, and Templer 2012; Winslow-Bowe and Jacobs 2011; Wolf-Wendel and Ward 2003) all of which can slow down publication rates and achievement of tenure (Massé and Bauer-Maglin 2017; Misra 2011; Weisshaar 2017). Because of these structural inequalities, Professor 35 says that women professors have to “set the boundaries a lot tighter than men do” in their classrooms, perhaps to avoid being negatively sanctioned in course evaluations from students Basow (1995).

Professor 3, a white man in the Humanities, brought up gender (unprompted) early on in his interview. When asked if he felt like there were certain environments on campus that he felt more comfortable talking naturally, he began discussing the ways in which he shifts his formality of speech during teaching. During this discussion of his teaching style, he brought up the dynamics of gender:

Yeah and I really wonder if there's not, um, probably a gender dynamic to this too? Because I remember talking, early on, to female colleagues in grad school. Like, um, the difficulties they've had... being taken seriously as instructors. It's like, “Oh I'm barely older than these people.” And like, how you have to dress. Well [they said to me], “You're this giant man... [Students are] not going to mess with you.” You know? And I was like, you know, “I don't know. I mean, I take your word for it.” So, I wonder about that too... Where people perceive your authority comes from, you know. It's like, “Well he's six-four. He knows what he's talking about.”

Professor 3's narrative alludes to the idea that he may have had more flexibility in the classroom than his women counterparts, especially during the early years of teaching. Despite asking whether or not there is a gender component, he later contemplates whether people presume his authority as a result of his gender presentation, or just a result of his size. Furthermore, while he importantly brings up the experiences of women, and how they may differ from his own, he also says that he responded to the women grad students: "I don't know. I mean I take your word for it." This trope may either be one of *I am not a woman, so I don't know*—and thus reminiscent of the *I am not black, so I don't know* discourse of colorblind racism found by Bonilla-Silva (2004:58-59) in his interviews with college students—or one of a male checking his privilege and acknowledging he has not experienced oppression that female colleagues have. His narrative also highlights an intersection of perceptions, including not only gender bias, but also age bias and height/body size bias.

On the other hand, Professor 39, a white man in the Social Sciences, was more confident in the linguistic privileges afforded to him by his membership in the social category of "men." Yet he was still hesitant to describe this phenomenon as a tangible issue of inequality. When asked about gender differences on campus, Professor 39 observed the following:

You know, I don't think women and people of color on the faculty can take the liberties I do in the classroom. Like I was saying before about using profanity. I think they may need to be more attentive to, you know, using standard American English, lest they discredit themselves in the eyes of some students. But, you know, that's their experience- if- if it is indeed their experience, they would have to report that to you. That's kind of my, you know, 'outside observer' sense. I know graduate students have talked to me—female graduate students—about the sexism they encounter in the classroom, and how they try to maintain, um, you know, a- a decorum—that probably has a linguistic dimension—to keep a lid on that kind of behavior. Um. I can, you know, I think— I have a lot more, as I say, *license*, you know, given my privileges, to play with language in the classroom [in a way that] would be very risky for other people to do.

Professor 39 articulates a keen awareness of the linguistic privileges afforded to him as a man, as he discusses things like profanity, informality, and linguistic flexibility – things that he can get away with but that women would (presumably) be sanctioned for. However, Professor 39 may be engaging in the *I am not a woman, so I don't know* discourse that Professor 3 may have used. When referencing the possibility of women being sanctioned for the same behaviors he engaged in, he calls this “their experience, if- if it is indeed their experience,” and going on to say “they would have to report that to you.” These utterances could mean one of a few things: that Professor 39 does not believe these women; that he did not want to discuss the existence of gender inequality in his department/ the university while being audio-recorded; or that he defers the opportunity to speak for women, similar to Bonilla-Silva’s (2011) findings (the *I am not black, so I don't know* trope).

Benevolent Sexism

In their conceptualization of ambivalent sexism, Glick and Fiske (1996) differentiate between hostile sexism and benevolent sexism. While hostile sexism includes overt aspects of sexism that fall under Allport's (1954) definition of prejudice¹³, benevolent sexism is defined by the authors as “a set of interrelated attitudes toward women that are sexist in terms of viewing women stereotypically and in restricted roles but that are subjectively positive in feeling tone (for the perceiver)” (Glick and Fiske 1996:491). The researchers note that they do not consider benevolent sexism harmless. Despite the positive feelings it may indicate for the perceiver, and even though it suggests a subjectively positive view of women, benevolent sexism “shares common assumptions with hostile sexist beliefs: that women inhabit restricted domestic roles

¹³ "Prejudice is an antipathy based on faulty and inflexible generalization. It may be felt or expressed. It may be directed toward a group or an individual of that group" (Allport 1954:9).

and are the ‘weaker’ sex” (Glick and Fiske 1996:492). The researchers note importantly that this type of sexism is not necessarily experienced as benevolent by the addressee.

Many of the narratives in this study contained instances of benevolent sexism, as they contained discourses that assumed traditional suppositions about women. For instance, when asked if he perceived differences in the way men versus women faculty communicate, Professor 36, a white man in Business, said the following:

You know, particularly in in my discipline, I think the women that are attracted [to the field], uh, are a little bit more self-confident, a little more aggressive. Um. ... I don’t find that, you know, women defer to the men, um, all that much. You know, they’ll ask, you know, pretty good questions.

While seemingly benevolent in its depiction of women as confident, Professor 36’s response is an example of benevolent sexism via its description of women scholars as being exceptional in their non-deference to men—implying a supposition of “normal” women as subservient to men.

When asked about gender differences in faculty communication styles, Professor 49, a white man in the university’s Professional Program, provided the following anecdote:

Professor 49: I do see a difference in when two women are talking with each other. Um. There’s a difference than, you know, if we were in a group of mixed[-sex] people. And even my wife who, um, as I said, doesn’t have, uh, a noticeable accent and is very articulate. When she’s perhaps talking to [another professional] woman, there’s- it sounds more like she’s talking to one of her friends than if she were talking to a man.

Interviewer: So like more causal? Or more-?

Professor 49: Yes. I would say—well this is a bad analogy, but—more sorority-girl-like. I don’t know. I’m not looking for the-

Interviewer: Like more feminine?

Professor 49: A little bit more feminine. There’s more, you know, *okay, so, you know, kinda*—all of those sorts of things.

Professor 49's response both trivializes and subordinates the speech of women. By referring to women's talking style (when talking to other women), Professor 49 draws upon the character type of the sorority girl – someone young, spoiled, and ditz (Ritchart and Arvaniti 2014; Tyler 2015); this infantilization is an instance of benevolent sexism. Additionally, he included verbal fillers such as *okay and so* as exemplars of this sorority girl speech, reflecting the Male Dominance trope of hedges and fillers as weak language—and thus being a form a benevolent sexism by describing women as the weaker sex.

Sexist language, at a symbolic level, treats women as invisible (Weatherall 2002); and many faculty members' responses did just that. At the end of his interview, Professor 7, a white man in Agricultural Science, asked the interviewer a little bit more about the Faculty Dialect Study and whether they were looking for specific answers, or issue of discrimination:

Interviewer: Yeah, so, we just want to hear the experiences. And we have the questions in there about gender. And so some female faculty might feel that they have to change their speech a little bit from situations.

Professor 7: Not for me. And I don't detect any differences either. I work with very confident, highly-enabled, successful female faculty though. I think they're very centered. Yeah.

While Professor 7's response is benevolent in its description of women as successful and enabled, he ignores the experiences that women have to endure to *be* successful; that is, his response equates the success of the women in his department as indicative of their comfort level, despite the fact that other Faculty Dialect Study interviews reveal that many women face immense pressure to adopt masculine features in order to succeed in academia (Myrick forthcoming). This supports Banchevsky and Park's (2018) findings that men in men-dominated fields are more likely to endorse the idea that women faculty should conform to masculine work norms in order to succeed. Additionally, his immediate response, "Not for me," implies that *he*

has never felt pressured to change the way he talks at work; in this case, he is discursively equating (or replacing) women faculty members' experiences with his own, ignoring the fact that men and masculinity are privileged in academia (Martin 1994; Morley 2005). It is possible that when Professor 7 said "Not for me," he meant that he doesn't believe that women academics feel pressured to change the way they talk *around him*; in which case he is discursively exceptionalizing himself as different from other men faculty, and thus downplaying or denying institutional sexism. This perspective is in line with findings of multiple studies which suggest that more men than women are satisfied with their workplace's opportunities for women and diversity initiatives (Loosvelt 2013; Vununu and InHerSight Gender Survey 2016), and that more women than men see barriers to professional growth (WIRe 2017).

Professor 12, a white man in Agricultural Science, also engaged discursively in the benevolent sexist trope of female subtypes (Becker 2010). When answering the question about men's versus women's speech, he characterized women on a scale: from those with "the feminist attitude" versus those with "the wife attitude." He described growing up in a time when most women became wives, and how he witnessed the transition of more and more women growing up "to be stand-alone people" who "threw it in your face." Here we see a clear juxtaposition between two female subtypes: traditional women (e.g., homemakers), non-traditional women (e.g., professional women, feminists), which have been documented in multiple studies of benevolent sexism (e.g., Noseworthy and Lott 1984; Six and Eckes 1991).

Turning his focus to academia, Professor 12 elaborated on the changes he has seen during his professional career:

I've watched all of that evolve you know over the 40 years or so, and it's been interesting. And it started off with a few women being in your face and, uh, probably not benefiting too much from that attitude other than-... They had to be extremely good to do that. Let's put it that way!

Here we certainly see the historically gendered academia-of-the-past that many older women faculty members mentioned. Professor 12 describes women being sanctioned for being masculine (i.e., assertive, “in your face”) and pressured to adhere to gender role expectations – unless the professor was “extremely good” at her job. This certainly highlights a double standard for men and women faculty of the past. Additionally, Professor 12’s evaluations of women as “in your face” illustrates the type of risk that Professor 18 (quoted earlier in this section) alluded to when describing her ignoring of sexist comments rather than confronting them.

Turning his focus on the women academics’ present-day situation, Professor 12 continued postulating:

I don’t—I’ve been thinking about this—I really don’t know what it takes to be a woman and be a professional today. You’ll have to figure it out! I really- I really don’t know. Some seem to do it extremely well. Some seem to do it in your face, and some...don’t do it well, even though they’re very competent. They- they just don’t have the confidence or something to pull it off. And I don’t know that you need to be a white man—if you’re black or a man or you’re a woman—I don’t really know what it what it means to do those things.

Here Professor 12 engages in the *I am not a woman, so I don’t know* discourse that was employed by Professor 3 (earlier) and others. While his discourse here could potentially be classified as ambivalent sexism, it is what he said next that cause the author to classify his response as overt sexism:

If you asked me which women I respected as scientists, it’s the ones who can clearly with the least emotion possible put a thought across. I think that’s all I’m looking for. But I want that in a man too, so I- it’s not- I don’t think I’m too particular. I don’t think I’m more demanding of women than I am of-. But I’m maybe I’m more suspect of women. Just like I’m still a little bit racist. You know I am. I would admit this if you were black.

Along with admitting to being “a little bit racist,” Professor 12 admits to being sexist as well. In the previous quote, he admitted to viewing women and leaders as incongruous, and in this quote

above, he admits that he is more suspect of women faculty than men faculty. Later in the interview, he even admits to preferring to work with men students over women students:

I'm more careful with women, whereas if it's a guy I'll just give him heck if I have to... He's one of me and I can—it's like marine-to-marine or something, you know—I can do. I don't do that to women. So, for that reason, I would rather have a guy graduate student if I had a choice. But I've never chosen on that basis. Just, uh, because I feel like I can communicate more directly.

Professor 12 makes it clear that his higher comfort level around men does not affect his decision-making when choosing research assistants. Nonetheless, implicit language biases like these are dangerous because they *can* influence perceptions and decision-making within the university (Holroyd 2015; Na 2016b).

In addition to respondents engaging in benevolent sexism discursively in their interview responses, many women interviewees provided narratives recounting experiences with benevolent sexism in the university workplace. For instance, when asked about differences she perceived between men and women in her department, Professor 9, a white woman in Natural Resources, focused on the gender imbalance of her field. In a hypothetical narrative she provided, she alluded to overt sexism on the part of her men colleagues:

I just would say that [my field] still is such a male-dominated world, that women are still maneuvering in that reality. I'm getting a little bit—probably because of trajectories and accomplishments—I'm, not a little bit, I'm *less patient* with what I consider to be any type of-. Not-. *Denigration* isn't the right word, but-. You know, if I get a comment from somebody that's kind of bordering on gender inappropriate or chauvinistic, then I don't put up with that much. I just- I'm like, "Really?" <laughter> "I know you're sixty-five or seventy, but, you know, we're beyond that." <laughter> "I am the expert here so just leave it. Listen to me or not, I don't really care. Got lots of other stuff to do." But that's part of my personality.

Surprisingly, Professor 9 downplays the hypothetical instance of sexism. She admits that she is becoming "less patient" with men colleagues sexists and chauvinistic comments – implying that she should be patient with them. She also alludes to being ignored and/or interrupted by men

colleagues, when she says she tells them ‘listen to me or not’; but she then downplays the entire incident (including the comments, the ignoring, and her standing up for herself) by saying it is just “part of [her] personality” rather than a systemic problem.

Not all professors discussed sexism in hypothetical or generic terms. Professor 18, for instance, a white woman in Business, provided the following concrete narrative about receiving inappropriate questions from a men faculty:

I’ll never forget. I had a son, and he was in, like, junior high. And one of the male faculty’s asking me if I was going to have another child! Whew! Well why didn’t I have another baby? And I’m thinking, “Well, I’m- I’m not doing anything to *not* have one! And so that’s insulting.” <laughter> But to even mention it! And I was sitting there Xeroxing, and he said, “Well, so, have you thought about having another kid?” I’m thinking, “My kid is 14. Why would I have another one?” ...But it’s like, you’re not going to discuss that with him, right? So you say, “No, I’m past that.” <laughter> And I would have to say, I’ve had- I’ve had quite a few people say inappropriate things around me, and, uh, oftentimes it’s older males. And I just blow them off. I mean, I don’t get adamant. I don’t get, you know- I don’t let it offend me.

