

InfoTrac. Web. 28 Sept. 2002. In her review of Crawford's book, Gergen suggests that the "differences between the ways men and women talk suggest that we might as well have come from different planets." Today, some view it as necessary to take a quick course in conversational translations. Gergen says Crawford made in-depth inquiries into issues of how conversation affects relations, power, and discrimination.

Glass, Lillian. *He Says, She Says: Closing the Communication Gap between the Sexes*. New York: Putnam, 1992. Print. Glass's book begins with the author's interest in gender communication. The first chapter is a Sex Talk Quiz that the reader can take to check his or her responses. The second chapter addresses "the evolution of sex differences in communication." Glass addresses the issue that different hormones found in men's and women's bodies make them act differently and therefore communicate differently. In later chapters Glass discusses brain development, environmental factors, and treatment of infants, and ends with recommendations for improving communication and thus the relationships with the other sex.

Tannen, Deborah. "Boys Will Be Boys." *The Argument Culture: Moving from Debate to Dialogue*. New York: Random House, 1998. Print. In Chapter 6 of *The Argument Culture* Tannen addresses the issue that boys or men "are more likely to take an oppositional stance toward other people and the world" and "are more likely to find opposition entertaining—to enjoy watching a good fight, or having one." She says girls try to avoid fights. She also claims that a girl tries to offer a view that would benefit the opponent. A boy, on the other hand, just argues for what is best for him. She concludes that patterns of opposition and conflict result from both biology and culture.

20g Preparing a Review of the Literature on a Topic

The *review of literature* presents a set of summaries in essay form for two purposes:

1. It helps you investigate the topic because it forces you to examine and then describe how each source addresses the problem.

2. It organizes and classifies the sources in some reasonable manner for the benefit of the reader.

Thus, you should relate each source to your central subject, and you should group the sources according to their support of your thesis. For example, the brief review that follows explores the literature on the subject of gender communication. It classifies the sources under a progression of headings: the issues, the causes (both environmental and biological), the consequences for both men and women, and possible solutions.

Like Kaci Holz in the paper below, you may wish to use headings that identify your various sections.

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Gender Communication: A Review of the Literature

Several theories exist about different male and female communication styles. These ideas have been categorized here to establish the issues, show causes for communication failures, the consequences for both men and women, and suggestions for possible solutions.

The Issues

Deborah Tannen, Ph.D., is a professor of sociolinguistics at Georgetown University. In her book *You Just Don't Understand: Men and Women in Conversation*, she claims there are basic gender patterns or stereotypes that can be found. Tannen says that men participate in conversations to establish "a hierarchical social order," while women most often participate in conversations to establish "a network of connections" (Tannen, *Don't Understand* 24-25). She distinguishes between the way women use "rapport-talk" and the way men use "report-talk" (74).

In similar fashion, Susan Basow and Kimberly Rubenfeld in "Troubles Talk: Effects of Gender and Gender Typing," explore in detail the sex roles and how they determine and often control the speech of each gender. They notice that "women may engage in 'troubles talk' to

enhance communication; men may avoid such talk to enhance autonomy and dominance" (186).

In addition, Kawa Patel asserts that men and women "use conversation for quite different purposes." He provides a "no" answer to the question in his title, "Do Men and Women Speak the Same Language?" He claims that women converse to develop and maintain connections, while men converse to claim their position in the hierarchy they see around them. Patel asserts that women are less likely to speak publicly than are men because women often perceive such speaking as putting oneself on display. A man, on the other hand, is usually comfortable with speaking publicly because that is how he establishes his status among others (Patel).

Similarly, masculine people are "less likely than androgynous individuals to feel grateful for advice" (Basow and Rubenfeld 186).

Julia T. Woods' book *Gendered Lives* claims that "male communication is characterized by assertion, independence, competitiveness, and confidence [while] female communication is characterized by deference, inclusivity, collaboration, and cooperation" (440). This list of differences describes why men and women have such opposing communication styles.

In another book, Tannen addresses the issue that boys, or men, "are more likely to take an oppositional stance toward other people and the world" and "are more likely to find opposition entertaining—to enjoy watching a good fight, or having one" (Tannen, *Argument* 166). Girls try to avoid fights.

Causes

Two different theories suggest causes for gender differences—the environment and biology.

