

Gender Differences in Language

---A Newspaper Survey

RUI GUO

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Supervisor: Anna Ekström

Table of contents

1. Introduction.....	1
1.1 Aim and scope.....	2
1.2 Material.....	2
1.3 Method.....	3
2. Theoretical background.....	4
2.1 Nouns or Noun Phrases Can Reflect the User's Thoughts.....	4
2.2 Classifications of Newspaper and its Language.....	4
2.3 The Relationship between Gender and Language.....	5
2.3.1 Male and Female Differences.....	6
2.3.2 Social Factors and Language.....	7
2.3.3 Gender Differences in the Use of Language by Men and Women.....	10
3. Analysis and discussion.....	11
3.1 Comparison between Nouns and Noun Phrases Used by Male and Female Writers.....	11
3.1.1 Nouns and Noun Phrases Used by Male Writers.....	11
3.1.2 Nouns and Noun Phrases Used by Female Writers.....	13
3.1.3 Data Comparison between Male and Female Writers.....	15
3.2 Comparison between Nouns and Noun Phrases from the Broadsheets and Tabloids.....	17
3.2.1 Nouns and Noun Phrases Used by Male and Female Writers from the Broadsheets.....	17
3.2.2 Nouns and Noun Phrases Used by Male and Female Writers from the Tabloids.....	18
3.2.3 Data Comparison between the Broadsheets and Tabloids.....	19
4. Conclusion.....	20
References.....	i

1. Introduction

Human language, a unique characteristic of our species, has been of interest throughout history. As regards linguistics, as a scientific study of human language, it has now evolved into a wide range of subjects after a long historical development. In the 1970's, Robin Lakoff published *Language and Women's Place*, arguing that women have a different way of speaking from that of men. Further-more, she believes that women's way of speaking reflects their subordinate position in society. Her study on language and gender shed a new light on the linguistic field at her time.

Moreover, according to He and Dai (2002), modern linguists regard the spoken language instead of the written as of prior importance but it does not mean we should not ignore the value of the study on written language. Hence, this paper tends to focus on the written language, especially that which is used in newspaper articles, since newspapers are one of the main information sources in people's daily life, its language is also typical of everyday language use and newspapers can thus afford us more live material for this study. The studying object of this paper is nouns and noun phrases, and according to the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (2009) - a noun is a word that refers to a person, a place or a thing, a quality or an activity. This means that whatever exists that can be named will be expressed as a noun. Moreover, as is said in Mercer (2000), language is a tool for thinking and according to Algeo (1995), most of the semantic content of a language is borne by nouns. So, to some degree, language can reflect the user's thoughts. We may find out the background thinking of a speaker by studying his or her expressions of the object, such as how to address a person - or a place by using nouns and noun phrases. Combining these two views, it is possible to infer the user's minds through the analyses of nouns. Furthermore, it also can be said that different nouns used by writers, to some extent, can reflect differences between these writers. People are all different in many ways, particularly in terms of gender differences. Hence, through an investigation into newspapers articles, this study is to find out whether or not gender differences can influence the use of nouns and nouns phrases. However, there is no need to study all types of nouns or nouns phrases, but those concerning the issues of politeness and impoliteness, compulsiveness and competitiveness, and euphemisms, since

Coates (2004) and Köhler (2008) point out that men tend to use language in a more impolite, compulsive and competitive way whereas women prefer a more polite and euphemisms style (more details are presented in theoretical background). However, all the above only shows that there are gender differences in language use. Are such gender differences also visible in the use of nouns and noun phrases in newspapers? Are these differences related specifically to gender or something else?

1.1 Aim and scope

Aiming to study gender differences in the use of nouns and noun phrases, this investigation will be based on its language materials from two kinds of English daily newspapers (Broadsheets and Tabloids). Nouns and noun phrases expressing politeness/impoliteness, compulsiveness/competitiveness, and euphemisms are the main subject of study in this paper.

1.2 Material

Languages materials are mainly from two kinds of daily newspapers were selected as the primary material for the present study: broadsheets and tabloids newspapers. Out of the broadsheets, *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and *Times* were chosen because of their popularity and wide circulation. Similarly, out of the tabloids, *The Sun*, *The Mirror*, and *The Daily Star* were for the same reason.