Despite recognizing that the questions she was being asked about family planning were inappropriate (as well as insensitive), Professor 18 felt compelled to answer the faculty member rather than challenging him – illustrating a clear power imbalance. She went on to say that when other older men have said inappropriate things to her, she doesn’t “get adamant” or let it offend her – despite the fact that it would be perfectly reasonable for her to feel offended and/or defend herself. Like other respondents, Professor 18 chooses to ignore rather than address negative face-threatening comments by men colleagues; due to the power differential between them, she likely sees the act of challenging them on the appropriateness of their comments (a positive face threatening act) too risky (Brown and Levinson 1987).

Professor 32, a white woman in the Social Sciences, recalled overt and persistent sexism when she first entered academia. When the interviewer asked if she felt more comfortable having

a Southern accent when she started teaching at a Southern university, she immediately turned the focus to gender:

No, I didn't feel more comfortable because the politics were so different. By this time... I understood gender and understood that I was being harassed. So language was the least of my worries. I was worried about being able to go from my office to the restroom without being harassed walking down the hall. So I didn't really care very much what anybody sounded like. They would do things like walk behind me when I was walking down the hall and twitching their hips mimicking, um, a woman's walk, or staring across the table at a faculty meeting saying things like, "Oh, them eyes." ...So my relationship to men and to language, I think, has changed drastically over time, and the older I've gotten, and the more secure I become, the less likely it has become an issue. Except for the very sexist things that um that men sometimes slip into.

Here we see Professor 32 ordering offensive behavior at work; not only does she down-rank linguistic offenses to sexist ones ("language was the least of my worries"), but she also treats linguistic discrimination and gender discrimination as mutually exclusive. This reveals a lack of awareness on her part of discrimination against women's speech, despite being very keyed in to sexism and other women's issues. Her response, and the responses of others, support Lippi-Green's (2012) assertion that linguistic discrimination is one of the last acceptable or overlooked forms of discrimination.

Conclusion

This study investigates perceptions of gender inequality in higher education through the analysis of faculty members' workplace narratives. Professors' metacommentary paints a picture of a work environment that—despite the increasing presence of women faculty—is perceived as favoring men and masculinity and disfavors women and femininity in language use. Stories describe women's language being policed and sanctioned more than men's, as well as men faculty members' relative linguistic flexibility in the classroom and beyond (i.e., being able to "get away with" more than women) as common and normative. Masculine speech was perceived as favored in the framing of direct speech and interruptions as the "powerful" language used in

meetings, and indirectness was described as secretive or passive aggressive. Qualitative analysis revealed faculty perceptions of a linguistically unequal work environment, as respondents described in detail men faculty's use of interruptions, loud volume, direct language, and talk time as a way to dominate others, especially women faculty.

Overall, the study reveals how narratives about language can provide rich insight into organizational norms of femininity and masculinity in the university. By examining the university setting, this study also exposes perceptions of gender inequality operating in the context where the most research and activity on this topic exists. The study's focus on language expands the current research on gender role expectations. In the study, a number of faculty members offered evaluations of men and women speech that reflected traditional gender role expectations notwithstanding ideologies in academia that have a reputation for being progressive and inclusive (Gross and Simmons 2014), supporting Stoll's (2015) observations that educators who express egalitarian ideals (especially related to race and social class) still often hold gender-unequal beliefs. Results of the QCA revealed alignments with traditional sex-based categorization, such as men being louder, more direct, and more linguistically aggressive, and women as more indirect, polite, and quiet (or women standing out for *not* having these attributes). These findings were somewhat incongruent with the liberal labelling (and overall leaning) of university faculty and suggests that many faculty members may be unaware of the connection between issues of language and issues of gender, especially the connection between language attitudes, gender bias, and power asymmetries. This became especially evident in the number of narratives describing workplace sexism (i.e., faculty members recounting experiences of sexist language), as well as benevolent sexist discourses in the *faculty responses themselves* (i.e., sexist discourses in participants' responses).

On a more promising note, not only did the previous literature related on workplace narratives and language perceptions provide a supportive theoretical framework for the study, but also, the incorporation of Politeness Theory proved useful in interpreting the results of the QCAs and qualitative analysis. Specifically, the concept of face-threatening acts aided in the explaining the perceptions of and values related to linguistic features like interruptions, compliments, and compliment responses. Future approaches to language and gender in the academy should consider the benefits of merging sociological and sociolinguistic theory in evidence-based understanding of the continuing, sociolinguistic practice of inequality in the academy.

CHAPTER 4: FACULTY PERCEPTIONS OF MEN AND WOMEN STUDENTS' LANGUAGE

Educators' opinions about gender "are not purely academic"; their opinions have personal and professional consequences (Dindia 2006). The same can be said for educators' language ideologies. Just as we know that gender stereotypes influence educators' perceptions of students (e.g., Heyder and Kessels 2015; Holder and Kessels 2017; Jones and Myhill 2004), we know that standard language ideologies influence educators' perceptions of students' speech (Charity-Hudley and Mallinson 2014; Dunstan et al. 2015; Lippi-Green 2012; Reaser et al. 2017). Nonetheless, we still know very little about faculty's *language and gender* ideologies—their beliefs and values about men's and women's language use—or how these ideologies are reflected in and/or inform their views of students. As a result, the question guiding this study is preliminary and exploratory: What gender differences do university faculty perceive in their students' speaking styles, and how do they explain and/or value those differences?

Social scientific and popular texts on language and gender have generally explained linguistic differences between women and men (beyond the biological) via one of two approaches: Male Dominance or Cultural Difference, the former attributing differences to women's socially subordinate status and the latter attributing differences to same-sex socialization spheres). Due to little research on university instructors' language and gender ideologies, we know little about how these two approaches may be shaping faculty's conceptualizations and explanations of gender differences. To fill this gap, the current study's specific research questions are: (1) Which linguist features or styles are most salient in faculty's descriptions of women and men students' speech? And (2) which approaches to language and gender do these faculty incorporate into their explanations and/or valuing of these differences?

To address these questions, the current study examines faculty discourses about men and women students' speech. Verbal data is analyzed from interviews conducted with tenured and tenure track faculty at a public research university. A mixed-methods approach was used to analyze the faculty responses. First, faculty members' responses were analyzed via quantitative content analysis to illustrate broad trends in the data related to faculty members' perceptions of men and women students. Then, these same data were analyzed qualitatively using qualitative analysis to explore the ways in which interviewees discursively and theoretically frame their observations. Results provide new insights into faculty perceptions related to the gender gap, as well as adding complexity to previous sociological research about gender and student engagement.

Teachers' Perceptions of Students

Sociologists have long argued that schools are one of the largest reproducers of inequality in the United States (Mills 1956; Sweezy and Baran 1966; Lucas 1999). Teachers' judgements of students affect their treatment of them (Bowles and Gintis 1976; Lareau 2011; Rist 1970; Rosenthal and Jacobson 1992). The few studies that have directly examined gender stereotypes in relation to teachers' perceptions of student behavior have revealed important trends. Jones and Myhill (2004) interviewed 40 primary school teachers and found a clear pattern: teachers tended to perceive female students as compliant, organized, and prepared, while male students were described as troublesome, disruptive, and immature. The results of Jones and Myhill's study suggest that teachers regard high-achieving children as girls and underachieving children typically as boys. This stereotype of the "diligent" female student versus the "smart but troublesome" male student has since been documented in many quantitative and qualitative studies (e.g., Hartley and Sutton 2013; Heyder and Kessels 2015; Latsch and Hannover 2014; Morris 2012; Sadker and Sadker 1986).

Morris's (2012) ethnography, *Learning the Hard Way*, chronicles observations of and interviews with students and teachers at an American high school over the course of a year and a half. Morris observed the trend of the "diligent" girl and the "smart but troublesome" (and "lazy") boy – both in teachers' perceptions and expectations, as well as students' actual actions. Discourses employed by teachers often centered around gender essentialism and boys-will-be-boys tropes, "normalizing" gender differentiated behavior (Morris 2012). Morris observed teachers praising boys for their innate abilities and girls for their performance. Morris (and other researchers, e.g., Dweck 2007) believes that these discourses hinder boys' academic performance and reproduce gender inequalities in school. The "gender gap" was certainly visible in the high school that Morris chronicled. Male students devalued academic achievement and accordingly performed worse than their girl peers; according to Morris, this is because their "social contexts framed school-focused behavior as inconsistent with masculinity" and the teachers' discourses were part of the problem (Morris 2012:170).

We know that public discourses are powerful influencers. Latsch and Hannover's (2014) study of German primary school students found that boys exposed directly to media portrayals of "failing boys" underperformed on tasks stereotyped as female-oriented (e.g., reading), and focused their learning goals on tasks stereotyped as male-oriented (e.g., math). Thus, these discourses have tangible consequences, and may even influence students' perceptions of themselves and their peers early as primary school. In a study of British schoolchildren by Hartley and Sutton (2013), results suggested that boys (as early as age 7) and girls (as early as age 4) believe—and think adults believe—that girls are better students than boys.

Heyder and Kessels (2015) investigated the connection between gender stereotypes and teachers' perceptions of boy and female student engagement. Specifically, they had pre-service

teachers rate masculine, feminine, and gender-neutral behaviors (enacted by male- and female-labelled students in written scripts) as behaviors that were beneficial for learning or that would impede learning. They found that the pre-service teachers were more likely to observe masculine behaviors as disruptive to the classroom. Moreover, male-labelled students were perceived as less likely to display “behavior that was beneficial for learning” and more likely to show “behavior that would impede learning” than the female-labelled students, even when the students were characterized by exactly the same gender-neutral behavior. Heyder and Kessels (2015) noted that their findings were “in line with the stereotype of lazy and troublesome boys” (p. 478); but without qualitative data (like that in Jones and Myhill 2004), it is difficult to draw conclusions about how teachers might be *framing* their perceptions of students. Discursive studies of teachers are important, because research suggests that many teachers are unaware of their gender biases including gender biases towards their students (Lundeberg 1997).

In addition to gender, language is a criterion used by teachers to make judgements about students. Researchers have examined primary and secondary school teachers’ attitudes towards nonstandard varieties of English, including Appalachian English (Brashears 2014), Gullah (Richardson and Lemmon 2009), Latinx-accented English (Na 2016a, 2016b), Southern English (Cross et al. 2001), and African American English (e.g., Blake and Cutler 2003; Bowie and Bond 1994; Cecil 1988; Cross et al. 2001; DiGiulio 1973; Foster 1992; Orzulak 2015). These studies have revealed troubling issues of teacher bias in favor of Standard English—i.e., the English of the non-regional, white, middle-class speaker (Delpit 2006; Zentella 1997; Zimmerman 2010). Teachers consistently rate standard-sounding students more positively than nonstandard sounding students (Carroll 2007; Corson 1993; Rickford and Rickford 1995). And teachers’ perceptions of students’ home languages/dialects influence their expectations of these students’

abilities (Corson 1993; Giles et al. 1987; Perry and Delpit 1998). These studies have revealed troubling issues of teacher bias in favor of Standard English—i.e., the English of the non-regional, white, middle-class speaker (Delpit 2006; Zentella 1997; Zimmerman 2010). Teachers consistently rate standard-sounding students more positively than nonstandard sounding students (Carroll 2007; Corson 1993; Rickford and Rickford 1995). And teachers' perceptions of students' home languages/dialects influence their expectations of these students' abilities (Corson 1993; Giles et al. 1987; Perry and Delpit 1998).

While the existing literature on teachers' perceptions of students is helpful in framing the current study, it is important to note that these studies have pertained exclusively to teachers of primary and secondary students (i.e., grades K-12), thus ignoring an important site of emerging adult behavior: higher education. Universities and colleges are important sites because they are not only workplaces, but also training grounds. The beliefs and behaviors of university employees may affect opportunities of employees and students. While we know that higher education is a gendered institution that enables and reproduces social inequality (Fox 2005; Leahey 2006; Long, Allison, and McGinnis 1993; Meyers 2013; Probert 2005; Williams 1995), an examination of micro-level interactions and discourses is necessary to understand how institutional gender inequality is reproduced (Ridgeway 2011).

The current study fills these gaps by examining faculty members' perceptions of men and women students' speech. To contextualize the study, the following section provides a theoretical overview of language and gender necessary to understand where beliefs and explanations of men's and women's language differences come from.

Theoretical Approaches to Language and Gender

Approaches to studying and explaining gender differences in language have shifted and progressed at a rapid pace over half century (Cameron 2014; Cameron, McAlinden, and O’Leary 1988; Coates 2004; Dindia 2006). Nonetheless, the two primary explanations of language differences between men and women (beyond the biological) have, broadly, fallen under one of two theoretical approaches: Male Dominance and Cultural Difference. As a result, we see in the 21st century a prevalence of Dominance and Difference influenced language ideologies. In the following two sections, the Dominance and Difference approaches are described and contextualized in terms of their scholarly and popular impacts.

Male Dominance

The second wave of feminism brought with it a focus on women’s subordination as explanatory for many gender differences. This translated into subordination-based explanations for women’s language in the 1970s: the Male Dominance approach. Lakoff’s (1975) *Language and Woman’s Place* is considered one of the first feminist approaches to language and gender (Bucholtz and Hall 1995). The text addresses the ways men silence/control women (via, e.g., interruptions), women are spoken about (via sexist discourse), and women themselves communicate (“woman’s language”). Thus, Lakoff was one of the first language and gender scholars to place hegemony at the center of her argument(s), with a focus on unequal power dynamics as explanatory for differences in men’s and women’s speech.

Despite its feminist underpinnings, *Language and Woman’s Place* has been heavily criticized for describing women’s language as less communicatively effective or powerful than men’s language. Drawing from intuitive-based models of syntax and semantics in linguistics

(rather than collected data), Lakoff asserts that a number of specific linguistic items are used more frequently by women (list from Holmes 2001:286):

- Lexical hedges or fillers, e.g., *you know, sort of, well, you see*
- Tag questions, e.g., *she's very nice, isn't she?*
- Rising intonation on declaratives, e.g., *it's really good?*
- 'Empty' adjectives, e.g., *divine, charming, cute*
- Precise colour terms, e.g., *magenta, aquamarine*
- Intensifiers such as *just* and *so*, e.g., *I like him so much*
- 'Hypercorrect' grammar, e.g., *consistent use of standard forms*
- 'Superpolite' forms, e.g., *indirect requests, euphemisms*
- Avoidance of strong swear words, e.g., *fudge, my goodness.*
- emphatic stress, e.g., *it was a BRILLIANT performance.*

Lakoff claims that these linguistic features signal women's uncertainty and lack of confidence.

