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Do Women Adapt More? The Gender Effects of the Speaker on Classroom Speech Evaluations

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DO WOMEN ADAPT MORE? THE GENDER
EFFECTS OF THE SPEAKER ON CLASSROOM SPEECH
(TITLE)
EVALUATIONS

By

Alethea Ann Bodden

THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
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IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
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Running Head: THE GENDER EFFECTS OF THE SPEAKER

Do Women Adapt More? The Gender Effects of the Speaker on
Classroom Speech Evaluations

Alethea A. Bodden

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ABSTRACT

The presentational style of females and the connection with the audience members was examined. 95 male and female subjects gathered the results from five different sections of speech communication classes. The rating scale that was completed by the subjects contained traits such as, organization, language, material, delivery, analysis and voice. The results have indicated that the female presentational style does have more of a connection and adaptation with the audience than do males.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Literature Review

Culture

Gender Language

Communication Between Sexes

Education

Presentational Characteristics

Audience Response and Nonverbal - Communication

Rating

Chapter 2: Methodology

Measurement

Chapter 3: Results

Chapter 4: Discussion

Limitations

Implications

INTRODUCTION

There are several characteristics in gender communication where numerous studies have been conducted to differentiate the traits and/or style between males and females. Those characteristics begin as children encompassed by stereotypes and a culture that is constantly changing. Eventually brought into the classroom, workplace and immersed into society where the stereotypes of the male and female gender reproduce. Past research has shown how females are more connected with the audience while giving a presentation. Whether it is the eye contact or facial reactions, females are more adaptable to the audience than males.

In the following chapters, these characteristics and traits will be discussed along with a further discussion of limitations and implications. The characteristics and/or traits will be discussed on the contributions to speech communication and the differences of presentational styles.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Culture

One of the major differences between gender communication and culture is and has been traditional notions of male/female roles. Numerous research studies have shown that sex roles have proven a significant determinant of human behavior. Culture is the sum total of capabilities and habits acquired by humans as members of society, encompassing their knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, laws and customs (Cateora, 1993). Cultural definitions of the role to be played by the two sexes are central to the meaning of "masculinity" and "femininity" in any culture where definitions exist. According to authors Cohen and Saine (Bock, Butler, & Bock, 1980) found that the importance of sex roles as being a result of the changing sex roles of current society. The turning point for American women in public speaking was in the World Anti-Salivary Convention held in London in 1840. At this time, women did not have the right to speak, or the right to vote. "Every day our culture encourages women us (women) to be about our bodies and ashamed of our many figure flaws" (Stone & Bachner, 1992, p.12). Goffman's analysis of magazine advertising asserts that women are pictures in the

following subordinate fashion to men: women appear shorter; men instruct women; women appear to be drifting in deep thought while men's eyes are focused purposely; and women appear as helpless (Tjernland, 1995). Fishburn (1982) informs that because these pictures are not perceived as unnatural by most people, this can create serious problems on how a society perceives women. According to book author Lynne Layton (Kaufman, 1999) she argues that masculinity and femininity are neither opposite nor equally valued because one member of any binary pair, in this case masculinity, is always in a superior cultural position to the other. In most cultures, there is a double standard of adult sexual mortality (Jacklin, 1974). Jacklin (1974) that it is difficult to determine what behaviors are, and what are not, linked to sex roles.

Kalleberg and Leicht (1991) agree that such stereotypes continue to hinder women's progress in organizations. "Women who accommodate their behaviors to these stereotypes hesitate to admit they desire power" (Reardon, 1993, p. 125). As a result, women fail to learn how to acquire and use power." A desire of power is natural; it helps us exert some control over our own fate" (Reardon, 1993, p. 1993). Reardon (1993) asserts the

importance for women to develop ways to hold the floor. Reardon (1993) demonstrates the lack of similar education, different family roles, and lack of networks of business contacts is some of the commonly cited barriers to women's success as entrepreneurs. "Even academic institutions (often considered more receptive to women and less prone to adhere to old stereotypes), similar distorted perceptions persist" (Reardon, 1993, p. 79). Reardon (1993) believes that the stereotypes about women's commitment to work, ability to lead, emotionality, readiness to cause trouble, and inability to work with each other linger because efforts to disable them have not been sufficiently pervasive or appreciative of the tenacity of gender impressions (p.79). Women are perceived to be emotional is the first in a series of disadvantageous of stereotypes (Reardon, 1993). Expertise is a longstanding problem for women because they are stereotyped and perceived of having less knowledge than men have.