I have chosen two kinds of articles, written by male and female writers respectively for study and there are twelve articles in total. From the selected newspaper articles we can see nouns and noun phrases which reflect gender differences have been chosen meticulously. Table 1 is a list of selected articles in this study.

Table.1 Twelve articles

Mary Travers Is Praised for Her Voice and Words	Published: November 10, 2009 (The New York Times)
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Two Heart Surgeries Strain a Couple's Finances, but Not Their Bond	Published: November 20, 2009 (The New York Times)
Album review: Susan Boyle's 'I Dreamed a Dream'	Published: November 23, 2009 (The Los Angeles Times)
'Chef Academy'	Published: <i>November 16, 2009</i> (The Los Angeles Times)
Women's carbon print is small but climate change hits them harder	Published: The Times November 19, 2009 (The Times)
Former royal aide Jane Andrews recaptured at budget hotel	Published: November 25, 2009 (The Times)
Katherine wins judging role	Published: November 25, 2009 (The Sun)
Sara Payne: Our justice is 'woeful'	Published: 06 Nov 2009 (The Sun)
Why Becks is a health icon	Published: NOV 25, 09 12:03 (the mirror)
Britain's Got Talent: can anyone stop Susan Boyle now she's been on Oprah?	Published: ON MAY 13, 2009 5:18 PM (the mirror)
HotBod Megan so foxy	Published: on 6 th Nov 2009(the Daily Star)
Susan Boyle breaks down after Live NBC performance	Published: On 26 th Nov 2009: (the Daily Star)

1.3 Method

This paper have collected all the nouns and noun phrases used by the authors of the above 12 articles that contain a connotation of gender differences, namely those that express politeness/impoliteness, compulsiveness/competitiveness, or involve euphemism.

Secondly, further discussions will focus on the following two perspectives: one is the representation of gender differences in the authors (male or female); the other is the

representation of gender differences in the type of newspapers (Broadsheets or Tabloids).

2. Theoretical background

To carry on this study, it is very necessary to define clearly what nouns and noun phrases, newspaper and gender language are. Some related literature is referred to in the following three sub-sections.

2.1 Nouns or Noun Phrases Can Reflect the User's Thoughts

Algeo points out that “nouns are of pivotal importance in languages like English. It has been observed that along with verbs they are a dominant part of speech, and that the semantic content of sentences is borne by nouns” (1995:203). Moreover, as mentioned in the introduction section, language can reflect the user's thoughts. Rousseau also holds a similar opinion that “minds are formed by language and thoughts take their color from its idea” (2007:82). People use nouns and noun phrases to describe things and express ideas. The selection of words and expressions, to some extent, reflects some “color” of the speaker's thoughts. Color here refers to the user's preference of wording showing his or her outlook towards life and the world. Color is related to the personalities of different individuals. It also shows differences between genders. As is said by Mead (1935), the differences in temperament of males and females can influence their minds. Since nouns and noun phrases are commonly the basis of people's wording habits, we can detect emotions that lie in the selection of nouns and noun phrases by the different genders.

2.2 Classifications of Newspaper and its Language

A newspaper is an important carrier of the mass media. It covers a range of topics, and publishes news and events to public at regular intervals. It also carries out the function of social public opinion. The language of newspapers is mostly formal written and many scholars have found that factors of the newspaper could influence the language that is used. Furthermore, Niblock (1996) argues that the type of newspapers are one of the main factors and she divides newspapers into broadsheets and tabloids and shows that broadsheets are larger and give more room for stories to be written in greater detail. She also points out that

the reason is that “this format of newspaper tends to be associated with ‘serious’ reporting, with extensive coverage of international affairs and complicated issues at home” (1996:23). On the contrary, many tabloids are smaller and their stories may be written more concisely. She also explains that “tabloids reporters are under much more pressure from editors, proprietors and readers to seize upon the more sensational stories” (1996:23). This is the main differences between broadsheets and tabloids.