Connecting these claims to patriarchal forces, Lakoff (1975) goes on to argue that a woman's use of this weak language can be used to keep a her "in a demeaning position" and "to refuse to treat her seriously as a human being" (p. 5).

Due to the book's depiction of women's language as "weak," some sociolinguists (e.g., Cameron et al. 1988; Holmes 2001) have called *Language and Woman's Place* a manifestation of linguistic subordination—giving subordinate linguistic status to the speech of a socially subordinate group (Lippi-Green 2012). In addition to framing masculine speech as *unmarked*, Lakoff provides no evidence for why feminine communication styles are less effective, other than that they are associated with women; thus, the language variety of subordinate social group (i.e., women) is relegated to subordinate linguistic status (i.e., weak language).

Other scholars, however, have focused on the book's sociopolitical implications and its place within the second-wave feminist movement, such as (Philips 2015) who praises how "in

tune Lakoff's position was with the women's movement of the time, how motivated women were to be heard, and how welcome was this bringing to conscious awareness of features that could be changed once they were conscious" (p. 561-562). The book's sociopolitical implications embody the dominance approach by importantly highlighting the role of the patriarchy in men's and women's speech differences—or at least in capturing public ideologies about these supposed speech differences (Bucholtz and Hall 1995).

Countless studies have since empirically and theoretically challenged Lakoff's claim that women's language features signal *weakness*. Decades of sociolinguistic study have identified linguistic functions for "women's language" features that extend far beyond signaling tentativeness, even into functioning as markers of assertiveness and aggression¹⁴. Despite the empirical shortcomings of *Language and Woman's Place*, its emphasis on inequality resulting from Male Dominance has made an impact on linguists' studies of women's speech, as well as other social scientists' studies of language and gender in various institutions (Bucholtz and Hall 1995; Cameron 2014; Cameron et al. 1988; Crawford 1995; O'Barr and Atkins 1980). As a result, the Dominance Approach has influenced and continues to influence popular and scholarly discussions of gender.

Cultural Difference

A paradigm shift occurred in the 1980s and gender differences were explained on the basis of differential socialization. Rather than placing inequality at the center of language differences, this approach centers on cultural differences between the sexes. Likely a result of the

¹⁴ For example, almost a dozen alternative classifications of tag question functions have been identified, including informational, confirmatory, facilitative, softening, attitudinal, peremptory, and "punctuational" tag questions (Algeo 1990; Holmes 1995; Tottie and Hoffmann 2006). Researchers have linked tag questions to increased levels of independence (Winefield, Chandler, and Bassett 1989), while others have shown how tag questions can challenge, antagonize, and insult (Algeo 1990; Holmes 1995; Tottie and Hoffmann 2006) – functions quite different tentativeness or uncertainty. Studies shown tag questions used by men and women equally in power positions (e.g., Cameron et al. 1988).

growing resistance against treating women as a marked/subordinate group (Coates 2004), the difference approach treated men and women as belonging to two distinct subcultures where boys and girls were differentially socialized. In doing so, this approach importantly challenged the conflation of culture with male culture (Coates 2004).

In terms of language, this approach centers on the broad proposition that men and women use language in fundamentally different ways due to socialization (in childhood and adolescence) in same-sex spheres. Marking a shift away from the treatment of women's language as "powerless," men and women are seen as having distinct communication styles, with neither group inherently better or worse than the other. While seemingly egalitarian, this proposition still posits that (all) women communicate differently from (all) men (Cameron 2009; Crawford 1995, 2004) – and, furthermore, centers on the conclusion that these differences inherently lead to miscommunication between men and women.

The earliest adopters of the difference approach were Maltz and Borker (1982), who argued that male-female miscommunication mirrors that of cross-ethnic miscommunication as a result of subcultural differences. Maltz and Borker's work brought an important focus to everyday interactions and cultural scripts, centered on the premise that miscommunication is *bound* to happen between the sexes due to cultural differences. These miscommunications were said to occur as a result of men's and women's differing interpretations of the meaning of questions, the conventions for beginning and linking utterances, the meaning of verbal aggressiveness, the conventions for topic flow and shift, and the conventions for topic sharing and advice giving. These miscommunications arise, according to the authors, from the differences between "men's language" and "women's language." Maltz and Borker (1982) claim that women display a greater frequency of question-asking, positive minimal responses (e.g.,

“mmhmm”), and conversational “shitwork” (their term to describe facilitation of the conversation), while men are more likely to interrupt, dispute their interlocutor, ignore their interlocutor, control the topic, and make direct declarations – all as a result of separated spheres of socialization as children and adolescents. These same-sex socialization spheres, and the interactions that occurred within them (e.g., play), were explanatory for the stereotypes of adult men’s (supposed) competitiveness and adult women’s (supposed) cooperativeness.

While the Maltz and Borker’s discussion of women’s *and* men’s speech marks an important transition away from the Dominance Approach, in which only the speech of women is discussed (thus treating men’s speech as the default), it ignores power issues. Maltz and Borker (1982) claimed that

American men and women come from different sociolinguistic subcultures, having learned to do different things with works in conversation, so that when they attempt to carry on conversations with one another, *even if both parties are attempting to treat one another as equals*, cultural miscommunication results. (P. 200, emphasis added)

While the Difference approach can certainly include components of dominance – for instance, the ways men are socialized into competition and/or other forms of micro dominance – it tends to ignore macro power imbalances (i.e., patriarchy, structural inequalities).

Despite its criticisms, the difference approach heavily influenced sociolinguistic approaches to language and gender over the next two decades, with a heavy focus on miscommunication. Deborah Tannen’s book *You Just Don’t Understand: Women and Men in Conversation* (1991) discusses cross-gender miscommunication for a lay audience. The book was well-received by the public and remained on the *New York Times* bestseller list for almost four years, including eight months at number one (Harper Collins, “You Just Don’t Understand”). In the book, Tannen comes to many of the same conclusions as Maltz and Borker, arguing that miscommunication is inevitable between women and men. She asserts that women

ask more questions and use them differently than men, but she bases these claims on limited data from Fishman (1978, 1980). Many empirical studies since the publication of *You Just Don't Understand* (e.g., Freed and Greenwood 1996) have revealed little to no difference in the number or type of questions used by women and men. Tannen also asserts that women are “indirect speakers” while men are “direct speakers”; however, as Freed (1992) points out, Tannen bases these claims on research of Greek and Japanese speakers – from societies where indirectness doesn't reflect low status – and furthermore, she “never addresses the resolution of conflicting ethnic and sex-related verbal styles” (p. 147). Sociolinguistic studies have since shown topic, conversational partner, and medium of conversation to be as (if not more) influential than gender in predicting directness.

In addition to empirical criticisms, many antagonists of *You Just Don't Understand* argue that the book's focus on cultural relativism excludes structural inequalities. While Tannen focuses on gender asymmetries, she carefully avoids discussions of patriarchy (Freed and Greenwood 1996). Some critics further to argue that this approach reproduces the gender status quo: “the construction of miscommunication between the sexes emerges as a powerful tool, maybe even a necessity, to maintain the structure of male supremacy” (Henley and Kramarae 1991:30). Either way, given the book's immense popularity, Freed (1992) is astute in arguing that the book's title itself “has been accepted as a metaphor for what ails American female-male relations – a simple misunderstanding” (p. 144).

While the cultural difference approach has received ample criticism within the academy, its ideology continued to spread into popular culture in throughout the 1990s, informing the work of many non-academic works. Capitalizing on the success of books like *You Just Don't Understand*, as well as on the rise of the self-help genre (Cameron 2009), was John Gray's

(1992) *New York Times* bestseller, *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus: The Classic Guide to Understanding the Opposite Sex*. This book, written by a nonacademic¹⁵, embodied the cultural difference approach's focus on cross-sex miscommunication. According to Gray (1992), the roots of cross-sex miscommunication are simple:

Men mistakenly expect women to think, communicate, and respond the way men do; women mistakenly expect men to think, communicate, and respond the way women do. We have forgotten that men and women are supposed to be different. As a result, our relationships are filled with unnecessary friction and conflict. (P. 2)

Despite its lack of empirical basis, *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus* was the highest ranked work of nonfiction in the 1990s (CNN 1999). The book's immense popularity aided in the public dissemination of language and gender myths reflective of the cultural difference approach (Cameron 2009). According to Cameron (2009:7-8), the language myths that have resulted from the Difference approach to language and gender can be summarized as follows:

- language and communication matter more to women than to men, and women talk more than men
- women are more verbally skilled than men;
- men's goals in using language tend to be instrumental, whereas women tend to be interpersonal or relational, and men talk more about things and facts, whereas women talk more about people, relationships, and feelings;
- men's way of using language is competitive, reflecting their general interest in acquiring and maintaining status, while women's use of language is cooperative, reflecting their preference for equality and harmony, and thus men's style of communicating also tends to be more direct and less polite than women's; and that

¹⁵ Gray's credentials include a master's degree in the Science of Creative Intelligence from Maharishi University, and a PhD in Psychology from Columbia Pacific University, an unaccredited nontraditional distance learning school which has since been shut down. He has never held a university position or a research position of any kind. *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus* contains pseudoscientific claims presented as scientific fact, such as the claim that PMS is a result of women's stifled emotions.

- these differences routinely lead to ‘miscommunication’ between the sexes, with each sex misinterpreting the other’s intentions, which causes problems in contexts where men and women regularly interact, and especially in heterosexual relationships

While the difference approach and its myths may seem to treat gender differences in an egalitarian manner (or even praising of women’s language skill), a closer look reveals problematic tropes. Popular discourses of “boys will be boys” and “you know how women are” take away linguistic (not to mention cognitive and behavioral) agency away from individuals, in addition to ignoring gender-related power differentials. Nonetheless, as this section has highlighted with the great success of Gray’s and Tannen’s books, the difference approach was widely accepted and celebrated.

Despite their criticisms, the Dominance and Difference approaches are considered by contemporary sociolinguists to have had a lasting impact on our society’s language and gender ideologies, including the public discourses about the subject (Cameron 2009, 2014). Nonetheless, we still know little about language and gender ideologies within schools. How do these ideologies manifest themselves within the university, an influential (re)producer of hegemonic ideologies (Bourdieu 1977; Bourdieu and Passeron 1990)? The current study aims to fill this gap by investigating language and gender ideologies at the university level, specifically focusing on faculty members’ perceptions of students.

The Current Study

For this study, I examine verbal data from interviews conducted with faculty at a public research university utilizing a mixed-methods analysis. First, I examine responses via quantitative content analysis in order to illustrate broad trends in the data related to faculty members’ perceptions of men and women students, and thus addressing my first research question: *which linguist features or styles are most salient in faculty members’ descriptions of*

women and men students' speech? Then, I analyze these same data qualitatively to explore the ways in which faculty discursively and theoretically frame their observations, and addressing my second research question: *which approaches to language and gender do these faculty incorporate into their explanations and/or valuing of these differences?*

In the following section, I detail my methods for data collection, coding, and analysis. I then provide the results of the content analysis, followed by the qualitative analysis. I conclude with a summary of the study and implications for the field.

Data Collection

Data for this study come from semi-structured interviews with 55 faculty members at a large research university in the southeastern United States. The interviews were collected as part of the Faculty Dialect Study, a larger project investigating the language-related experiences of tenured and tenure-track faculty. Faculty members were asked to participate in the study via email solicitation and snowball sampling. Regarding the former method, a university email was sent to a random sample of one-third of the tenure-track faculty members balanced for college, rank (assistant, associate, full) and gender. The email asked for voluntary participation in a study exploring how instructors adjust their speech when they become part of an institution of higher learning, as well as their dialect experiences from childhood. (See Appendix A for email). Participants included tenured and tenure-track faculty spanning multiple departments and colleges, as well as SES, regional, and dialect backgrounds, and was balanced for gender. Table 4.1 break downs the academic field and race/ethnicity of the 55 participants whose interviews were used in the current study. Broadened academic fields were used so as to prevent identifiability of faculty in small departments or fields, as well as racial, ethnic, or gender minorities in those fields.

Table 4.1: Study participants' gender, academic field, and race/ethnicity (N=55)

	Men	Women
Academic Field		
Agriculture Science	5	0
Applied Social Sciences	2	4
Business	1	1
Design	1	0
Education	2	2
Engineering	2	1
Humanities	6	5
Life Sciences	4	1
Natural Resources	0	4
Professional Program	2	1
Social Science	5	7
Race/Ethnicity		
Black/African American	1	6
Latinx/Hispanic	0	2
White/Caucasian	28	18

The Faculty Dialect Study interviews were semi-structured, designed to explore faculty members' language attitudes and experiences before academia, during the journey towards academia (i.e., college and grad school), and within academia. Faculty members were asked 24-26 questions (two questions were for women faculty only). Only a few of these questions addressed gender specifically, and these questions did not occur until over half-way through the interview; thus, interviewers did not believe that this was an interview about gender specifically (which it wasn't). All interviews were audio-recorded digitally with the faculty members' consent using a Marantz recorder. Over 50 hours of audio were recorded and transcribed. Each interview was transcribed and then hand-corrected (by a different transcriptionist). Coding was carried out in NVivo for the quantitative content analysis (QCA) and qualitative analysis.

This chapter reports data primary from faculty members' responses to Interview Question #19: *Have you ever noticed differences in the way that men versus women students communicate in your classes?* Because some participants talked about students in other parts of the interview,

however, faculty responses to other questions where gender-related themes arose spontaneously are also included.

Content Analysis

Faculty members' responses were coded for perceived differences in men and women students' speech (i.e., linguistic features and/or communication styles that interviewees identified as being more common in men or women students). Responses related were coded as follows:

- If interviewee mentioned linguistic feature/style/attribute = [*Name of Feature*]
- If interviewee reported observing no gender differences = *No Differences*
- If the interviewee did not answer the question = *NA*, excluded from analysis

Results of the CQA are displayed in Figure 4.1. Thirty-three faculty members reported observed differences between men and women students, while 19 said that they did not observe communication differences based on student gender.¹⁶ Five faculty members did not answer the question or were not asked the question. Regarding the group who reported no gender differences, actual responses took multiple discursive forms (e.g., *simple "no,"* *qualified "no,"* etc.) and are discussed in more detail in the qualitative analysis section.

¹⁶ Two of the faculty members reported *not* observing differences in men's and women's communication styles, but also (either in the same response or later in the interview) mentioned at least one difference between men's and women's communication styles.