"Past studies of gender, however, dwelled on how much women accepted their traditional role and therefore focused almost exclusively on the attitudes of women, not of men" (Fertman, 1995, p.3). Brend (1975), women in this culture have developed some reactive intonation patterns, which do

not occur in the speech of men. Kaufman (1999) furthers that gender inequalities in this culture interfere with the negotiation of connection and agency for both males and females. Sex role barriers to expressively by males have been linked to a variety of psychological woes (La France & Mayo, 1979).

According to La France and Mayo (1979), sex-role stereotypes is associated in men with constriction of emotional expression.

Weitz (1976) asserts that,

Men who were asked about their sex-role attitudes and who were found to hold more liberal views were rated as being nonverbal warmer when interacting with both men and women. In contrast, men holding more transitional sex-role attitudes were judged to be less warm in such interactions (p. 176).

La France and Mayo (1979) believe that sex-role stereotypes are associated in men with constriction of emotional expression.

There are many generalizations with the different roles.

Some cultural beliefs according to Mohd and Khalifa are types of games children play, which are perceived as important in determining the characteristics, which they will acquire in the future through time. According to Jacklin (1974) that it might certainly be expected that

the treatment of children would reflect society. "We have seen that the greater aggressiveness of the male is one of the best established, and most pervasive, of all psychological sex differences" (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974, p. 368). Furthermore, Whiting and Edwards (1973) describe that girls sought and offered more non-aggressive contact than did boys. There is evidence from a number of studies on children that boys and girls do make somewhat different choices, but the toy attributes responsible for the choices are obscure (Jacklin, 1974).

Jacklin, Maccoby and Barrier (1973) found that the two sexes spent equal amounts of time with stuffed animals, but that the boys preferred toy robots. Early reports indicated that boys appeared to develop sex-typed choices at an earlier age, and that in fact there might be a decline in sex typing among girls between the ages 5 and 10. Past studies have shown that boys were more likely to avoid the sex-inappropriate toy than were girls. The girls on the other hand, showed interest in boys' toys whether an adult was present or not. S. Ross (1971) found that among 3-5-year-olds playing shopkeeper, boys were more concerned than girls that their customers in the play store (a same sex peer) choose a sex-appropriate toy. There is some evidence that the greater

preference by males for the activities associated with their own sex continues into college age (Jacklin, 1974). Past research has shown that during puberty, girls are given "proscription" statements; Their main goal is to get married and thus they must not be too smart, independent or strong (Desjardins, 1992). Psychological sex differentiation changes with age (Jacklin, 1974). "We believe social shaping to be of the utmost importance in children's acquisition of sex-typical behavior" (Jacklin, 1974, p. 275).

Gender language

Reardon (1993) believes although the English language is the same between men and women, the selection and impact is much different. The heart of the problem is the fact that men and women working together do not speak the same language" (Reardon, 1993, p. 5). Differences in gender messages found that (puberty), boys are given "obligation" statements to the effect that they must gain a skill to have a job to provide and care for a family. Language has been largely studied on performed verbal and nonverbal behavior. There has been evidence of the gender-linked language effects from an investigation using language samples drawn from public speeches by university students

(Mulac & Lundell 1982). According to Reardon (1993), it is an issue of discrimination. "For too long business academics and practitioners have been hesitant to acknowledge that men and women experience life, therefore work as well, in different ways" (Reardon, 1993, p. 6). These images of women persist long after the reality has changed (Reardon, 1993). "Once women and men come to the realization that much remains to be done for women to become equals with men in business, the question remains: What to do? The answer is to recognize damaging stereotypes rather than continuously contribute to their existence" (Reardon, 1993, p.83). "Stereotypes are perilous to women's careers: Women lack sports experience, so they can't understand teamwork" (Reardon, 1993, p.77). Mohd and Khalifa (1998) claim that, "Consequently, when a girl is thrown into a business environment, she is at a loss because she is not acquainted with the notion of team spirit" (p. 28). Also noting that women wouldn't make good leaders. Reardon (1993), suggests that men have developed these patterns of language that ultimately separates leader from non-leaders. Maccoby and Jacklin (1974), asserts,

"It has been alleged that aggression is the primary means where by human beings dominate one another, so

that cross-sex encounters it will be true that (with no rare exceptions) men will dominate women, and will therefore come to occupy the positions in society in which status and authority are vested" (p. 368).