In addition to the above differences between broadsheets and tabloids, both types of newspapers aim at different readerships. As Bell (1991:109) points out, 80% of the readers of broadsheets belong to the middle classes, while the tabloids, conversely, draw about the same percentage of their readers from the working classes. Consequently, the above two readerships differ in terms of financial means as well as in terms of education backgrounds and interests which means that newspaper producers try to appeal to their respective readerships. They select the news to write about according to what they believe their readers will consider most news-worthy. On the other hand, the way the newspapers are written is also influenced by the readerships. There is “a close reflection of audience status in linguistic style” (Bell 1991:109), which means that the language which newspapers use is most likely to be tailored to their readers.

2.3 The Relationship between Gender and Language

Gradol and Swann (1989) believe that sex and gender is the two major factors that influence people’s speech acts. From this perspective, it is necessary to figure out the concept of sex and gender first.

Coates claims that “gender is not something we are born with, and not something we have, but something we do or something we perform. Sex is a biological categorization based primarily on reproductive potential, whereas gender is a social elaboration of biological sex” (2004: 89). In common with Coates, Talbot also presents the implications of sex and gender, “Sex is biologically founded...Gender by contrast is socially constructed; it is learned. People acquire characteristics which are perceived as masculine and feminine” (1998:7). It means

that sex refers to biological differences between males and females; while gender describes the characteristics that a society or culture delineates as masculine or feminine. According to the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (2009), masculine is described as “having the qualities or appearance considered to be typical of men; connected with or like men”, and feminine is defined as “having the qualities or appearance considered to be typical of women; connected with women”. The difference between sex and gender is obviously that sex is a biological concept, while gender belongs to the social category.

Furthermore, like the sex and gender have biological and social attribute, language also has the same division. Graddol & Swann also presents the nature of language as language is “a social phenomenon and the speech of an individual person” (1989:4). In this sense, it can be believed that: on the one hand, language is personal, and one of the fundamental differences among humankind is sexual difference; on the other hand, language is social, and it means that language is influenced by social surroundings. To some extent, this is just in common with the opinion that sex and gender is the two major factors which could influence people’s speech act. In the following, we will further discuss the differences lie in male and female and social surroundings.

2.3.1 Male and Female Differences

As mentioned above, many linguists prove that sex differences do exist in language. Coates (2004) argues that some stereotypes, such as women being more polite, have been firmly believed by the public. Furthermore, Talbot (1998) divides sex differences into “sex-exclusive” and “sex-preferential”. According to Talbot, “sex-exclusive gives the impression of rigidity and coercion”; while “sex-preferential are not absolute, they are matters of degree” (Talbot, 1998: 6). In this sense, sex-exclusive is an absolute difference between male and female. Both parts have their own way of talking. However because of the existence of sex-preferences, men sometimes use women’s way of talking, abs vice versa.

Talbot once stated the differentiations of sex-preferential and sex-exclusive: “they are in facts ways of doing gender” (Talbot, 1998:7). Since gender can be divided into masculine and

feminine, the term “doing gender” means showing masculinity or femininity. From the perspective of sex differences, it must be elaborated from two aspects: on the one hand, according to the view of sex-exclusiveness, “doing gender” means that men could only use male language to show masculinity and women could only use female language to show femininity. The reason is that sex is inherent which can-not be changed. On the other hand, according to the sex-preferential view, “doing gender” means more flexibility. So, men could show both masculinity and femininity, and so could women. In this sense, a person’s speech may not match his/her own biological sex, and he/she may maintain the traits of more than one gender. Namely, a man can use female language to communicate with others, and vice versa. Moreover, Talbot believes that “choice from among a range of lexicogrammatical options is part of gender performance” (1998:11). “Gender performance” is divided into masculine and feminine. The word “choice” is the forms used by women and men which are enforced by prescriptive rules. Based on such a rule, masculine means to use male language, and feminine means to use female language. Furthermore, femininity and masculinity refers to the degree to which persons see themselves as masculine or feminine, given what it means to be a man or woman in society (Burke, Stets & Pirog-Good 1988; Spence 1985). In this sense, masculinity means that the person’s degree of masculine is more than that of feminine, vice versa. Social animal as we are, no one could escape from being influenced by the social surroundings. Therefore, sex-exclusive differentiation mentioned by Talbot (1998) is uncommon in language. The detailed characteristics of social factors which influence the language will be discussed in next subsection.