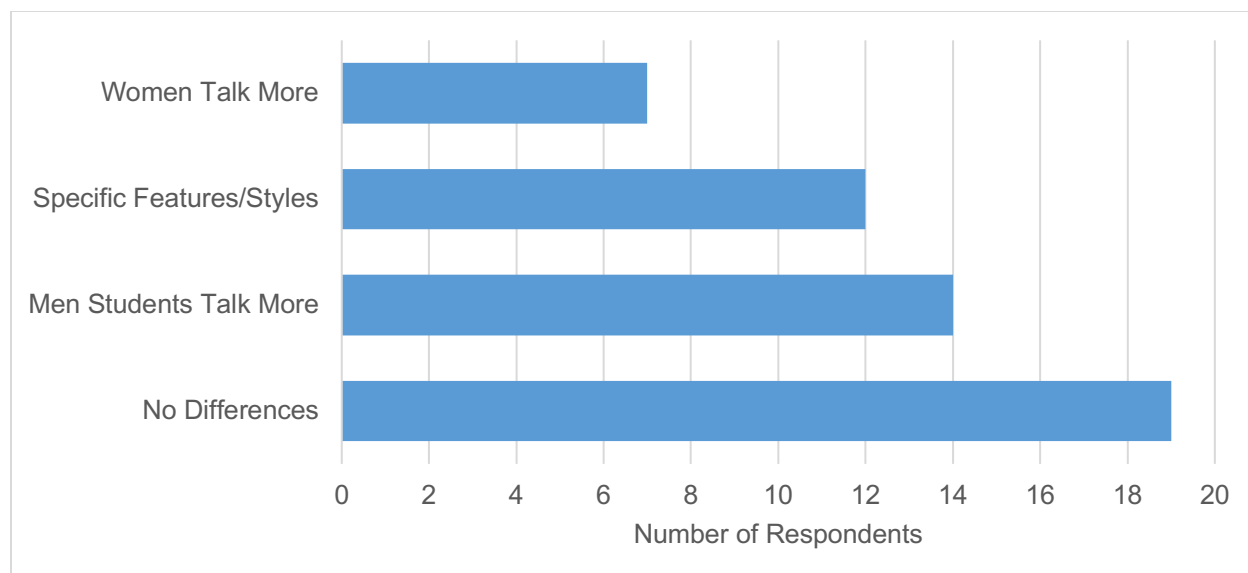


Figure 4.1: Faculty respondents' broad observations of men and women students' linguistic differences

In terms of faculty respondents that did report gender differences, the most common themes related to talkativeness (brought up by 28 faculty). Fourteen faculty members observed that men students talk more, while 7 observed that women talk more. This finding was surprising considering perceptual research has revealed a tendency for listeners to overestimate women's apportionment of talk, even when it's identical to men's, in mixed-sex conversations (e.g., Cutler and Scott 1990). Of the 14 faculty members who observed men students talking more, their responses included descriptions of men students speaking up more (12 faculty), sharing more (2 faculty), and/or engaging more (1 faculty), as well as women being quieter (3 faculty). Of the 7 faculty members who observed women talking more, descriptions included women speaking up more (4 faculty), sharing more (3 faculty), engaging more (2 faculty), and asking more questions (2 faculty), as well as men being quieter (1 faculty) and briefer (1 faculty). A closer look at these data using qualitative analysis (in the following section) highlights the ways in which faculty members discursively framed talkative women versus talkative men quite differently.

While many other responses referred to personality traits which were not included in this analysis (e.g., “men are aloof,” “women are insecure”), 12 faculty members did mention actual linguistic features or styles of speech differentiating women and men students (labelled in Figure 4.1 as “Specific Features/Styles”). These specific linguistic features and styles included the following:

- men students using more direct or aggressive language (mentioned by 6 faculty)
- women students being more verbally skilled or dynamic (mentioned by 4 faculty)
- women students using ‘uptalk,’ i.e., rising intonation on declaratives (mentioned by 3 faculty)
- men students interrupting (mentioned by 2 faculty)
- men students using informal/casual language (mentioned by 2 faculty)
- women students apologizing (mentioned by 1 faculty)

Notably, these features six features/traits are all mentioned in Lakoff’s (1975), Maltz and Borker’s (1982), and/or Tannen’s (1990) work.

Because previous literature has suggested an effect of teacher gender on perceptions of students (Mullola et al. 2012), I broke down the data from Figure 4.1 by faculty participants’ gender. These results are displayed in Figure 4.2. To gain insight into the gender of faculty members who mentioned specific features, I also broke down the “different linguistic features” (from Figure 4.1) into the specific features mentioned.

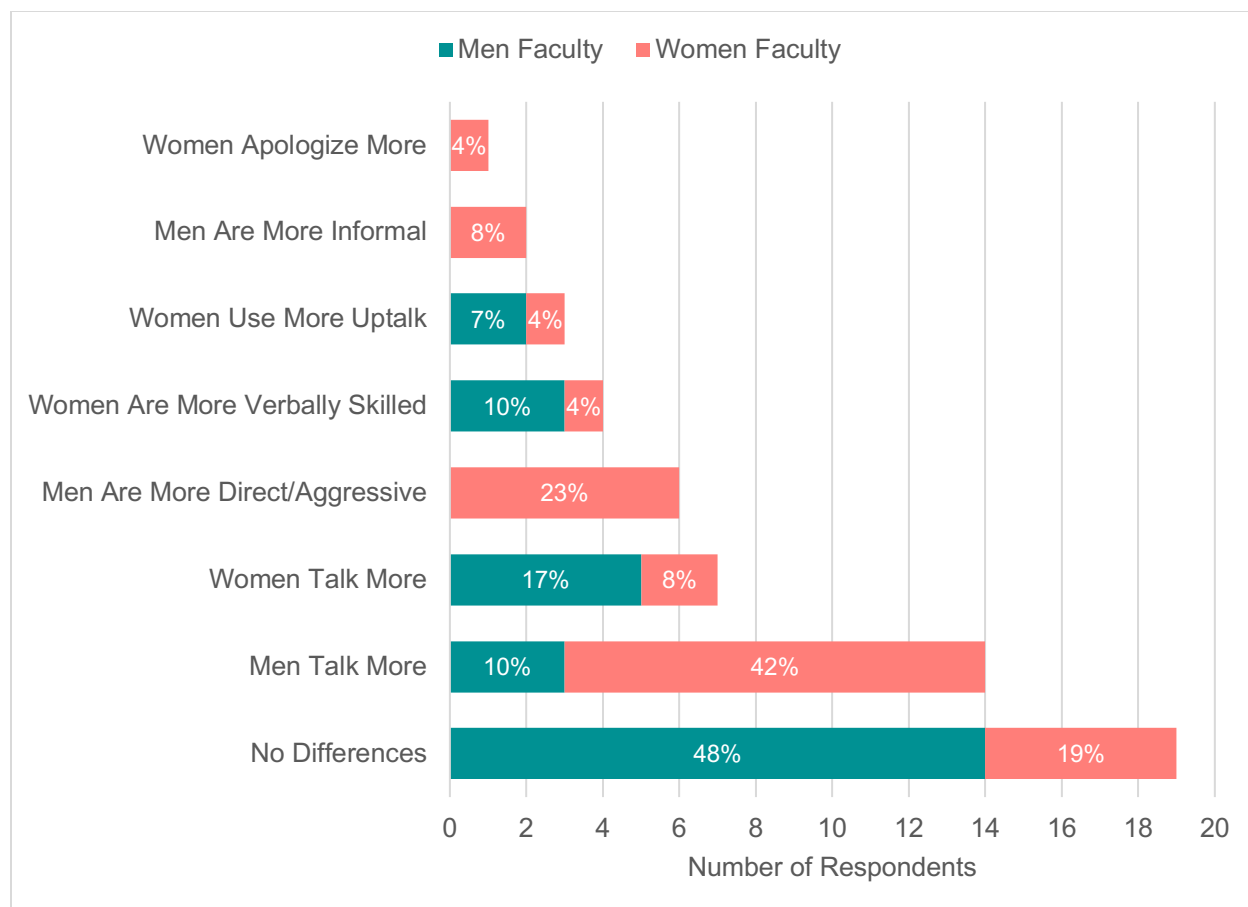


Figure 4.2: Perceived linguistic differences between men and women university students, broken down by respondent gender (with percent labels denoting percentages of total men respondents and percentages of total women respondents).

Figure 4.2 illustrates several important trends related to faculty gender. First, we see that a higher percentage of men respondents reported no differences between women and men students than women respondents. This supports the literature that has found a trend of men being ambivalent towards gender equality efforts and/or believing that gender equality has been achieved, even when these men are supporters of gender equality (Dworkin et al. 2012; Shefer et al. 2008; Sideris 2004; Levtoev et al 2014). Secondly, we see that a higher percentage of women faculty observe men students talking more, while more men faculty observe women talking more. This may be indicative of a contra-sensitivity in which the linguistic practices of the opposite sex are more salient to the hearer/observer. From this perspective, it is noteworthy that

only women respondents mentioned men students being linguistically aggressive. This finding aligns with those of Mullola et al. (2012), which found that men teachers viewed men students' behaviors more positively, as well as reflecting West and Zimmerman's (1975) claim that men's interruptions of women tend to be negative, whereas their interruptions of men are positive and affirming. The number of respondents who brought up women's apologies, men's informality, and women's uptalk was relatively low – although the entire sample was relatively small, making it difficult to interpret salience or significance. Nonetheless, because the discourses used to describe these features stood out importantly, they will be discussed further in the following section.

Qualitative Analysis

Each data point from the QCA was reexamined qualitatively within the context of the discursive framing surrounding it. Specifically, I examined the values and/or explanations of the perceived linguistic differences that faculty members mentioned, including coding for their employment of Male Dominance and/or Cultural Difference tropes (see Table 4.2 for that coding schema). In what follows, using these as tropes a contextualizing framework, I detail the most persuasive discursive themes gleaned from the data: engaged women, overzealous men, timid women, casual men, and gender-blindness.

Table 4.2: Coding schema for qualitative analysis, based on discursive tropes of Male Dominance and Cultural Difference

‘Male Dominance’ tropes	‘Cultural Difference’ tropes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Men dominating women linguistically • Women needing to adapt linguistically • Women’s weak language a result of oppression • Women as linguistically hesitant (via, e.g., hedges, fillers, tag questions, and rising intonation on declaratives) • Promises connected to altered speaker (‘women will succeed if they...’) • Threats connected to non-altered speech (‘women will not succeed if they...’) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mars and Venus (men and women being from ‘two different planets,’ separate-but-equal) • Inevitable cross-sex miscommunication • Socialized essential difference • Women as more verbally skilled than men • Men’s linguistic goals instrumental (talking more about things and facts) • Women’s linguistic goals interpersonal or relational (talking more about people, relationships, and feelings) • Men’s language as competitive, direct, impolite, reflecting general interest in acquiring and maintaining status • Women’s language as cooperative, reflecting preference for equality and harmony

Engaged Women

Seven respondents described women students as more talkative in class. Talkativeness included asking questions, engaging, sharing, and elaborating. Professor 6, a white man in Social Sciences, said, “Typically, females are a lot more willing to engage to ask questions, you know. If they’re interested in something, they’re willing to share.” Professor 6 went on to say that he didn’t believe this was “a hard and fast gender difference,” but rather, “just something I’ve observed.” Nonetheless, the theme of women sharing does align with the Cultural Difference trope of women’s language being more cooperative.

Many faculty members praised their talkative women students by juxtaposing their men students as participating in a bare-minimum sort of way. Professor 14, a white man in Agricultural Science, said the following about the students in his classes:

...[the women] tend to be a little bit more energetic and dynamic when they speak, whereas the guys are just kind of like, you know, “I gotta do this. Let me get it over with and let’s move on.”

Here Professor 14 reports the hypothetical inner dialogue of his men students’ thoughts. The phrases “I gotta do this” and “let me get this over with” fit in with the Cultural Difference trope of men’s linguistic goals being instrumental (as opposed to women’s linguistic goals being interpersonal or relational).

Professor 12, a white man in Agricultural Science, made the following comparison between his men and women students’ willingness to talk:

I would say the girls are more, uh– women are always more prone to speak up, I think, than men are. I don’t know why that is, but I think that’s true. I think guys don’t want to look stupid. That’s all I can think. I was a speak-up guy. I’ve always been. But I’ve noticed that I was one of the few...

Illustrating the Cultural Difference trope of socialized essential difference, Professor 12 refers to women “always” being more prone to speak up, noting his own talkativeness as exceptional. (Importantly, he refers to “girls/women” and “guys” in general, rather than men and women students specifically, further emphasizing Mars-and-Venus essentialization). Whether or not he believes these trends to be a result of biological hardwiring or childhood gender segregation is unclear; but he certainly doesn’t observe Male Dominance to be suppressing women’s voices.

Professor 25, a white man in the university’s Professional Program, also noted women’s talkativeness juxtaposed with men students’ bare-minimum attitude, similar to Professor 14 but with many more Cultural Difference tropes at play:

Men are much more succinct and to the point, almost to the point of not nearly saying anything, you know. Not giving you anything to work with, you know. Uh. You're like, "Tell me more." Women on the other hand are, you know, uh, I wouldn't say [they're] more thoughtful, but they're more— they give you more to work with, you know? They share more of their thoughts.

Professor 25's description of men's communication is clearly influenced by the Cultural Difference approach. The professor's labels of "succinct" and "to the point" align with the Cultural Difference trope of men's linguistic goals as instrumental, and his description of men "not nearly saying anything" aligns with the character type of the *silent* and/or *unable-to-communicate* man that Cameron (2009) highlights in her criticisms of Cultural Difference. Cameron argues that the approach is "remarkably patronizing towards men," with descriptions of the verbally unskilled man painting a picture of men as "petulant toddlers" or "Neanderthals sulks in their caves" (Cameron 2009:6-7). Additionally, it is noteworthy that (like Professor 12) Professor 25 refers to "men" and "women" rather than "men students" and "women students"; thus, while he is directly responding to the question about students, in his response he is making Mars-and-Venus-like claims about men and women's communication styles in general, fitting the Cultural Difference trope of socialized essential difference. Finally, while the Professor 25 doesn't directly address emotions, he does mention that women "share more of their thoughts" more than men, alluding to the Cultural Difference trope of women's linguistic goals being interpersonal or relational in addition to being more verbally skilled.