A significant form of power is knowing the right people (Reardon, 1993, p. 143).

According to the Journal of Social Psychology (1999) 84% of women in male-type jobs considered themselves highly feminine, furthermore, 82% of women in female-type jobs considered themselves highly feminine. "It manifests itself in meetings where women speak and are not heard" (Reardon, 1993, p. 4). "Most women no longer believe that the only obstacle to their success is the 'glass ceiling'" (Reardon, 1993, p. 4). Reardon explain that women knock themselves out getting near the top only to discover that it's just more of the same-a relentless quicksand of difference and disregard. Furthermore, it is argued those inborn differences, such as, greater passivity, lack of security, and self-confidence in women makes them seek inferior jobs. Research also says that these jobs involve boring, repetitive tasks, which make them feel more secure. "For women to make it to the top of traditional organizations,

they are going to have to recognize that the two currently popular routes, keeping quiet while proving oneself and beating men at their own games, are not working" (Reardon, 1993, p. 27). "Referent power" poses as a mediate threat to women (Reardon, 1993). Referent power is from being perceived as similar to those who have power. "This poses an obvious problem for women: We look different from most of those in power. We usually sound different as well, and few of us know how to engage in verbal sparring- a form of male jousting that strengthens interpersonal bonds when played well" (Reardon, 1993, p.135).

Barricade, Launder, and Mulch (1986) found that "previous research has shown that there is evidence that the effect of gender-linked language differences cross rater gender and age group boundaries. Barricade, Launder & Mulch (1986) describe that,

"Generally female speakers in the public context were comparatively complex, literate, tentative and attentive to emotional concerns. By contrast, the males were egocentric, nonstandard, active, controlling and intense" (p.124).

Reardon (1993) furthers that the verbal and nonverbal languages men use at work is frequently different from

those used by women. When men focus on tasks rather than relational issues, they do something to scripts they've learned as children and adults" (Reardon, 1993, p.31). Reardon (1993) asserts that it always isn't on purpose, in traditional organizations men aren't inclined to listen to people who introduce ideas in ways that make them sound unimportant (p.133).

Communication Between Sexes

Bock and Bock (1977) shares that some evidence suggests that the "opposite sex" effect may carry over into the speech classroom. Past research has shown that it is perceived that there is no gender difference in the classroom, which the researchers demonstrate attention to ensure that all students receive equal educational opportunities in the classroom. Results from a 1991 survey showed that most faculties perceived no gender differences in classroom participation (Women in Higher Education, 1999). The faculty in a 1991 survey showed that female students sought out outside help more often and more open to constructive criticism, while male students interrupted more, furthermore, males assumed leadership roles. When describing, "human behavior"-- has been about the behavior of males (Tiger, 1999). Masculinity is the degree to which

masculine values prevail over feminine values (De Mooj & Keegan, 1991). "Masculine" values, such as assertiveness, performance, achievement, independence and male dominance, prevail in all settings over "feminine" values which include sympathy, service, interdependence and both sexes in caring roles (Hofstede, 1984). Mohd and Khalifa (1998) asserts an examination of feminine; "different meanings associated with the same word, imply some of the qualities which are considered as masculine, such as; critical, analytical, serious, logical, systematic and rational" (p. 26). The dictionary definition of feminine means, ladylike, womanly, delicate, soft and fine. It has been observed from According to recent research (Journal of Social Psychology, 1999) implying that gender scheme is more flexible and that males and females have different traits under their personal definitions of masculine and feminine. "Femininity" is associated with silence. According to Stone and Bachner (1994) many women grew up with the quotation: " Her voice was ever soft, gentle and low; an excellent thing in woman" (p. 3). "Women have learned that trying to be like men is exhausting and nonproductive" (Reardon, 1993, p. 23). "According to common wisdom, women are more emotional than men" (Reardon, 1993, p.102). Past research