2.3.2 Social Factors and Language

As mentioned above, language is “a social phenomenon” (Graddol & Swann, 1989:4). Graddol and Swann argue that “a language has an existence outside of ourselves” (1989:5). Besides, some linguists also believe that the differences of language between men and women are not necessarily linked to gender but linked to social surroundings. So, we can hold that language can be influenced by the social factors, especially social surroundings.

Moreover, linguist Curran believes that “Language is a medium of socialization. Essentially

as a child learns the language of his or her culture, he or she is also learning how to think and behave as a member of that culture” (1995:146). In other words, there is a very close relationship between language and society. The core message contained in the quotation above is about language behavior. Language behavior is not biological behavior; it is social, learned and gained behavior. Linguistically speaking, females and males learn, from their early childhood, how to behave like girls and boys and how to become feminine and masculine. Furthermore, language behavior reflects the social dominance of men, weakness of women. In this meaning, an individual’s language behavior must comply with the social status. People who break these rules will be considered impolite. Politeness is the act of granting the socially appropriate amount of respect to others, depending on their relative status. Moreover, when it comes to the social status of men and women, it is necessary to introduce the concept of the androcentric society. The notion of androcentrism was first mentioned in the early twentieth century by Gilman (1911/1971), who wrote in *The Man-Made World or Our Androcentric Culture*.

all our human scheme of things rests on the same tacit assumption; man being held the human type; woman a sort of accompaniment and subordinate assistant, merely essential to the making of people.....Our androcentric culture is so shown to have been, and still to be, a masculine culture in excess, and therefore undesirable.

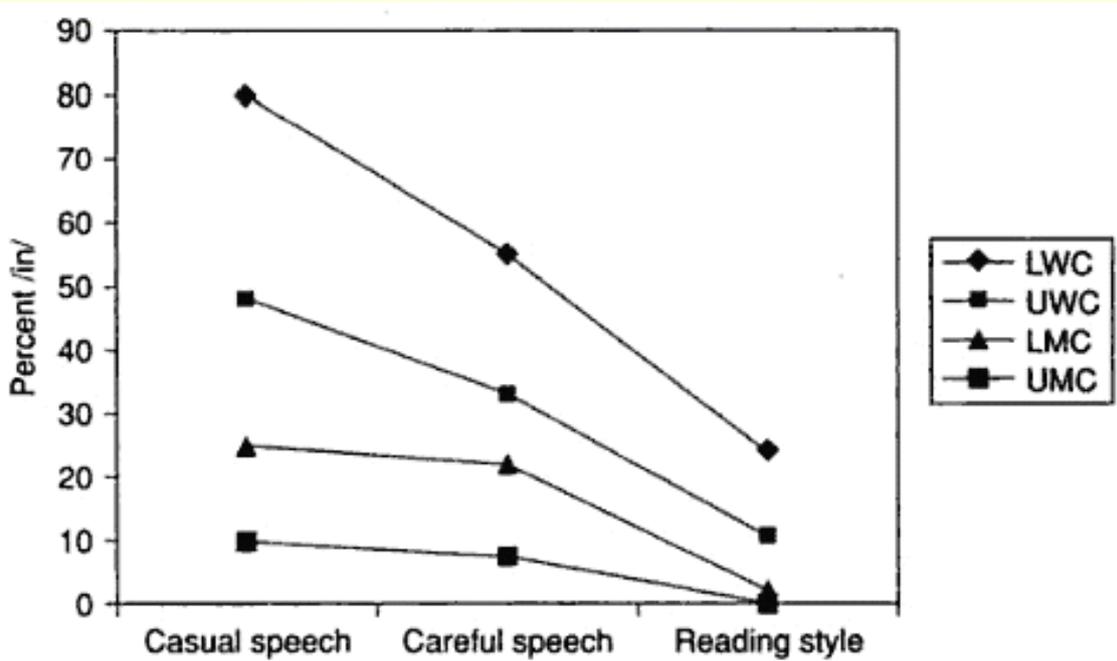
(1911/1971:20)

From the quotation above, it can be seen that men have made the world in which women inhabit. If women are going to make their own world, it is necessary for them to understand the way of exploring the relationship of language and reality in which they are accomplished in the world dominated by men. Moreover, Tannen (1991) focuses on differences between men’s and women’s languages which interact with social status. Tannen (1991) points out that men use language to emphasize their status, while women use it to create a connection. Tannen (1991) also states that communication is a continual balancing act, juggling the conflicting needs for intimacy and independence. Intimacy emphasizes separateness and differences. So, for many men, the use of language is mainly a means to preserve independence and maintain status in a hierarchical social order. For many women, the use of

language is negotiations for closeness in which people try to seek and give confirmation and support.