Multiple other professors attributed women's talkativeness to their superior verbally abilities. Enacting the Cultural Difference trope of women as more verbally skilled than men, four professors overtly described women as being more skilled communicators. Professor 14, the white man in Agricultural Science quoted earlier, said the following when discussing the talkativeness of the women in his class:

I would say if anything the— the female students tend to be probably better-spoken, if that makes sense. You know, the males just kind of come in mumbling and rattling off. Certainly there are exceptions. Some [males] that are very good public speakers. But, um, the female students that I've had interactions with are very well-spoken. Um, you know, they're very good public speakers.

Here Professor 14 contrasts his “well-spoken” women students with his “mumbling and rattling off” men students. Professor 17, a white man in Engineering, also used the trope of women as more verbally skilled than men, admitting it was likely a stereotype but one that he adhered to:

I generally adhere to the stereotype that women are better communicators than men. Um. Most women that I have, if I— if I give them a written assignment that requires some an essay or some [description]. This is engineering, right? We don't do that that much. I mean, we have reports and we have technical writing, etcetera, etcetera. But I really— I— I really do believe that most [women] are better—a little better—communicators, at least initially, than men are.

Professor 17's acknowledgement of the stereotype status of his claim, coupled with his continuous hedging (*most, a little, at least*), lends itself to an awareness of the over-essentialization of the Mars-and-Venus approach. Nonetheless, Professor 17's description of women being better communicators “initially” may suggest that he doesn't view this gender difference as an effect of socialization, but rather of biological hardwiring – that, perhaps, verbal ability is a skill that men aren't born with, but that they can be taught.

One professor attributed women's talkativeness (or, rather, men's quietness) to the imbalanced gender makeup of her classes. Professor 52, a white woman in Education explained that the women students outnumber the men greatly in her field, which she believes influences participation:

Yeah but I think in [Education] it's really interesting, because we usually have way more women in the classes, and so we don't get as many gender dynamics going on, because, if anything, the poor guys... we don't get to hear their voices hardly at all, because it's only like one or two of them.

In addition to using an apologetic tone when discussing her silenced men students (referring to them as “the poor guys,” insinuating that men’s silence as unfortunate) she attributes women’s talkativeness. That is, she believes that disproportionate numbers silence men. Nonetheless, this could perhaps be a symptom of field rather than numbers, with Education being highly gendered as a “feminine” field, like nursing and social work (Stockton et al. 1980). Moreover, as illustrated in the next section, numerous interviewees gave examples of talkative men who dominated despite being outnumbered by women in their classes.

Overzealous Men

Contrary to the previous theme of talkative women, many professors (14 of them) described men students as being more talkative than their women peers. Their discourses about these talkative men, however, differed noticeably from discourses about talkative women. Men students’ participation was framed as being courageous, fearless, or aggressive. For instance, Professor 41, a black woman in Applied Social Science, said that although she has “a lot fewer men” in her classes, but the men students “are not hesitant to speak at all.”

Many of the professors who described talkative men students framed their talkativeness as a negative attribute. They did so by highlighting inappropriateness of comments, lengthiness of comments (i.e., floor-hogging), and talking without being called on. Professor 33, a white woman in Education, said:

I think there can be some male students that are more willing to contribute and offer their opinions. ...Sometimes I have to, um, encourage them to listen to others first.

By claiming to have to encourage her men students to listen, Professor 33 implies that the men students are either floor-dominant, interrupting, or otherwise linguistically dominating the classroom.

Not all respondents were as discursively indirect as Professor 33 in their descriptions of assertive men students. Professor 52 (the black woman in Education quoted earlier) used the verb “dominate” in her response, saying, “Yeah, I have had some issues. Um. You know, some— some men want to dominate the conversation.” Similarly, Professor 32, a white woman in Social Science, explained,

My male students are far more likely to dominate conversations. They're far more likely to volunteer to talk. They're far more secure in offering their opinions about anything and everything regardless of their level of expertise.

In her description of the ways men students “dominate” conversations, Professor 32 implies that conversation topics are more expansive for men, while perhaps women are more focused on specific areas of expertise. “Dominance,” thus, does not simply refer to *more* conversation, but more *expansive* conversation. In these ways, Professor 32’s descriptions align with the Male Dominance trope of men linguistically dominating women via its reference to men being “secure,” since Lakoff’s (1975) entire thesis centered on women’s insecurity and men’s prerogative.

Professor 57, a black woman in Humanities, also described men’s linguistic dominance via descriptions of their floor-hogging and lack of filter:

I feel like my male students have a tendency to speak more in class. Um. A lot more without being, um, called on or being prompted. They're more forward with their words and much more willing to just say whatever they're feeling, whether it's appropriate or not.

Here Professor 57, just like Professor 32, alludes to inappropriateness of the men’s talk, with a focus on the unqualified (and unprompted) nature of their comments. Here, male students’ “dominance” includes not only more talk, but more presumptive talk.

Professor 51, a white woman in Applied Social Science, referred to men students’ speech “aggressive” in relation to course-related demands:

I've had a couple male students that- a little more aggressive, I guess, and um, I don't want to use the word like *bully* or *intimidate*, because I think that's a little more harsh than what I mean but, um, maybe trying- recognizing that I am a young female instructor, and maybe trying pressure me into things, um, like grade negotia[tion]- which is not a negotiation, but what they hope will be a negotiation. Or, so there's been a couple times where, um, I felt men were more demanding or straightforward and acted in ways that perhaps they wouldn't toward a male instructor.

In this anecdote, Professor 51 attributed this forthcoming style not only to her students' gender, but also as a result of her own gender; that is, she considered that these men students may not have communicated so aggressively (or at all) with a man professor. Professor 51's description of the men students' aggression towards her (a woman) certainly align with Male Dominance theme of men dominating women linguistically. While Cultural Difference also encompasses themes of men being linguistically direct, a subscriber of the Cultural Difference approach would be more likely to describe men being linguistically direct with women *and* other men.

Another linguistic trait mentioned by multiple professors who framed their men students as overzealous was interruptions. Professor 33 (the white woman in Education who was quoted earlier describing the domineering men in her class), said the following:

Professor 33: Sometimes I'll need to directly call on female students to contribute their ideas because they might be less willing to or they might get interrupted. Uh. I think male students tend to interrupt more. Um -

Interviewer: And this is even when [men] are in the minority?

Professor 33: Yeah. Yeah.

Professor 33 admits that women often get interrupted in class, and while she doesn't overtly say by whom, the focus of her next sentence is men students and their tendency to interrupt.

Accordingly, the professor employs a clear Male Dominance trope of men linguistically dominating women. Professor 33's observations are quite different from those of Professor 52

(quoted earlier in the *Engaged Women* section), who reported observing quiet men in her Education classes, and who evoked a Cultural Difference explanation in doing so.

Finally, a few professors alluded to the theme of overzealous young men by juxtaposing exceptional (nontraditional) men students in their classes. For example, Professor 11, a white woman in Social Science, said the following about the men in one of her courses:

Well, I have a very gentle breed of men in my undergraduate psychology of gender course. Um. There are a few in there for whom the whole question concept of gender is brand new and they are relatively quiet. I really haven't had a belligerent, resistant learner, and the men are very sweet, lovely people who want, um, to be seen, I think, as egalitarian. And so they don't interrupt, they don't take the stage, you know, they know how to share time in the classroom.

Professor 11 exceptionalizes the men in her Gender Studies course as a “gentle breed of men”; so when she says that the men aren't belligerent, don't interrupt, and don't floor-hog, she implies that conventional/average men students *are* and *do*.

This section has shown faculty members' discursive framing of men students' linguistic dominance. As the responses show, the notion of dominance is not simply *talking more*; it also involves more expansive topics, interruptions, floor-hogging, linguistic directness, presumptiveness, (over)confidence, and even aggression. While these themes certainly complement the preexisting literature about perceptions of boys as “troublesome but smart” students (Heyder and Kessels 2015; Jones and Myhill 2004; Morris 2012) they also contrast previous findings related to boys being perceived as academically “lazy” students (Heyder and Kessels 2015).

Timid Women

As noted in the previous section, many professors juxtaposed their women students with their “fearless” men students who “aren't afraid to speak up.” Women's lack of confidence is central to Lakoff's (1975) descriptions of women's language and, thus, the Male Dominance

approach. Professor 31, a white woman in Textiles, noted that men spoke up frequently in her class, whereas “the females are the ones that come up to me after class... I definitely notice that.” It is important to note that Textiles is a STEM subfield, as research has shown that men participate more in STEM classes (Guzzetti and Williams 1996; Howe and Abedin 2013). It is very possible women’s lack of *in-class* participation observed by Professor 31 in her Textiles courses is a result of them being women in STEM. If so, this example would mirror that of Professor 52, the Education professor who reported men students speaking up less than women in her Education classes.

Respondents brought up women’s timidity in descriptions of linguistic differences beyond just talkativeness. For instance, of the three professors who brought up uptalk (i.e., rising intonation on declaratives), two directly attributed the feature to women’s insecurity in some way. Professor 49, a white man in the university’s Professional Program, relayed the following anecdote about a former PhD student’s use of uptalk:

I can’t remember if it was when she was starting to finish up her PhD or when she was a post-doc, but it was about that time and I had to talk with her about the way that she talked when she was giving presentations, because she would—her voice would raise up an octave at the end of something. A lot more questions or things like that. And I was like, “You are an excellent scientist. Sound confident. Don’t make these things sound like a question.”¹⁷

Despite multiple studies documenting uptalk being used as a linguistic tool by women in positions of authority (Cheng and Warren 2005; McLemore 1991), Professor 49 clearly interpreted his students’ uptalk as insecurity. His belief reflects Male Dominance tropes of women’s uptalk signaling uncertainty and/or lack of confidence. Additionally, the

¹⁷ Note: the author realizes post-doctoral researcher a student, the faculty interviewee could not remember whether – at the time of the scenario described in his anecdote – the woman was a PhD student of a postdoc. Because he mentioned her student status, and the power differential between them, this anecdote was treated like and coded as a professor-student interaction, and thus student perception.

advice/coaching that Professor 49 provided the PhD student is a perfect example of the Male Dominance trope of promises connected to altered speech.

While Professor 49 was confident in his view of uptalk and his belief that it should be altered, Professor 56, a black woman in Applied Social Science, was less sure:

Professor 56: A lot of what struck me with a lot of young people now is this, kind of, I don't know it's this, kind of—for lack of a better term—this kind of just *valley girl* thing where every- every sentence ends on a high note. ...I don't know if you've noticed that or not.

Interviewer: Oh yeah, it's called *uptalk*. ... You hear it all over the place.

Professor 56: Yeah and I hear it with African American students, white students, you know, Hispanic. It just seems to be, you know, cross-cultural.

Interviewer: Both men and women?

Professor 56: Uh, more women than men, I have to admit that, more women than men and, uh ... I don't know. I- let me I have to think about... I don't know if this is not going to make any sense, and I'm not articulating it correctly, but like [women's speech] seems lighter to me. ...Not as, you know, kind of, um, uh, uh, you know, *domineering* or, you know, *not as forceful* I guess is the word. Um, and again, I don't know if that's a reflection of me or it's them.

Professor 56 is hesitant to describe uptalk as necessarily weak; she uses lots of hedging to mitigate her stance, including multiple instances of *I don't know* as well as *I guess* when making the claim. Nonetheless, it's clear she subscribes (albeit hesitantly) to Male Dominance trope of women's language as weak, as she describes women's uptalk as sounding less domineering and less forceful than men's language.

This section has shown how faculty discursively frame women's linguistic timidity in two primary ways: timidity indexed through lack of verbal engagement, and timidity indexed through use of “weak” language features. Regarding the former, some faculty members expressed women's lack of participation in class as a result of their timidity; in line with the latter, respondents expressed the belief that their women students used “weak language

features”—such as uptalk, or fillers—which created a tone of timidity, thus undermining their expertise. The former challenges the notion of “more engaged” women students, while the latter supports the previous literature indicating women’s speech is perceived as more tentative (Palomares 2009; Leaper and Robnett 2011).

Casual Men

In line with Lakoff’s (1975) claim that women use more formal language than men, multiple interviewees mentioned men students being linguistically more casual. Terms of address were brought up multiple times when discussing men students’ informality. For instance, Professor 51 (the white woman in Applied Social Science quoted earlier) described the following trend:

For the most part it’s—and this isn’t totally the way they speak but—also calling me “Ms.” repeatedly over and over and over again regardless of what my signature says. Um. And that is definitely— that comes from men more than women for sure. Because *a female couldn’t possibly have a PhD.* (italics here denote sarcastic tone)

Here Professor 51, whose email signature includes her doctoral-degree-holding status, emphasizes the number of times that men students address her as “Ms.” To Professor 51, this implies not only casualness and informality, but also disrespect or ignorance. While we cannot know the intentions of Professor 51’s students, interviews with university faculty carried out by Heckert et al. (1999) found that men faculty reported being more likely than their women colleagues to be called “Doctor” by students, and sociological research suggests that undergraduate students are more likely to call men faculty “professors” and women faculty “teachers” as a result of implicit biases related to men and women (Miller and Chamberlin 2000).

Salutations and email as an area in which men’s informality stood out was also noted by Professor 54, a white woman in Applied Social Science. She provided the following comparison:

I would say, like, guys are more often more casual in email—even to me—than, like-. A woman would initially... they'll write “Doctor [*Last Name*]”... But a guy will often just write, you know, an email without a salutation or a closing.

Here Professor 54 highlights men students’ tendency to write emails in an extremely informal manner; she adds that it’s “a surprise to me that there's no more proper engagement with somebody,” with the word *proper* highlighting the informal nature of men’s communication with her. Rather than othering women for being linguistically formal, as Lakoff (1975) did in *Language and Woman’s Place*, both Professors 51 and 54 frame men’s informality as the marked form.

If we consider the excerpts above through the lens of politeness theory (Brown and Levinson 1987), we can see that the observations informal men seem to mirror sociolinguistic findings related to men and politeness, as summarized by (Kiesling 2007):

Studies of gender and politeness generally show that men tend to be less polite (use more direct strategies without paying attention to face) and are especially less positively polite, than women (Holmes 1995). ... In general, the fewest politeness strategies are seen in conversations among men and the most politeness among women, with mixed-gender conversations falling in between. All of these patterns are tendencies; ...they are not categorical. (P. 666).

It is both possible that the anecdotes of Professors 51 and 54 are reflective of these tendencies, or informed and shaped by knowledge of these tendencies.