has shown that research on the emotionality of women is inconsistent. Reardon (1993) describes emotional talk not being perceived as masculine, and non-masculine behaviors are typically considered below leadership quality. "So long as leadership is associated with conviction and confidence, rationality and decisiveness, women will need to decide whether they can afford to express emotion in traditionally female ways or suppress their emotions entirely" (Reardon, 1993, p. 105). Reardon (1993) believes that essentially, women apologize for their thoughts. To apologize for thoughts or ideas will only set boundaries for success of women in both society and the workplace. "A man's success is more likely to be attributed to ability, a woman's success to hard work, good luck, or an easy task (Reardon, 1993, p. 107). It would be just that easy if women could conform their speech to that of men. "They could get rid of disclaimers, tag questions, intensifiers, and other patterns more prevalent in female speech" (Reardon, 1993, p.109). So, as research shows, it is not surprising that trust is credible of being a roadblock for women. Women and minorities are different from the majority of workers in traditional organizations (Reardon, 1993, p. 111). "The task of overcoming stereotypes regarding female credibility

would be demanding enough if it depended only on the verbal expressions of women" (Reardon, 1993, p. 112). Bem (1974) found that men choose masculine activities over feminine ones even when they would be paid more for performing feminine activities. Further research also shows that males avoid stereotypical female tasks, whereas women's choices of activities are more sex neutral. Gender is an elaboration of the word sex or biological difference. According to Reardon (1993). Studies have found that the female approach elicits greater liking and praise for social sensitivity, but male boasting creates the impression that the boaster is competent, confident, proud, and successful. "A woman's failure will be attributed to lack of ability, a man's failure to bad luck, a hard task, or lack of effort" (Reardon, 1993, p. 107).

Parents and teachers operate on the basis of certain stereotypes about children's characters (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974). There are stereotypes views about how the sexes differ, such as the greater aggressiveness of boys have been borne out and how girls are generally more dependent and sociable (Jacklin, 1974). According to Schrof (1993) it is this ideal that keeps girls from studying "male" subjects even when the doors are opened to them, that leads

girls to hide their intellect when around boys and discourages girls from taking risks or challenge. According to Bock and Munro (1979) females tend to have more oriented needs and abilities than do males. This may be due to the fact that women have scored higher in logical reasoning than did men. Seeing that children are more frequently exposed to models of their own sex than to cross- sex models. Jacklin (1974) asserts that through imitating whatever model happens to be available, they will tend to acquire more sex-appropriate than sex-inappropriate behavior. In school, it is frequently the case that the teachers are women and the principles are men (Jacklin, 1974). Research shows that there are no straightforward sex differences that have been found between boys and girls. According to Weatherall (1998) suggests that boys demonstrate cooperative interactive style and girls demonstrate speech features more usually attributed to a competitive interactive style. A past study has shown that a boy (subject) tried to assume a position of dominance and the girl (subject) challenges. According to Weatherall (1998) girls have a more traditional stereotype as being polite and cooperative while boys are domineering and competitive. According to Gray (1992) suggests boys and

girls communicative styles may not be that different (Weatherall, 1998). Makawi, (1988) in the research of Mohd and Khalifa (1998) that girls, since early childhood, are accustomed to certain roles through the games they play or pushed to play; rope jumping, dolls, etc. According to the 8-year study of Davies and Brember (1999) boys had a significant higher self-esteem than girls did. Previous studies have shown boys outperforming girls on math tests. Furthermore, Davies and Brember reveal that girls outperform boys at the ages of 7, 11, and 14 in National Curriculum Assessments in English. In the research of Davies and Brember (1999) Wylie (1979) claims that there is no evidence for sex differences in overall self-concept at any age level.