Furthermore, language is a mirror of society. Different languages belong to different social status, such as working class and middle class, etc. The table below shows that different social status has different styles in language use.

Table.2 Social and Stylistic Stratification



LWC: lower working class; UWC: upper working class; LMC: lower middle class; UMC: upper middle class (Labov, 2001: 81)

From the table above, we can see the conclusion that improved social status of people seems to mean that they pay more and more attention in choosing words. The lower working class use “casual speech” while the upper working class use “reading style.”

2.3.3 Gender Differences in the Use of Language by Men and Women

Sex differences and social factors (gender differences) are closely entwined. Sex primarily indicates the biologically determined characteristics of men and women; while gender refers to cultural or social characteristics of femininity and masculinity. Parts of the differences in language use by men and women have been noted in the above sections. This section further focuses on differences in language use by men and women, especially in the use of nouns and noun phrases.

Firstly, according to Coates (2004), women's language is used in a cooperative way or a polite way, whereas men's language is used in a competitive and impolite way. As is known, nouns and noun phrases are part of language. Based on Coates' view, women use more polite nouns and noun phrases than men do, vice versa. For instance, men tend to use more swear words than women do. According to Coates, "Men are expected to know how to swear and how to tell and appreciate the telling of dirty jokes" (2004:84). Furthermore, in respect to men's compulsiveness and competitiveness, we may conclude that men use more compulsive and competitive nouns and noun phrases than women do. According to Köhler (2008), men and women differ in the way that men manage people and give orders while women often soften their demands and statements. This coincides with Tannen's point men use language to emphasize the status. Some orders in the form of nouns and noun phrases can be evaluated. Secondly, the use of "ladylike" language by women can also be evaluated. Based on Köhler's view, women make frequent use of euphemisms. Euphemisms may hide unpleasant or disturbing ideas and they can make women seem to be more polite and elegant. Using euphemism can make women "ladylike".

3. Analysis and discussion

In this section, all the nouns and noun phrases with polite/impolite, compulsive/competitive overtones, and euphemisms are collected out from the 12 articles listed in Table 1. Among the 12 articles, 6 are from broadsheets (3 by female authors, and 3 by male authors), and the other 6 are from tabloids (id.). By going over the 12 articles selected, this paper will discuss gender differences in terms of the use of these nouns and noun phrases. According to gender differences and social factors, there are two main points: one is to investigate gender differences in the use of language from newspaper articles. In this sub-section, more attention should be paid to the authors' gender, because it can influence their language use. The other point is to concentrate on social factors, i.e. styles of newspapers that relate to the perspective of readers from different social classes. Thus, a comparison and contrast of the use of nouns and noun phrases in broadsheets and tabloids is investigated.

3.1 Comparison between Nouns and Noun Phrases Used by Male and Female Writers

In this part, the nouns and nouns phrases in the newspapers' articles will be analyzed separately according to the gender of the writers.

3.1.1 Nouns and Noun Phrases Used by Male Writers

In this sub-section, six newspaper articles written by male authors are further discussed. They are: *Mary Travers is praised for her voice and words*, *'Chef Academy'*, *Former royal aide Jane Andrews recaptured at budget hotel*, *Sara Payne: Our justice is woeful*, *Hot bod megan's so foxy*, and *Britain's Got Talent: can anyone stop Susan Boyle now she's been on Oprah*. As mentioned above, nouns or noun phrases which contain connotation of "politeness and impoliteness (swear words and dirty words), compulsiveness (orders) and competitiveness, and euphemisms" are shown in the following table.