No Differences

Not all professors perceived language-based gender differences in their classrooms. Nineteen reported having observed no differences between women and men students (as illustrated in the QCA results). Of those 19 professors the majority (13 faculty) claimed that any linguistic differences they did observe were related to personality types, not gender. In other words, individual differences trump gender differences. Professor 27, a white man in Applied Social Science, reported only seeing individual differences.

Interviewer: And have you noticed any differences in the way that men versus women communicate spoken or written in your classes?

Professor 27: No, not as a rule. I mean there are individual examples in it but, you know – but I think it's more just that – individual. There's the super shy one and the super outspoken one. Um. Not so much as a rule.

While Professor 27 does bring up contrasting traits, he does not attribute those traits to a certain gender. Similarly, Professor 3, a white man in Humanities, also attributed his lack of observing gender differences between students to the immense linguistic variation among his students.

Focusing on multiple aspects of communication, Professor 3 said the following:

I tend to have, you know, the kind of– the spectrum in both genders in terms of participation, ability, clarity, participation, you know. Um. Even to the extent of, you know, you get some classes where there's a problematic, like, sort of good-and-bad problem of a student who dominates and, like, answers everything? I've had that in both genders. Yeah. So, I don't see much difference there.

Professor 3 described varying levels of communication styles stated neutrally (e.g., “participation” as opposed to “high participation” or “low participation”). Then, however, he shifts his focus to linguistically disruptive behavior. Describing a hypothetical student dominating the class (very similar, discursively, to the way respondents described *overzealous young men* in the previous section), he maintains that he sees this type of disruptive behavior from men and women students.

In addition to focusing on individual differences that were personality-based, other professors noticed differences that were field-of-study based. For instance, Professor 20, a white man in Humanities, explained:

I mean, I haven't noticed a gender difference. I just see a discipline difference. Like, they're English majors, so they write really long complicated sentences with lots of clauses, and I'm trying to get them to write shorter, more skimmable – and kind of be, you know, like, use headings [rather than topic sentences]. Stuff like that.

In his response, Professor 20 attributes communication styles to field of study rather than gender; nonetheless, it is important to note that, at this professor's university, over three-fourths of undergraduate English majors are women.

Some faculty members took pride in their reporting of no observed differences between men and women students—perhaps seeing this lack of evidence *as evidence* of gender egalitarianism in their classrooms. One of these examples came from Professor 16, a white woman in the university's Professional Program:

Interviewer: Do you notice differences in the ways that your men versus women students are communicating...?

Professor 16: No, I'm really delighted to say I haven't noticed a difference.

Here we see Professor 16 pleased (“really delighted”) with her lack of observation, likely a result of her assuming a gender-egalitarian classroom, as opposed to being an unobservant person.

While some responses (like the one above) bordered on “gender-blindness,” one faculty member—Professor 8, a white man in Education—made direct comment about expected gender-blindness in the profession:

Professor 8: So, do you notice any major differences in the way that men versus women so still thinking about students so the way that men versus women communicate in your classes whether spoken or written?

Interviewer: Uh-uh. I haven't. Nope. I guess we're trained not to think about it—right?—in terms of gender.

While it's possible that Professor 8 (like Professor 16) was pleased at his lack of observed differences and/or his success at gender-blind observations of students, it is also possible that his comment was a quip related to gender-blindness having negative consequences in the workplace, such as concealing women's disadvantages and normalizing interactions that privilege the masculine (e.g., Lewis 2006; Olsson 2000).

Finally, some faculty members attributed their lack of observing gender differences not to an absence of differences, but to a lack of awareness on their part. For instance, when asked about gender differences in student communication styles, Professor 23, a white man in Agricultural Science, was stumped by the question:

The way they communicate? I don't know. That's a question I would need to reflect on because I haven't – I haven't ever – I don't think – thought about – of that. I'm sorry I don't have an answer for you with that.

In fact, the theme of *never having thought about [linguistic concept x]* was a common answer for many of Faculty Dialect Study participants, suggesting that—while many faculty members may be conscious of biases related to gender—they may not be aware of those related to language. This supports Reaser and colleagues' (2017) observation that because “language is rarely given attention as an element of diversity in college... members of the campus community remain largely unaware of the attitudes and assumptions they hold about language” (p. 258). For this reason, the study of what faculty know (as well as what they consciously and unconsciously *do not* know) about language, should be crucial to the sociological study of inequalities in education.

Discussion

The goal of this study was to shed light on gender differences university faculty members perceive regarding their students' speaking styles, and how they explain and/or value those differences. Faculty perceive men students using more direct language than women, interrupting more than women, and using more casual and informal language than women, while they perceive women students as being more verbally skilled than men, using more uptalk than men, and apologizing more than men.

These observations underscore previous descriptions of men's and women's language found in well-known scholarly texts, such as Lakoff's (1971) *Language and Woman's Place* and Tannen's (1990) *You Just Don't Understand*. While many follow-up studies and meta-analyses (e.g., Canary and Hause 1993; Dindia 2006; Dindia and Canary 2006; Hyde 2005; Mulac 2006) have shown more within-gender variation than between-gender variation in the use of these features, Cameron (2009) reminds us that most people do not read academic journals that present empirical research on language use. Instead, they get their information about scientific findings from popular books (e.g., *Woman's Place; You Just Don't Understand; Men are from Mars*) and popular mass media (e.g., newspapers and TV, which tend to highlight stories about sex *differences* rather than similarities). These publicized bits of "soundbite science" linger in public memory, and as Cameron (2009) observes, this is "how myths acquire the status of facts" (p. 20). This phenomenon seems evident in the results of this exploratory study with faculty.

Tropes from both Male Dominance and Cultural Difference approaches were salient in the professors' responses. The Difference approach was generally used to explain women's superior verbal abilities, men's brevity/quietness, and other "essential" differences between men and women. The Dominance approach was appealed to in two different ways. In the *Overzealous Men* section, we saw how professors (especially women) used the Dominance approach to highlight men's linguistic dominance over women; in the section on *Timid Women*, however, we saw how respondents (both men and women) used the Dominance approach to explain women's use of "weak" language features.

Contrasting discourses emerged in descriptions of men and women students' in-class participation. While women students' talkativeness was framed as "skilled," "engaging," and "asking good questions," men's talkativeness was often described as "aggressive" and

“presumptive.” This juxtaposition is highly reminiscent of the stereotype of the “diligent” girls and “smart but troublesome” boys found in previous literature (e.g., Heyder and Kessels 2015; Jones and Myhill 2004; Morris 2012). This finding lends nuance, however, to how this stereotype manifests itself in postsecondary education versus lower grades; in the previous literature troublesome boys in primary and secondary school were characterized by laziness and noninvolvement, while the current study found troublesome men in the university characterized by aggression and overzealousness.

While more research is needed to explain why these stereotypes of men students morph from *under-involved* to *over-involved* at the post-secondary level, research documenting dominant and aggressive classroom behavior in men university students as well-documented (Pittman 2010, 2012). In terms rationale, some blame the instructors and/or the “chilly climate” facing women students in higher education (Crombie et al. 2003; Fox 1984). Fox (1984), for instance, claims that it is a result of faculty allowing men students to dominate, arguing that faculty members promote and reinforce “the invisibility of female students” by calling directly on men but not women, giving men more time to answer than women, and crediting the contributions of men more often than women. Others, however, blame traditional social hierarchies, and students’ reaction to the collapse of these hierarchies. Pittman's (2010) study of women faculty of color revealed these women faculty had experienced having their authority and expertise challenged by students – mostly *white men* students. The author suggests that the students’ actions may be interpreted as an attempt to reassert their dominance and restore the normative status (i.e., the norm of white men being in charge).

Finally, a notable finding was the number of professors who engaged in individualist and/or gender-blind explanations, reminiscent of the discourses of color-blind racism discussed

by Bonilla-Silva (2012). While we should be certainly be encouraged by the number of professors who reported observing no gender differences in their classrooms—as it may suggest that these professors do not hold overt biases or stereotypes about men and women, and/or university classrooms becoming more gender egalitarian—we should be wary of the inequalities and privileges that gender-blindness can conceal, and the implicit biases that are unrecognized or acknowledged.

Conclusion

This chapter investigates faculty discourses about men and women students' language. The study increases understanding of language and gender ideologies, by illustrating the ways in which the Male Dominance approach and Cultural Difference approach have informed university faculty members' views of student behavior. The study also extends existing sociological literature on teachers' perceptions of students to include a focus on *language ideologies*, providing a new window into the way teacher's view student behavior. In the study, many respondents described student speaking styles that align with preexisting stereotypes about men's and women's speech (e.g., women being more verbally skilled, men being more aggressive). Are these views of student language objective, or are faculty perceptions influenced by gender bias(es) and cultural stereotypes? Experimental/perceptual studies like Heyder and Kessels' (2015) should be carried out at the university level in order to investigate these questions. This study also extends what we know about teachers' perceptions of students beyond the primary and secondary level—by focusing on postsecondary instructors. Because teachers' perceptions can lead to differential treatment of students, which in turn can influence student outcomes (Bowles and Gintis 1976; Rist 1970; Rosenthal and Jacobson 1992), it is crucial for sociologists to

determine whether university instructors are supporting gender equity not only in theory but in practice.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

The traditionally gendered institution of higher education raises a multitude of questions about an educational system that often voices concern about structurally based inequality in American society. Many researchers have investigated the ways in which gender inequality operates at a structural level, including issues related to hiring, promotion, and tenure, as well as division of labor (e.g., Beaman-Smith and Placier 1996; Doucet et al. 2012; Long et al. 1993; Park 1996; Probert 2005; Steinpreis et al. 1999; Toffoletti and Starr 2016). Few studies, however, have examined gender inequality at the linguistic or discursive level in higher education. An examination of language practices is crucial to understand ways in which inequalities are reproduced institutionally (Bourdieu 1979; Fairclough 1989) and navigated locally (Acker 2006; Gal 1989; Goffman 1955, 1959, 1982; Hymes 1989). Sociolinguistic research has shown that attitudes towards nonstandard language can reproduce racial, ethnic, and class-based inequalities in higher education (e.g., Costner, Daniels, and Clark 2010; Dunstan 2013; Dunstan et al. 2015; Dunstan and Jaeger 2015; McBride 2006). At the same time, no study has yet considered the ways in which language ideologies might reproduce *gender* inequality in higher education. How do ideologies related to language and gender reproduce or challenge gender norms and expectations within academia?

Sociolinguists have long been interested in language and gender, but paradigmatic approaches in the past have often engaged in the subordination and/or mystification of women's language (Cameron et al. 1988). As a result, many popular beliefs about language and gender reflect a view of feminine speech as inferior to masculine speech (Cameron 2009, 2014). These beliefs and values have tangible consequences. For instance, women's speech is disproportionately sanctioned at work (Carli 1990; Holmes 2008; Perriton 2009; Wiley and

Eskilson 1985), due at least in part to the association of men's speech with leadership, competence, and ambition (Eagly and Karau 2002; Heilman 2001). Workplace studies of women's speech have focused primarily on corporate managerial contexts, however, overlooking the majority of working women along with intragroup variation (Mumby 1988). By focusing on the private sector, language and gender research has overlooked and ignored a significant institutional site: higher education. Ironically, one of the least scrutinized sites is the one in which most of the research about language and the workplace is conducted.

To fill these gaps, the guiding questions for my dissertation research were: *how do language and gender ideologies operate among the teaching faculty at universities, and what do they reveal about issues of privilege and power in higher education?* In approaching these questions, I used an interdisciplinary approach, drawing from sociology, sociolinguistics, and social psychology. To holistically capture the processes at play in the reproduction of language and gender ideologies (and associated discourses and behaviors) it was integral to use theories of symbolic interactionism, gender role expectations, role congruity theory, stereotype threat, and theories of language and gender to frame this research. As such, this dissertation highlights the importance of interdisciplinary research.

Summary of Findings

My dissertation research comprises three distinct but related studies. Data for the studies came from semi-structured interviews collected for the Faculty Dialect Study, a larger project investigating the linguistic experiences of university faculty. All interviews were audio recorded and then transcribed. In each of the three studies, I used a mixed-methods approach to examine difference aspects of language and gender ideologies in the academic workplace. In Chapter 2, I analyzed interviews with women professors for themes related to linguistic pressures faced in the

university, and behaviors of adaptation or resistance to these pressures (including linguistic features and styles adopted or dropped). In Chapter 3, I examined faculty interviews for perceived linguistic patterns men and women faculty, with a focus on perceived differences in meetings, at conferences, and in the classroom. In Chapter 4, I analyzed professors' interviews for responses for perceptions of men and women students' language use, with a focus on perceived differences in the classroom. In what follows, I explicate upon each of the three studies and its major findings. In the subsequent section, I revisit the dissertation Project Aims introduced in the first chapter and discuss the ways in which the three studies have contributed towards those aims.

The study presented in Chapter 2, "Linguistic Expectations Faced by Women Faculty," marks the first mixed-methods study of perceived linguistic pressures faced by women university faculty. The study analyzes women faculty members' responses to the following interview questions: "As a woman, are there speaking styles that you have adopted or dropped in order to sound more competent?" and, "Have you ever been pressured to act/talk more feminine or more masculine?" as well as other relevant comments during the interview. The study sheds light on women faculty members' perceptions of interactional norms, expectations, and reactions within the university setting.

Role congruity theory posits an inconsistency between femininity and leadership: "the social role of being feminine is incongruent with the social role of being a leader, which occurs because people observe men in management roles and then correlate the characteristics of men with the definition of an effective leader" (Eagly and Karau 2002:2). In terms of the relationship between role congruity and *language*, multiple previous studies have examined perceptions of white men's and white women's speech in terms of their adherence to or resistance against

traditional gender role expectations (e.g., Carli 1990; Mulac 2006). Many of these studies identified a double-bind for white women: they are sanctioned for indexing femininity as well as for violating gender norm expectations (Carli 2001; Eagly and Karau 2002; Lindsey and Zakahi 2006; Palomares 2009). The majority of these workplace perception studies, however, focused on the corporate workplace, ignoring the university setting – leaving answered questions related to how we expect scholars to sound. Thus, Chapter 2 is successful in broadening the sociological discussion of perceptions of professional women to directly include women academics.