Girls obey the first command more frequently than boys (Milton, Kagan, & Levine, 1971). Jacklin (1974) questions, "When models of both sexes are available, do girls more often attend to, and/or imitate, the female model, and boys the male model?" (p. 289). Past research does show that there is evidence that in adulthood such selection does occur. In a study by Block (1972) fathers reported feeling that it was more important to give comfort to a girl when she was upset than to do so for a boy, but

mothers had no distinction. In encounters between the sexes, men are expected to take the initiative. Few studies have asked parents how they believe the two sexes differ. The study by Rothbart and Maccoby (1966), describing boys as being more likely to be rough at play, be noisy, defend themselves, defy punishment, be physically active, be competitive, do dangerous things, and enjoy mechanical things (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974). However, girls were described as being more likely to be helpful around the house, be neat and clean, be quiet and reserved, be sensitive to the feelings of others, be well mannered, be a tattletale, cry or get upset, and be easily frightened (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974). "We have seen that the sexes are psychologically much alike in many respects" (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974, p. 373). "A number of studies found no sex differences, but those that did usually report that boys receive more positive feedback than girls" (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974, p. 335). Maccoby & Jacklin (1974) asserts that there is a tendency for girls to maintain a higher level of interest in academic achievement through the school years. Although, when it comes to expectations for the child to go to college, it is clear that parents more often hold such an expectation for sons than daughters do

(Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974). Research does prove some unfounded beliefs about sex differences, such as, boys being more analytic, girls are more suggestible, girls have lower self-esteem, and girls lack achievement in motivation (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974).

Sex Differences that are fairly well established. (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974). With competitiveness, when sex differences are found, they usually show boys to be more competitive, but there are many studies finding sex similarity. There is evidence that young women hesitate to compete against their boyfriends. The behavior of students goes further than what happens with the teacher in the classroom, it starts with the parents. Jacklin (1974) declares that recent evidence of verbal ability in girls may be due to receiving more stimulation or reinforcement from their caretakers. Research has shown that when a girl behaved dependently, her parents changed their behavior toward her (Jacklin, 1974).

Bock and Munro (1979) asserts that men will be viewed as more organized than women regardless of whether the speech is organized. Past empirical research has shown the differences between masculine and feminine traits. Desjardins (1992) asserts that "Societal System" is

primarily responsible for the differences that occurs between genders.

Education

Research shows that much of the education has been directed to oral communication behavior of the individuals. Studies have shown that sex variables influence classroom criticism and student response. Furthermore, success hinges on improving skills and measurement of progress in skill acquisition. Furthermore, Brooks (1971) proposes that student's with high self-concept is likely to be confident of his or her ability, to accept praise with out embarrassment, and to look at criticism as being beneficial providing the opportunity to acknowledge weakness and set out to change them. Albright (Young, 1971) found that female students generally have better attitudes toward criticism than do male students. Those students with low self-concept is likely to be sensitive to criticism, over responsive to praise, hypercritical to self, and pessimistic toward competition (Brooks, 1971).

Feedback or criticism is a method used by teachers to inform students that aspects of their performance need to be altered or maintained (Book & Simmons, 1980). McCrosky and Lasbrook (1970) explain that for many years' teachers of

speech has believed that an important avenue through which a student may improve his oral communication ability is by learning what he does well and what he does poorly. Criticism is a vital part of teacher behavior in the speech classroom. Young (1974) asserts that teacher behavior based on psychological models of behavior change or by theory based on classroom experience. Sex of the teacher is not as important (Bock & Bock, 1977). Although, one study found that male instructors tended to give higher ratings on speech to women than to men (Bock & Bock, 1977). Gorham (1988) asserts that teachers who verbalize the positive results of on-task behavior are perceived as more immediate than those who verbalize the negative consequences of failing to comply and that particular set of power messages is likely to be related to increased learning. Researchers have demonstrated that students learn most from teachers who are "warm, friendly, immediate, approachable, affiliative and fostering of close, professionally appropriate personal relationships (Allen, 1988). There has been empirical research and experimentation that suggests humor is capable of reducing negative affective states and improving intelligence, friendliness, and perceptions of the teacher. Confidence also plays an important issue for

both the teacher and the student because if the teacher doesn't have the confidence in teaching the material or confidence in their students, this will just reflect on the students' self-confidence and self-esteem issues. Students' perceptions of teacher immediacy are influenced by verbal as well as nonverbal behaviors, and that these behaviors contribute significantly to learning (Gorham, 1988). Positive head nods, smiles, eye contact, vocal expressiveness, overall body movements and purposeful gestures help the relationship between the student and teacher to feel more comfortable. Furthermore, Page (1958) demonstrates that students who are given specific comments or free comments from the teacher improved significantly on pre- and post-classroom tests when compared to students who received no comments."