Table 3. Nouns and noun phrases used by male writers

	Samples	Numbers
Polite Forms	congratulations;	1
Impolite Forms	shit, idiot, a nice butt, crap, fucker;	5
Compulsive and Competitive Ways	requirement, none of your business	2
Euphemisms	fib	1

In Table 3 above, regarding the polite forms used by male writers, there is only one sample: *congratulations*. Based on its meaning, it is generally used to felicitate someone on his good luck or success. To be more detailed, it is better to analyze it in its context as in the sentence below:

Mrs. Boyle, congratulations...

(The Mirror: *Britain's Got Talent: can anyone stop Susan Boyle now she's been on Oprah*)

In the context sample above, the writer distinctly uses the polite noun *congratulations* to express his manners. Hence, it can be considered that the usage of *congratulations* shows an intention to be polite. However concerning impolite forms used by male writers, there are five samples which are all swear-words: *shit, idiot, a nice butt, crap, and fucker*. Further they are all swear-words and it is not necessary to discuss every one of them. Take one of the five samples: *shit* to illustrate. It means excreta and it is a very ungracious word. See the context below:

Someone likely to say: "people are all equal before the law in America" and it is an incredible shit.

(The Sun: *Sara Payne: Our justice is woeful*)

In the context sample above, the writer wants to express his disbelief and he uses an impolite word. Obviously, it is a noun expressing impoliteness. With respect to compulsive and competitive forms, there are two samples *requirement* and *none of your business*. Take one of the two samples *requirement* to illustrate this. There are no compulsive or competitive implications from its literal meaning and for this reason, it should be analyzed together with its context.

This is a requirement...

(The Los Angeles: 'Chef Academy')

The sentence above is obviously showing the user's intention of coercion to some extent, because no matter what the writer wants to express, it is followed by *this is a requirement*, and what the writer tries to convey must be accepted. The expression *this is a requirement* has already shown the writer's compulsive intention. At last, in euphemism, there is one sample-*fib*. The writer uses *fib* to avoid using the word- lie, and it can soften the tone of his article to discuss it within its context.

It is a fib that our justice is always...

(The Sun: Sara Payne: *Our justice is woeful*')

In the above context sample, the writer uses the word *fib* instead of the word *lie*. Obviously, the tone of *lie* is stronger. In a way, this also is a polite usage.

3.1.2 Nouns and Noun Phrases Used by Female Writers

In this sub-section, six articles from the newspapers written by female authors are further analyzed. They are: *Two Heart Surgeries Strain a Couple's Finances, but Not Their Bond*, *Album review: Susan Boyle's 'I Dreamed a Dream'*, *Women's carbon print is small but climate change hits them harder*, *Katherine wins judging role*, *Why Becks is a health icon* and *Susan Boyle Breaks Down After Live NBC Performance*.

Table 4. Nouns and noun phrases used by female writers

	Samples	Numbers
Polite Forms	many thanks, pleasure, welcome, my dear friend, good luck	5
Impolite Forms	hell	1
Compulsive and Competitive Ways		0
Euphemism	rest room, piffle,	2

From Table 4 above, regarding polite forms used by female writers, there are five samples: *many thanks, pleasure, welcome, my dear friend, and good luck*. Let us take one of them to analyze in context:

Good luck to Susan...

(The Los Angeles: *Album review: Susan Boyle's 'I Dreamed a Dream'*)

Through analyzing the modifier *good*, we can see that the writer uses the noun phrase *good luck* in a polite way to express a good wish to Susan. While concerning impolite forms used by female writers, there is only one sample: *hell*.

Take it easy, if not you will go to hell and...

(The New York Times: *Two Heart Surgeries Strain a Couple's Finances, but Not Their Bond*)

In the context above, the writers may use this expression to show her discontented emotion, but it is an impolite word and she ignores the readers' feeling. At last, in euphemism, there are three samples: *rest room* and *piffle*. Let us take one of them to discuss in context:

...piffle and tired rationalizations.

(The Sun: *Katherine wins judging role*)

The writer used *piffle* instead of some words which means twaddle, such as bullshit, to be more elegant and polite.

3.1.3 Data Comparison between Male and Female Writers

Based on Table 3 and Table 4, Table 5 shows a comparison between the male and female writers' articles. More details are in the following.