For the study, I carried out a two-part mixed-methods analysis: first, content analysis provided an overview of the features identified by women as helpful or hurtful to their careers, whether faculty members added or dropped linguistic features to sound more competent, pressures to sound more masculine or feminine, and subsequent acts of adaptation or resistance to these pressures; and secondly, I used comparative qualitative analysis to uncover linguistic expectations women faculty perceive as normative in academia, including how and why they conform to or resist these expectations. Rather than including data from interviews with men faculty, the responses of women exclusively are utilized in this manuscript. I consider this decision a form of academic feminism, which gives careful attention to women's diverse experiences by listening to women and allowing women themselves to describe and theorize about their experiences (Devault 1990). Furthermore, I was careful to consider the experiences of white women as unique from the experiences of women of color, as well as the experiences of working-class white women from middle-class white women; this attention to intersectional identities highlights important ways in which women's multiple social identities intersect with their gender to produce unique privileges and oppression (Collins 1990).

Major findings of this study reveal significant obstacles perceived by women faculty that mirror obstacles facing professional women in corporate workplaces. While many interviews in this study revealed an overall perception of gender-related progress made over the past few decades, most of this progress was related to a decrease in overt sexism. Instead, findings of this study highlighted a perceived prevalence of benevolent or covert gender biases that persists in the academy. Overall, this suggests that more work needs to be done in academia to critique and remodel everyday discourses about women's language within the academy, and to address the linguistic obstacles that women faculty perceive in the workplace.

In Chapter 3, "Gender Inequality in Higher Education Revealed Through Workplace Narratives About Language," I examined narratives of men and women faculty members' language-related experiences at work, revealing many themes of perceived gender inequality. Employee workplace narratives have been studied by social scientists in order to better understand workplace culture and specific organizational processes (e.g., Bennet and Feldman 1981; Boland and Tenkasi 1995; Czarniawska 1996; Martin 1982; Mumby 1994; Smircich 1995). According to Mumby (1988), workplace narratives warrant social scientific study due to their powerful ability to disseminate ideological meaning formations. These narratives can be especially important within the scope of gender due to their ability to disguise and perpetuate gendered organizational practices (Ely and Meyerson 2000; Olsson 2002). Most studies of workplace narratives related to gender, however, have examined corporate organizations, ignoring other workplace types, such as colleges and universities. While the analysis of workplace narratives pertaining to *language* use may be particularly important due to the crucial role that language plays in constructing gender (West and Zimmerman 1987; Butler 1988, 2011;

Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2013), no study has examined university faculty members' discourses and narratives about language and gender in the workplace.

Chapter 3 addressed three specific questions: What differences between men and women faculty's communication styles do university faculty members perceive? How are these perceptions reflect or challenge traditional gender role expectations? What do these narratives reveal about organizational norms of femininity and masculinity in the university? I used a mixed-methods approach to analyze the faculty interview responses. First, content analysis examined broad patterns across the interview responses. This analysis shed important light on the specific features that faculty associate with men's and women's speech. Second, qualitative analysis examined the ways in which participants framed and ascribed value to their responses. By focusing on language as a symbolically interactive means for constructing realities and reproducing inequalities, the qualitative analysis revealed ways in which language-related narratives reveal perceived gender inequalities at the institutional level. Furthermore, by highlighting implicit biases about language and their connections to benevolent sexism, the study exposes ways in which linguistic biases contribute to gender biases in higher education.

Results revealed that respondents perceive academia as favoring men and masculinity (and disfavoring women and femininity) in regard to language use. Major findings included stories of women's language being policed/sanctioned more than men's, as well as men faculty members' relative linguistic flexibility in the classroom and beyond (i.e., being able to "get away with" more than women) as common and normative. Findings illustrated faculty perceptions of a linguistically unequal work environment, as respondents described in detail men faculty's use of interruptions, loud volume, direct language, and talk time as a way to dominate others, especially women faculty. A number of narratives described workplace sexism (i.e., faculty members

recounting experiences of sexist language). Additionally, many faculty members offered evaluations of men and women speech that reflected traditional gender role expectations. In fact, multiple faculty interview responses contained instances of benevolent sexist discourses. Overall, results of this study suggest that more work needs to be done to address the linguistic inequalities that women and men faculty perceive in the workplace.

Lastly, in Chapter 4, “University Faculty Perceptions of Men and Women Students’ Language,” I examined faculty members’ responses to interview questions about differences in the communication styles of men and women students. Specifically, I analyzed the differences and similarities they perceived between men and women students’ speech. I did so by coding specific linguistic features and/or communication styles that respondents identified as being more common in men or women students (e.g., women talk more, men are more direct). I carried out multiple content analyses in order to discern major trends, paying close attention to respondents’ gender and field with regard to the emergent patterns. Then, I examined these interview data qualitatively within the context of the discursive framing surrounding it, focusing the values and/or explanations of the perceived linguistic differences that faculty members mentioned; this including coding for respondents’ employment of Male Dominance and/or Cultural Difference tropes. The Male Dominance approach centers on explanations of women’s language as “weak”—and subordinate to men’s speech—as a result of women’s subordinate position in society, while the Cultural Difference approach attributes men’s and women’s speech differences to subcultural communication norms resulting from same-sex socialization spheres. While both approaches have their shortcomings, both have been popular in the social scientific *and* popular spheres related to gender issues; thus, I employ qualitative analysis to see if and how these explanations manifest themselves in the gender-related discourses of faculty.

By identifying linguistic features that faculty members associate with women's or men's speech, as well as the theoretical approaches manifested in their explanations of these differences—and the values given to the said features—I uncover ways in which certain language attitudes reflect or reproduce gender ideologies, specifically those related to the previously documented stereotypes of “engaged” female students and “troublesome” or “disruptive” male students.

Major findings include faculty perceiving men students using more direct language than women, interrupting more than women, and using more casual and informal language than women, while they perceive women students as being more verbally skilled than men, using more uptalk than men, and apologizing more than men. Tropes from both Male Dominance and Cultural Difference approaches were salient in the professors' responses. Professors (especially women) used the Male Dominance approach to highlight men's linguistic dominance over women, as well as women's use of weak language features. Cultural Difference was employed in descriptions of women students' superior language skill and engagement. A notable number of professors reported no observed differences between men and women students. While this trend could be a result of professors' gender-blindness (which can conceal important inequalities), it could also be evidence of university classrooms becoming more gender egalitarian.

Overall, results revealed that the majority of professors interviewed did not perceive differences in the speech of men and women students, which could suggest one of two things: first, gender egalitarianism may be on the rise in the classroom, or gender inequality may be being overlooked in the classroom. For instance—regarding the latter—if a professor expects men to interrupt, men students' interruptions may not be salient to them. Of the professors who did report observing differences between men and women students, observations reflected many

traditional gender role expectations. In terms of the ways faculty members discursively explained the differences they observed, tropes of Male Dominance and Cultural Difference were employed by faculty, suggesting a lasting influence of these theoretical approaches on the ways in which academics may conceptualize language and gender.

Limitations

This dissertation research is the first investigation of university faculty members' beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors related specifically to language and gender. Key limitations of the study concern issues of sampling, the most important being a possible sampling bias. Due to the subject of the study and the time required to participate (about an hour), it is possible that those who volunteered to participate had stronger opinions about the study subject. During the first hour after we disseminated the email, we received 25 volunteers, and within the first twenty-four hours we received 54 volunteers. A larger sample size of faculty could yield a much more beneficial analysis; however, time constraints and the necessity for interview to be hand-coded disallowed for a larger sample. Similarly, interviewing faculty from different universities might have elicited important regional and/or class difference. While interviews with a selection of faculty cannot capture overall sentiment of a university or institution, they do provide insight into the beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that may be reproducing ideologies in various spaces within higher education.

A second limitation concerns biases related to interviewer effects and response biases that result from the interview process itself. As with any social scientific interview, the presence of the interviewer (as well as the audio recorder) may have biased responses. The manner in which the interviewer asked the questions (including verbal and non-verbal feedback), and the race, age, and gender of the interviewer should all be considered as having some effect on the

responses of the participant (Kreuter 2008). Because many studies of interviewer effects have revealed gender-of-interviewer effects in gender-related attitude questions (e.g., Davis et al. 2010; Huddy et al. 1997; Liu and Stainback 2013), it should be noted that the majority of interviews were carried out by white women. Additionally, social desirability bias should be considered. Social desirability describes “the tendency of some respondents to report an answer in a way they deem to be more socially acceptable than would be their ‘true’ answer” (Callegaro 2008). Studies have documented social desirability affecting responses to gender-related survey questions, with respondents overreporting attitudes and behaviors of gender egalitarianism (e.g., Press and Townsley 1998; Streb et al. 2008). As a result, the extent to which Faculty Dialect Study participants engaged in “a more or less deliberate editing of the response shifts the answer in the direction the respondent feels is more socially acceptable” (Callegaro 2008:826) should be considered.

Contributions

The findings of this dissertation research have implications for the placement of language within the sociological literature surrounding gender and work, as well as gender and education. In what follows, I detail the contributions of my dissertation to the field, by framing them within the existing literature that they add to.

Broadly, my dissertation research reveals how university faculty’s everyday linguistic interactions may shape institutional ideologies related to gender. According to Blumer (1962, 1969) meanings are derived from social interaction and modified through interpretation. Language is a central means through which we construct meaning. As such, symbolic interactionism has been incorporated into more recent studies of language and gender. A symbolic interactionist approach to language and gender emphasizes the dynamic aspect of

linguistic interaction (Coates 2004). Following West and Zimmerman (1987), it treats gender as something we *do* rather than something we *have* or *are*. Under this approach, gender is seen as something that one is constantly negotiating via performative interactions (Butler 1990), as well as “something that is *accomplished* in talk every time we speak” (Coates 2004:7, original emphasis). My dissertation research examines faculty interpretation of linguistic interactions, and the role the processes play within academia. Grounded in symbolic interactionism, my analysis of interview data focuses on faculty members’ interpretations of their interactions between with other agents in the university (i.e., students, postdocs, other faculty), and how these interpretations shape their views of gender. Thus, my three studies not only consider the linguistic behaviors of faculty and their interlocutors, but also the language these faculty members use to articulate their interpretations of the interactions. One way I have accomplished this is through the analysis of faculty narratives. Employee narratives have been studied by social scientists in order to better understand workplace cultures and/or specific organizational processes (e.g., Bennet and Feldman 1981; Boland and Tenkasi 1995; Czarniawska 1996; Martin 1982; Mumby 1988; Smircich 1995). These narratives can be especially important within the scope of gender due to their ability to disguise and perpetuate gendered organizational practices (Ely and Meyerson 2000; Olsson 2002). More specifically, narratives about gender and gendered traits “create a sense of an ‘objective’ reality” about gender and serve as “an indication of reality or ‘the way things are’ in the organization” (Lester 2008:281-282). Only a limited pool of literature has focused specifically on workplace narratives in higher education, a gap to which my dissertation research contributes.

Using a mixed-methods approach, I have identified linguistic features that faculty associate with men’s and women’s speech, as well as values they place upon (and explanations

given for) those features. Representations of language and gender are “part of the social apparatus which legitimizes and so helps to maintain gender distinctions and hierarchies” (Cameron 2014:293); these representations do not have to be accurate descriptions of language and gender to fulfil the ideological function. For this reason, it is crucial to study non-linguists’ beliefs about language and gender, because linguistic attitudes often reveal judgments about other social categories and norms (Lippi-Green 2011; Preston 1993). Beliefs about men’s and women’s speech in particular are often more prescriptive than descriptive, shedding light on how we believe men and women ought to speak/ behave (Cameron 2014; Coates 2008). Many stereotypes about men’s and women’s speech popularized in the twentieth century persist in the twenty-first century, despite lacking substantive empirical support (Cameron 2009, 2014). As a result, individuals tend to associate various linguistic features, styles, and attributes¹⁸ with either men or women. These associates often stem from—or lead to—stereotypes about men and women.

While a wide array of beliefs about men’s and women’s speech exists—with a variety of values assigned to linguistic features—one constant belief is that men’s and women’s speech is different to some extent. The explanations for these differences (beyond the biological) tend to fall into one of two camps: Male Dominance or Cultural Difference explanations. The former attributed gender differences in language to men’s socially dominant position in society, while the later explained differences as a result of childhood socialization. While these past social-scientific approaches to language and gender have had massive influence on modern beliefs about and attitudes towards language and gender (Cameron 2009, 2014), no empirical study has

¹⁸ Linguistic features include rising intonation, creaky voice, or saying “runnin’” instead of “running”; linguistic styles include directness, indirectness, engaged; linguistic attributes include emotional language or harsh language.

yet examined the implications of these theoretical approaches in the university workplace. We know that ideologies about language play an important role in teachers' views of students (Haig 2001; Haig and Oliver 2003), as well as students' views of teachers, their peers, and themselves (Dunstan 2013; Dunstan and Jaeger 2015; Levy et al. 1997). Likewise, we know that the values individuals and institutions place on certain types of language influences our views of language users (Lippi-Green 2012; Milroy 2007; Milroy and Milroy 1999). But no study has looked at the linguistic features that professors ascribe to men and women, nor the values they place upon said features. To fill this gap, my dissertation research identifies linguistic features that university faculty associate with women's and/or men's speech, as well as the values they place upon those features and the explanations they give for the existence (or lack) of differences.

By examining the university workplace, my dissertation helps broaden the discussion of professional women's language to include university faculty. Despite increases in gender egalitarianism, many everyday practices in academia are still based on culturally imbedded beliefs about gender (Fox 2005; Leahey 2006; Long, Allison, and McGinnis 1993; Meyers 2013; Probert 2005; Williams 1995). As a result, colleges and universities are prime sites for gender inequality (Abramo et al. 2016; Aguirre 2000; Doucet et al. 2012; Kahn 2012; Park 1996; Probert 2005). Gender inequality related to perceived competence and credibility is well-documented in academia ((MacNeill et al. 2014; Miller and Chamberlin 2000) as is students' expectations of instructors to adhere to gender norms (Andersen and Miller 1997; Bennett 1982; Dion 2008; Sprague and Massoni 2005). Recent qualitative research (e.g., Fotaki 2013) suggests an assumed association with sounding "academic" and sounding "masculine." My dissertation fills in the gaps in existing literature by investigating the consequences of this association, such as women faculty members' adoption or avoidance of linguistic features in order to sound more

competent. The investigation of adopted and dropped linguistic features is important, due to the power that linguistic resources have to construct stances (e.g., toughness, professionalism) and personas (e.g., a “scholar”). Due to socially-constructed associations, speech can be masculine or feminine, and men and women can employ either or both depending on the situation. Ochs' (1992) model of linguistic indexicality¹⁹ of gender posits the following linkage: linguistic resources (e.g., words, pronunciation, intonation) signal social constructs (e.g., stances, acts, activities), which help to constitute gender meanings (e.g., femininity, masculinity). An example of this model offered by Benor (2005) is the connection between cursing and masculinity; use of frequent curse words signal a stance of “toughness,” which is associated with and thus constitutes masculinity. From a dramaturgical perspective, this signaling of tough masculinity through cursing might be conceptualized as a “manhood act” (Schrock and Schwalbe 2009; Schwalbe and Shay 2014). My dissertation research identifies linguistic expectations women faculty perceive as normative in academia, including how they conform to or resist these expectations linguistically. This research sheds light on the linguistic resources perceived by women faculty as professional, scholarly, etc., and whether or not the adaptation or dropping of specific features are seen as necessary to achieve a confident and competent stance, and/or a professional or scholarly persona. Moreover, these findings reveal significant obstacles perceived by professional women that may perpetuate gender inequality in the university workplace.