According to Miller (1964) there is a high importance of "reliability" and "validity" to both the classroom speech teacher and the quantitative researcher. "Validity" is grounds for the final judgement are based on sound criteria of speaking performance, meanwhile, "reliability" is the agreement (Miller, 1964). According to research from Henrikson (1940) the better known students are judges to be somewhat better speakers. Students evaluate their peers'

speeches. For some reason students' rankings/ratings of speeches agree with those of their instructors' and that students agree with each other on their rating speeches" (Book & Simmons, 1980, p. 136). Bostrom (1964) furthers that; the students reporting on the characteristics of good teachers mention objectivity. "All we can say is that the sex mix in the classroom undoubtedly makes a difference in the motivation of students, and it would be worthwhile to consider how these motivations could be constructively utilized" (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974, p. 367). If students' skills increase as a result of instruction, the teacher must have had an impact on the skills (Rubin & Buerkel, 1995). Book and Simmons (1980) asserts that feedback can motivate student achievement and can induce significant change in performance. According to Bostrom (1964) indicated that negative or positive criticism might have a corresponding effect on a student's self-concept to communicate. According to the observations of Serbin, O' Leary, Kent and Tonic (1973) of teachers and children, boys are more often than girls to ignore a teacher's direction are; furthermore, boys receive more negative control. Negative control may include loud reprimands and physical restraint. There is another possibility, however: that

teachers are analyzing clusters or patterns of behavior (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974).

Presentational Style and Characteristics

Numerous researchers have shared various definitions on the form of speech. Speech carries many important factors, not only with the speaker giving the speech, but also the criticism of the audience. Smaja (1996) asserts that speech is a form of commitment. "A good speaker cannot be afraid of disagreement, criticism or even anger" (Stone & Bachner, 1992, p. 6). It is also noted that, "A good speaker is like a good athlete: she makes it look easy" (Stone & Bachner, 1992, p. 9). Speech is an act; it comes from the depths of one's being. The act of the speech gains its significance on how it is presented. Book author Ron Hoff (1998) explains that a presentation is a torpedo not a canon. A torpedo is better than a cannon due to the following definitions:

Cannon: a free willing cannon, often called a "speech", creates lots of smoke! Explodes a subject. It takes a subject of some interest and expands it. It is essentially an inside/out presentation. Torpedo: A torpedo that spends precisely to its mark. Starts

narrowly and gets sharper. It is essentially an outside/in presentation (p.2).

When a speech is being presented there is a trust evolving between the speaker and the audience. Reardon (1993) describes communication as a complex activity. The key communication issue is directness. According to Brooks (1971) individual's self concept affects the way a person selects and processes communication. Rerdon (1993) explains communication at its best as being like a chess game. "Each player's moves limit or expand the options of the other" (Reardon, 1993, p. 29). Research shows that we communicate to convey meaning. Experts in communication have a phrase that captures this: "Meanings are in people, not in words" (Reardon, 1993, p.107). When communicating, trust and credibility are two very important factors, not only for the speaker but also the audience. Communication research has identified five major components of credibility: expertise, conviction, energy, composure, and trust (Reardon, 1993, p. 107). Reardon (1993) asserts that words themselves are merely vehicles of what people think.

The process of rating oral communication, in theory, provides a measure of the responses of an individual to specific aspects of the communicative act Bock, 1972).

Speakers are always being judged and rated by the members of their audiences. The individual evaluator is a significant variable in speech ratings. An assumption by Barker (1969) asserts that ratings are primarily a function of the stimulus (speech) rather than the internal subjective state of a competently trained speech evaluator. The process of rating speech behavior is central to the discipline of speech communication (Bock & Bock, 1970). Bock, Powell, Kitchens and Flavin (1977) request that the major means of measurement in such evaluation studies have been rating scales. In terms of comprehension, there are no differences between an organized speech and an unorganized speech (Bock & Munro, 1979). Speech evaluation has been shown to be an important variable in both classroom application and in communication research. One major concern of both communication teachers and researchers is the evaluation of communicative acts Bock, Butler & Bock, (1984). Researchers and classroom instructors to assess speaking effectiveness, traditionally have used speech ratings. The reliability of judgements of speaking performance is a crucial consideration in many research and teaching problems in the field of speech (Clevenger, 1964). Behavioral or performance assessment is a central part of

speech communication education (Carlson, & Smith-Howell, 1995). Making a speech can trigger every last one of your insecurities; it takes will power not to hunch over and hide (Stone & Bachner, 1992).