Table 5. Data Comparison between Male and Female Writers'

	Used by male writers	Used by female writers
Polite Forms	1	5
Impolite Forms	5	1
Compulsive and Competitive Ways	2	0
Euphemism	1	2

From Table 5, it can be seen that: male authors use more impolite forms and compulsive and competitive expressions than that of female authors; while in terms of polite forms and euphemism, female authors use more than male authors do.

Based on the above, two general results could be found here: on the one hand, men use impolite forms, as well as compulsive and competitive ways more than women do; while women use polite forms, including euphemisms, more than men do. It is in line with Coates' views that "men are expected to know how to swear..." (2004:84) and "women are more polite" (2004:84). Using swear words is not a polite way. By digging into the implication of nouns and noun phrases, we can infer the user's "color" towards other people and objectives. "Color" can reflect an individual's emotion. It is impolite to use swear words to others. Further, it is commonly believed that men are more aggressive than women. When reflected

in the language, we can see men use more compulsive and competitive ways of expressing themselves than women do. Moreover, the use of polite forms and euphemism contains a connotation of politeness, thus in this way, women can be more ladylike and elegant. These are the sex differences in the use of language. Further-more, from social linguistic views, men tend to ignore the audience's feeling towards the use swear words. It can be regarded as a self-centered behavior. Males use compulsive and competitive ways of expressing themselves more than females do, which means that in the androcentric society, men dominate society and they are always self-confident. This is reflected in the use of language. Men try to keep their upper status in communication. This is in accordance with Tannen's (1991) opinion: for many men, language is mainly a means to preserve independence and maintain status in a hierarchical social order. In a word, the 12 articles show gender differences in the use of language.

On the other hand, both male and female authors use nouns or noun phrases which contain a connotation of - politeness and impoliteness (swear words and dirty words), compulsiveness (orders) and competitiveness, and euphemisms. It complies with Talbot's (1998) view that sex-exclusive differentiation is uncommon in language. It is safe to believe that a person's speech may not match his/her own biological sex, or that he/she may maintain traits of both genders. However, there is no reason to consider that male authors use female language to show femininity and that female authors' use male language to show masculinity. According to Burke, Stets, Pirog-Good(1958) and Spence's(1985) opinions, masculinity means a person's degree of masculinity is more than femininity, and vice versa. As a result, we can't confirm that these six male authors' articles show the femininity or masculinity and the same goes for the six female authors' articles, since only one investigation on nouns or noun phrases is not enough to come to the above conclusion. Nevertheless, one thing that is certain is that language is "a social phenomenon" (Graddol & Swann, 1989:4) and more detailed discussions on social factors will be provided in section 3.2.

3.2 Comparison between Nouns and Noun Phrases from the Broadsheets and Tabloids

In this section, it is to be investigated whether social factors can influence language or not. Articles from the broadsheets and tabloids, six from each, are further discussed in the following. Since this section focuses on the newspaper factors, the nouns and nouns phrases in the newspapers' articles will be analyzed according to the newspapers' varieties.

3.2.1 Nouns and Noun Phrases Used by Male and Female Writers from the Broadsheets

In this sub-section, the six articles from the broadsheets are further analyzed. They are: *Mary Travers Is Praised for Her Voice and Word*, *Two Heart Surgeries Strain a Couple's Finances, but Not Their Bond*, *Album review: Susan Boyle's 'I Dreamed a Dream'*, *'Chef Academy'*, *Women's carbon print is small but climate change hits them harder*, and *Former royal aide Jane Andrews recaptured at budget hotel*. Furthermore, nouns or nouns phrases which contain a connotation of politeness and impoliteness (swear words and dirty words), compulsiveness (orders) and competitiveness, and euphemisms and are used by both male and female writers are shown in the following table.