Environmental Causes. Tammy James and Bethann Cinelli mention, "The way men and women are raised contributes to differences in conversation and communication..." (41).

Another author, Susan Witt, in "Parental Influence on Children's Socialization to Gender Roles," discusses the various findings that support the idea that parents have a great influence on their children

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during the development of their self-concept. She states, "Children learn at a very early age what it means to be a boy or a girl in our society" (253). She says that parents "[dress] infants in gender-specific colors, [give] gender-differentiated toys, and [expect] different behavior from boys and girls" (Witt 254).

Patel notices a cultural gap, defining culture as "shared meaning." He goes on to comment that problems come about because one spouse enters marriage with a different set of "shared meanings" than the other. The cultural gap affects the children. Patel also talks about the "Battle of the Sexes" as seen in conflict between men and women. Reverting back to his "childhood gender pattern" theory, Patel claims, "Men, who grew up in a hierarchical environment, are accustomed to conflict. Women, concerned more with relationship and connection, prefer the role of peacemaker."

Like Patel, Deborah Tannen also addresses the fact that men and women often come from different worlds and different influences. She says, "Even if they grow up in the same neighborhood, on the same block, or in the same house, girls and boys grow up in different worlds of words" (Tannen, *Don't Understand* 43).

Biological Causes. Though Tannen often addresses the environmental issue in much of her research, she also looks at the biological issue in her book *The Argument Culture*. Tannen states, "Surely a biological component plays a part in the greater use of antagonism among men, but cultural influence can override biological inheritance" (Tannen, *Argument* 205). She sums up the nature versus nurture issue by saying, "the patterns that typify women's and men's styles of opposition and conflict are the result of both biology and culture" (207).

Lillian Glass addresses the issue that different hormones found in men's and women's bodies make them act differently and therefore communicate differently. She also discusses how brain development has been found to relate to sex differences.

Judy Mann says, "Most experts now believe that what happens to boys and girls is a complex interaction between slight biological

differences and tremendously powerful social forces that begin to manifest themselves the minute the parents find out whether they are going to have a boy or a girl" (qtd. in McCluskey 6).

Consequences of Gender Differences

Now that we have looked at different styles of gender communication and possible causes of gender communication, let us look at the possible results. Morgan and Coleman relate that divorce is one of the most stressful events a person can experience. They expound upon this point by stating, "The decision to divorce is typically made with ambivalence, uncertainty and confusion. It is a difficult step. The family identity changes, and the identities of the individuals involved change as well."

Through various studies, Tannen has concluded that men and women have different purposes for engaging in communication. In the open forum that Deborah Tannen led in 2004 (on compact disc), she explains the different ways men and women handle communication throughout the day. She explains that a man constantly talks during his workday in order to impress those around him and to establish his status in the office. At home he wants peace and quiet. On the other hand, a woman is constantly cautious and guarded about what she says during her workday. Women try hard to avoid confrontation and avoid offending anyone with their language. So when a woman comes home from work she expects to be able to talk freely without having to guard her words. The consequence? The woman expects conversation, but the man is tired of talking (Tannen, *He Said*).

Solutions

Answers for better gender communication seem elusive. What can be done about this apparent gap in communication between genders? In his article published in *Leadership*, Jeffrey Arthurs offers the obvious suggestion that women should make an attempt to understand the male model of communication and that men should make an attempt to understand the female model of communication.

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However, in his article "Speaking Across the Gender Gap," David Cohen mentions that experts didn't think it would be helpful to teach men to communicate more like women and women to communicate more like men. This attempt would prove unproductive because it would go against what men and women have been taught since birth. Rather than change the genders to be more like one another, we could simply try to "understand" each other better.

In addition, Carolyn Crozier makes this observation, "The idea that women should translate their experiences into the male code in order to express themselves effectively ... is an outmoded, inconsistent, subservient notion that should no longer be given credibility in modern society." She suggests three things we can change: 1.) Change the norm by which leadership success is judged, 2.) Redefine what we mean by power, and 3.) Become more sensitive to the places and times when inequity and inequality occur (Crozier). Similarly, Patel offers advice to help combat "cross-cultural" fights. He suggests: 1.) Identify your fighting style, 2.) Agree on rules of engagement, and 3.) Identify the real issue behind the conflict (Patel).