By examining language attitudes as a guise for other attitudes, my dissertation research reveals implicit language biases held by university faculty that translate into gender biases. In order to better inform universities about the issues they should address in their diversity

¹⁹ *Linguistic indexicality* refers to signaling of an identity or stance via language. For example, the phrase “the use of Hebrew loanwords indexes masculinity” is synonymous to “the use of Hebrew loan words signals masculinity linguistically.”

initiatives, it is important to understand the language attitudes and biases held by faculty (Dunstan et al. 2015). Language discrimination is, after all, one of the last “back doors to discrimination” (Lippi-Green 1997:73). While discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religion, and other social categories are socially unacceptable (as well as illegal), it is still acceptable and common to discriminate against individuals and groups based on the way they talk (Lippi-Green 2012; Mallinson and Brewster 2005; Wolfram 2000). Implicit bias can occur despite individuals’ conscious nonprejudiced attitudes or equitable intentions (Bargh 1999; Devine 1989). This is because individuals are unaware of the implicit biases they hold. Thus, education and training, particularly those with a focus on awareness, are necessary to produce changes in implicit bias (Devine et al. 2012). Researchers who have tested the effectiveness of various training programs intended to reduce implicit bias(es) have found that—in addition to individual concern about the effects of the bias, as well as tangible strategies to reduce bias—awareness of implicit bias is key to reducing individuals’ bias (Devine et al. 2012; Richeson and Nussbaum 2004; L. A. Rudman, Ashmore, and Gary 2001; Son Hing, Li, and Zanna 2002).

Studies of language attitudes and biases in the university have primarily focused on students’ perceptions of instructors, especially the attitudes of undergraduate students toward foreign-accented professors and teaching assistants (e.g., Brown 1992; Kavas and Kavas 2008). More recently, studies have begun examining the language attitudes and biases held by professors. Na's (2016) dissertation research, for example, examined implicit attitudes of college-level instructors at university in Florida toward Hispanic-, Korean-, and Chinese- accented English and Standard English. Results indicated the instructors exhibited some bias towards speakers of Hispanic-accented English, showing a slightly stronger preference for Standard-accented English over Hispanic-accented English. Other studies of instructor attitudes, while not

specifically focused on language, have included language as a variable, illustrating the connection between language bias and other social biases. For example, Costner et al. (2010) examined university instructors' views of teaching African American students. Faculty members read statements with which they were asked to rate their agreement; among these were a few statements about speaking Standard English versus African American English. The results of this study revealed that the majority of faculty participants believed African American students should speak Standard English in the classroom; faculty of color felt that African American students should speak standard English only in the classroom environment, while white faculty felt African American students should speak Standard English all the time (in and outside the classroom). While the study was not focused on language attitudes specifically, the language-related findings strongly illustrated the connection between language attitudes and inequitable attitudes related to race. Language attitudes can shed light on gender bias, as well. In her historical overview of language and gender attitudes, (Cameron 2014) notes a non-coincidence: representations of women's speech tend to "naturalize the social inequalities which are associated with gender difference" (p. 285). That is, descriptions of women's and men's language are often more *prescriptions* of how they ought to speak/ behave; and these naturalized ideologies are often readily invoked to justify the exclusion or marginalization of women. As such, my dissertation reveals faculty attitudes towards feminine and masculine speech, and how these perceptions reflect their perceptions of what it means to sound scholarly or competent. Furthermore, my findings reveal how faculty's language attitudes and biases affect their perceptions (and treatment) of colleagues and students, thus revealing ways in which implicit language biases may translate into gender biases in higher education.

Finally, my dissertation gives attention to the ways in which gender intersects with race, class, regional identity, producing unique experiences of linguistic privilege and oppression in the context of higher education. Paradigms of intersectionality “remind us that oppression cannot be reduced to one fundamental type, and that oppressions work together in producing injustice (Collins 2008:18). An intersectional approach centers on the idea that combinations of identities may result in different outcomes than examining one social identity in isolation (Parent, DeBlaere, and Moradi 2013; Purdie-Vaughns and Eibach 2008; Warner and Shields 2013). Applied to the study of gender, intersectionality “further reveals that the individual’s social identities profoundly influence one’s beliefs about and experience of gender” (Shields 2008:301). As a result, feminist researchers argue that an individual’s intersecting identities must be at the forefront in any investigation of gender (Collins 2008; Crenshaw 1991; Shields 2008). Studies of language ideologies have only recently begun utilizing an intersectional approach. As more studies of language adopt an intersectional approach, Hall-Lew and Yaeger-Dror (2014) suggest that it may be necessary for sociolinguistics to (1) expand research protocols to include nontraditional methodologies (e.g., content-based discourse analysis, ethnographic detail); (2) conduct parallel research in different communities to maximize comparability; and (3) examine both intergroup and intragroup variation.

Intersectionality and its application to the matrix of domination maintains that people can experience privilege and oppression simultaneously (Collins 2008; Johnson 2005). My dissertation illustrates how faculty members may experience simultaneous privilege and oppression related to their language use. For instance, white women faculty experience pressure to sound competent and scholarly, due to women’s speech and feminine speech being stigmatized (hence, *oppression*); but, as opposed to black women faculty, these white women

were often able to drop or add linguistic features to achieve these desired traits (hence, *privilege*). By revealing ways in which privilege and oppression interact with language attitudes and behaviors, my dissertation research has provided new insight into the intersecting identities of faculty members. Using an intersectional lens when examining faculty interview data, my analyses highlights the intersection of gender with race, social class, regional identity, and other social categories, producing unique experiences (of privilege and oppression) in the context of higher education.

Future Directions

The results of this dissertation lead to future directions in two realms: future research, and application of the results via university initiatives. Future research could quantify the ways in which women faculty members alter their speech to sound more professional. For instance, recordings of women professors teaching, participating in faculty meetings, and/or giving conference presentations—contrasted with recordings of their interview speech, or speech at home or with friends (following Forrest 2018)—could reveal ways they adopt or drop linguistic features at work. Phonological, grammatical, or discursive elements could be analyzed quantitatively. A study such as this coupled with a comparison study of men faculty could reveal inequalities—such as whether or not women faculty exert more linguistic “work” (i.e., adding and/or dropping more features) than men faculty. This comparative study would highlight micro-level interactions related to the unequal gender expectations in the university. Within the realm of gender expectations, many perception experiments have been carried out with university student assessing linguistic perceptions of, for example, “foreign-accented” instructors and teaching assistants. A similar study could be carried out to assess students’ perceptions of “masculine-sounding” and “feminine-sounding” men and women professors.

In order to examine how my findings are similar or different across postsecondary institutions, future research should collect and analyze interview (or survey) data from faculty at other universities; this expanded study could reveal patterns related to region, race/ethnicity, or setting (e.g., urban versus rural). With a larger sample, analyses could be carried out to assess departmental- or college-level differences in relation to language and gender ideologies. Previous workplace research suggests a relationship between gender inequality and gender makeup of the organization or field (Banchefsky and Park 2018; Pew Research Center 2018). I would like to investigate whether ideological patterns related to language and gender ideologies emerge when comparing fields dominated by men faculty (e.g., engineering, math, agriculture) with fields dominated by women faculty (e.g., education, nursing, foreign languages).

The findings of my dissertation also have implications for university initiatives. While most universities have institutional initiatives and programs promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion, issues of language are rarely addressed in these programs (Dunstan et al. 2015). Previous research has documented the connection between instructor biases and subsequent treatment of students; my dissertation results reveal language and gender biases held by professors. If universities want to ensure atmospheres in which students are treated equally regardless of sex or gender, faculty's language and gender biases must be addressed. Workshops and classes related to language diversity have been shown to affect student participants' language-related beliefs and attitudes (Dunstan et al. 2015; Reaser 2006; Sweetland 2006). Dunstan et al. (2015) predict that these workshops can affect the beliefs and attitudes of university faculty and staff as well. Universities should provide faculty with workshops to help them address language and gender biases—with a specific focus on how these biases can create inequality in the classroom, in faculty meetings, and during faculty and staff hiring processes.

The findings in each of my studies can inform decisions about which topics to discuss, which beliefs to address, and which linguistic features to highlight. For ideas on how to begin such a language diversity initiative, I recommend looking at North Carolina State University's *Educating the Educated* program (Dunstan et al. 2015).

To conclude, my dissertation has provided a first look at language and gender ideologies operating within the university workplace. I have shown how faculty members' ideologies may result in biases towards other students and other faculty, as well as how these ideologies have caused women faculty members to change the way they speak at work. As universities continue to search for ways to create more equitable workplaces for women faculty, as well as ensuring fair treatment and assessment of students, my dissertation and future research can provide important building blocks for institutional initiatives to build upon.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Faculty Dialect Study Solicitation Email

Dear [Name],

As a member of [name of university], we would like to invite you to participate in a study that explores how students and instructors adjust their speech when they become part of an institution of higher learning. You were selected for participation in this study because of your role as a faculty member. We are particularly interested in talking with faculty who came from backgrounds where they spoke regional or cultural varieties of English other than those traditionally used in most academic communities.

The study is aimed at understanding how [name of university] can better understand and accommodate people from diverse language backgrounds in a university setting. If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to participate in an audio-recorded interview with one of our researchers. The total amount of time required for participation is roughly an hour, and there are no additional obligations.

We will ask you questions about your perceptions of your own speech, the speech of those from your home community, and the speech of others on campus, as well as how your speech has or has not influenced your experiences in academia. Interviews will take place on-campus at [name of university]. We will happily come to your office or meet you at a convenient location for the interview.

If you would be willing to participate in this study, please use the link below to indicate your interest and availability for an interview (**Click here to indicate your availability for an interview: [Take the survey](#)**). A member of the research team will follow up to schedule a time to meet.

Thanks for your help. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Best,

Walt Wolfram, Ph.D.
William C. Friday Distinguished University Professor
English Linguistics
Director, North Carolina Language and Life Project
North Carolina State University

Stephany Dunstan, Ph.D.
Associate Director, Office of Assessment
North Carolina State University

Audrey Jaeger, Ph.D.
Professor of Higher Education
Alumni Distinguished Graduate Professor
North Carolina State University

Caroline Myrick, Ph.D. candidate
Department of Sociology
North Carolina State University

Click here to indicate your availability for an interview:
[Take the survey](#)

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

[URL]

Appendix B: Faculty Dialect Study Interview Questions

0. Where did you grow up?
0. What did your parents do for a living?
0. Where would you describe your family growing up in terms of its socio-economic status?
0. What were your aspirations as a child? (Was it expected you would go to college? Did you always know you wanted to enter academia? Did you know academics/ ppl with post secondary degrees?)
1. How would you describe the way that you speak?
1a. Is the way you speak now the way that you spoke growing up (“accent”, word choice, etc.) If not, how has it changed?
1b. In what ways does the way that you speak differ from when you are on campus to when you are with family or friends?
2. Tell me about the way people generally talk where you’re from. Is there a certain accent or vocabulary that makes the area special?
3. Do you think you speak basically the same as most people where you’re from or do you think there is something different about the way you or your family speak/spoke?
4. Had you given much thought to the way you speak before you went to college? If so, what were those thoughts and what prompted them?
4i. Where did you attend college (undergrad)? Was it is a different area/region/country than where you grew up?
4a. What about when you began graduate school?
4ai. Where did you attend graduate school? Was it is a different area/region/country than where you grew up?
4b. What about when you began your career as an academic?
5. What do you notice, if anything, about the way that people on university campuses talk?
5a. In your field?
6. As a faculty member, have you ever felt that the way you naturally speak has had an influence on the way that:
6a. Students perceive you? How so?
6b. Peers/colleagues perceive you? How so?
6c. Supervisors perceive you? How so?
7. Are there certain environments on campus in which you feel more or less comfortable because of the way you speak (or because of how others speak)? If so, what are those environments?
8. Do you think that the way you speak has changed since you began you career as a faculty member? If yes, has this change been intentional?
9. Do you think that the way you speak has had an impact (positive or negative, or both) on your beliefs regarding your ability to have a successful career as an academic?
10. Did the way that you speak influence the way you saw yourself as an undergraduate or graduate student? Early in your career as a faculty member?
11. Does the way you speak influence the extent to which you feel that you fit in on your campus?
11a. With your colleagues (at your institution, nationally/internationally in your field)?
11b. In your department?

12. Has there been a time in your academic career or career as a faculty member when you have felt proud of the way you speak/spoke? Embarrassed?
13. Are there certain times (teaching, presenting at conferences, interacting with colleagues) that you change the way you speak? If yes, how so? Why do you think this might be?
14. Are there certain people around whom you change your speech? If so, who are these people?
15. Do you think your experiences as a faculty member would be different if you spoke differently? How so?
16. Do you feel like the way that you speak is an important part of who you are?
17. MEN & WOMEN: Have you ever noticed differences in the way that men v. women faculty communicate (casually, professionally, in/outside the classroom, etc.)?
17.a. WOMEN: As a woman, are there other speaking styles that you have adopted OR dropped in order to sound more competent?
17.b. WOMEN: Have you even been pressured to act/talk more feminine? More masculine?
18. What communication issues have you run into with students who sound different from you?
18.a Do certain students in your classes have more difficulties in class than others, due to the way they talk?
18.b Which of your students do you find difficult to understand speaking-wise? writing-wise?
19.a Have you noticed major differences in the way that minorities communicate (spoken, written) in your classes?
19.b Have you noticed major differences in the way that men vs. women communicate (spoken, written) in your classes?
20. Why did you respond to this email?