Table 6. Nouns and noun phrases from the Broadsheets

	Samples	Numbers
Polite Forms	many thanks, my dear friend, congratulations, pleasure, welcome,	5
Impolite Forms	idiot, crap,	2
Compulsive and Competitive Ways		0
Euphemism	rest room, piffle, fib	3

Since these nouns and noun phrases have been analyzed in context above, the only difference here is that their classifications are changed according to the newspapers' varieties. In this

sense, analysis in context is needless. From Table 6, it can be seen that: in the broadsheets, regarding the polite forms, there are five samples: *many thanks*, *my dear friend*, *congratulations*, *pleasure*, and *welcome*, while concerning impolite forms, there are two samples: *idiot*, and *crap*. At last, in respect to euphemisms, there are three samples: *rest room*, *piffle* and *fib*.

3.2.2 Nouns and Noun Phrases Used by Male and Female Writers from the Tabloids

In this sub-section, six articles from the newspapers from the broadsheets are further discussed. They are: *Katherine wins judging role*, *Sara Payne: Our justice is 'woeful'*, *Why Becks is a health icon*, *Britain's Got Talent: can anyone stop Susan Boyle now she's been on Oprah?*, *Hot Bod Megan so foxy*, and *Susan Boyle breaks down after Live NBC performance*. Furthermore, nouns or nouns phrases which contain a connotation of politeness and impoliteness (swear words and dirty words), compulsiveness (orders) and competitiveness, and euphemisms and are used by both male and female writers are shown in the following table.

Table 7. Nouns and noun phrases from the Tabloids

	Samples	Numbers
Polite Forms	good luck,	1
Impolite Forms	shit, a nice butt, fucker, hell	4
Compulsive and Competitive Ways	requirement, none of your business	2
Euphemism		0

From Table 7, it can be seen that in the tabloids, regarding the polite forms, there is one sample: *good luck*, while concerning the impolite forms, there are four samples: *shit*, *a nice butt*, *fucker*, and *hell*. With respect to the compulsive and competitive forms, there are two samples: *essential*, and *none of your business*.

3.2.3 Data Comparison between the Broadsheets and Tabloids

Based on Table 6 and Table 7, Table 8 shows a comparison between the broadsheets and the tabloids newspapers. More details are in the following.

Table 8. Data Comparison between the broadsheets and tabloids

	From the broadsheets	From the tabloids
Polite Forms	5	1
Impolite Forms	2	4
Compulsive and Competitive Ways	0	2
Euphemism	3	0

From Table 8, we can see that in the broadsheets, authors use more polite forms and euphemisms but fewer impolite forms and compulsive and competitive ways of expressing themselves. In the tabloids, authors use more impolite forms and compulsive and competitive expressions and fewer polite forms and euphemisms.

Furthermore, one of the possible reasons why there are differences in the use of nouns and noun phrases between the broadsheets and tabloids is the consequence of the prospective readers and the newspaper's orientation. On the one hand, according to Niblock (1996), the broadsheets primarily focus on international affairs and complicated issues at home and the format is associated with "serious" reporting, while the tabloids are mostly concerned with "sensational stories" and the authors may focus more on the news and less on the reporting format. Hence, the authors of broadsheets are cautious to use impolite forms and compulsive and competitive expressions.

On the other hand, based on the research by Bell(1991), 80% of the readers of broadsheets belong to the middle classes, while 80% of the readers of tabloids are from the working class. On this account, newspaper authors have to take the differences of educational background

between the middle class and the working class into consideration. Linguistic styles should also be taken over. Further more, as is said by Labov (2001), the working classes mostly use a “casual” style while the middle classes usually use a “reading” style. Thus, the newspaper authors should also make the style of articles comply with the taste of their prospective audience.

4. Conclusion

There being two different genders — male and female, on account of the differences between the physiological features and the superiority and inferiority in social activities, men and women are differentiated from each other in individuality, value, image and status, which give rise to variations in their language styles and language uses.

In this study, by investigating expressions from 12 articles from broadsheets and tabloids, we can find that there are possible differences in language use between the genders, the influential factors including both gender differences and social factors, which can be seen in newspapers varieties aimed different prospective readers. Of course there is limitation of this study. For the small amount of data collected, the results can only reflect a profile of gender differences of language. The reason may be that the authors are more cautious when they use the written language and it also explains why modern linguistics regards the spoken language instead of the written as of prior importance. But by random selection of newspaper articles, the conclusion will at least indicate some of the problems. If a more specific conclusion is to drawn, more primary material must be investigated.

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