McCluskey claims men and women need honest communication that shows respect, and they must "manage conflict in a way that maintains the relationship and gets the job done" (5). She says, "To improve relationships and interactions between men and women, we must acknowledge the differences that do exist, understand how they develop, and discard dogma about what are the 'right' roles of women and men" (5).

Obviously, differences exist in the way men and women communicate, whether caused by biological and/or environmental factors. We can consider the possible causes, the consequences, and possible solutions. Using this knowledge, we should be able to more accurately interpret communication between the genders.

Works Cited

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likeness of a kachina, called a *tihu*, from the man impersonating the kachina. You are more likely to receive a *tihu* as a girl approaching marriage, though a child or older woman may receive one, too.

Grammar checkers A grammar checker cannot help you locate shifts in tense, number, or person among sentences. Shifts are sometimes necessary (as when tenses change to reflect actual differences in time). Furthermore, a passage with needless shifts may still consist of sentences that are grammatically correct, as all the sentences are in the preceding examples.

6 Transitional expressions

Transitional expressions such as *therefore*, *in contrast*, or *meanwhile* can forge specific connections between sentences, as do the underlined expressions in this paragraph:

Medical science has thus succeeded in identifying the hundreds of viruses that can cause the common cold. It has also discovered the most effective means of prevention. One person transmits the cold viruses to another most often by hand. For instance, an infected person covers his mouth to cough. He then picks up the telephone. Half an hour later, his daughter picks up the same telephone. Immediately afterward, she rubs her eyes. Within a few days, she, too, has a cold. And thus it spreads. To avoid colds, therefore, people should wash their hands often and keep their hands away from their faces.

—Kathleen LaFrank (student), "Colds: Myth and Science"

Note that you can use transitional expressions to link paragraphs as well as sentences. In the first sentence of LaFrank's paragraph, the word *thus* signals that the sentence refers to an effect discussed in the preceding paragraph.

The following box lists many transitional expressions by the functions they perform.

Transitional expressions

To add or show sequence

again, also, and, and then, besides, equally important, finally, first, further, furthermore, in addition, in the first place, last, moreover, next, second, still, too

To compare

also, in the same way, likewise, similarly

Key term

person The form of a pronoun that indicates whether the subject is speaking (first person: *I*, *we*), spoken to (second person: *you*), or spoken about (third person: *he*, *she*, *it*, *they*). All nouns are in the third person.

To contrast

although, and yet, but, but at the same time, despite, even so, even though, for all that, however, in contrast, in spite of, nevertheless, notwithstanding, on the contrary, on the other hand, regardless, still, though, yet

To give examples or intensify

after all, an illustration of, even, for example, for instance, indeed, in fact, it is true, of course, specifically, that is, to illustrate, truly

To indicate place

above, adjacent to, below, elsewhere, farther on, here, near, nearby, on the other side, opposite to, there, to the east, to the left

To indicate time

after a while, afterward, as long as, as soon as, at last, at length, at that time, before, earlier, eventually, formerly, immediately, in the meantime, in the past, lately, later, meanwhile, now, presently, shortly, simultaneously, since, so far, soon, subsequently, suddenly, then, thereafter, until, until now, when

To repeat, summarize, or conclude

all in all, altogether, as has been said, in brief, in conclusion, in other words, in particular, in short, in simpler terms, in summary, on the whole, that is, therefore, to put it differently, to summarize

To show cause or effect

accordingly, as a result, because, consequently, for this purpose, hence, otherwise, since, then, therefore, thereupon, thus, to this end, with this object

Note Draw carefully on this list of transitional expressions because the ones in each group are not interchangeable. For instance, *besides*, *finally*, and *second* may all be used to add information, but each has its own distinct meaning.



If transitional expressions are not common in your native language, you may be tempted to compensate when writing in English by adding them to the beginnings of most sentences. But such explicit transitions aren't needed everywhere, and in fact too many can be intrusive and awkward. When inserting transitional expressions, consider the reader's need for a signal: often the connection from sentence to sentence is already clear from the context or can be made clear by relating the content of sentences more closely (see 3 pp. 146–47). When you do need transitional expressions, try varying their positions in your sentences, as illustrated in the sample paragraph on the facing page.