Audience Response and Nonverbal Communication

As a speaker it is of high importance to have the audience think well of you. There is a relationship that should exist between the presenter and audience. "I need you, you need me" is a belief of Ron Hoff. He defines "need", as the audience needs something-usually help. The delivery of the speech involves the voice quality, rate, volume, fluency, pauses or timing, eye contact, poise, posture, movement, and gestures. When giving a presentation/speech Hoff believes that, "the presenter's best chance to win is by offering his or her knowledge, talent, ideas, wisdom openly-in a heart-felt desire to help rather than a self-protecting fear of being outgunned or sold down the river" (p. 57). According to Hoff (1998), clothes communicate almost instantaneously, as quickly as the eye can telegraph a snapshot to the mind. It is important for the speaker to dress in a manner that projects the strongest strength. Hoff (1998), asserts as if what the speaker wears is like a compliment to the

audience. By this, the clothes the speaker is wearing communicated that the audience is important. If women are obsessed with clothing, it is because they know it speaks to others" (Reardon, 1993, p. 113). Reardon (1993), asserts that many women do not care to be limited to suits. The important thing about dress is not to out-dress the boss. "The most important assets of a good speaker are a strong voice, good eye contact, erect posture, clarity, decisiveness and self confidence" (Stone & Bachner, 1994, p. 3). There are three basic elements in a speech: pace (how fast or slowly you talk), pitch (how high or low) and volume (how loudly or softly) (Stone & Bachner, 1992). If the speaker feels strongly about what he/she is saying, it is important to allow those feelings to show, by this the individual will be an effective speaker (Stone & Bachner, 1992). The first 90 seconds of a presentation is crucial. Researchers want to understand information processing in the absence of verbalization, because concurrent verbalization draws on a subject's limited attention capacity (Chakravarti, 1989). Reardon (1993), suggests that the most effective means of developing composure is frequently observing oneself succeed. This could be done by getting to the point more quickly, raising one's voice to

be heard, learning phrases that capture attention, employing humor, dropping some disclaimers, and/or being sure you are saying what you mean" (Reardon, 1993, p. 109). In order to be a superb presentation, Ron Hoff (1998), believes a speaker would have to meet the following requirements:

Eye contact with the audience while speaking, demonstrating what your talking about, the feeling of being "in control", good memory, listening to your voice, use the word "you" more than "I", wonder what the other person is thinking while the speaker is talking (p.24).

"A good speaker needs to be as precise and concrete as possible; the last thing any audience wants is rambling, giggly nonsense" (Stone & Bachner, 1992, p. 6). Research findings indicate that vocal characteristics are sex-linked in a prescriptive way: there are social norms for the way women and men ought to sound. Vocal expression is defined as, "The vocal aspect most often singled out as reflecting sex differences is that of pitch, with men's vocal output becoming lower-pitched in adolescence" (La France & Mayo, 1979, p. 98). "A strong pleasant voice is the greatest asset a speaker can have" (Stone & Bachner, 1992, p. 9).

Women's voices are softer, therefore, when they use tentative speech patterns over and over, men just tune them out (Reardon, 1993). "If you sound like a giddy little girl, you will be treated like one" (Stone & Bachner, 1992, p. 20). High pitch is the one vocal signature always associated with childish or immature speech (Stone & Bachner, 1992). Research shows that female speakers sound unsure of their answers. According to Lakoff (1973), "Women often answer questions with declarative statements which end with the rising inflection typical in English, of questions" (p. 47). Volume of the speaker is very important. Stone and Bachner (1992) suggest that low volume not only suggests low energy, low enthusiasm and weariness, it also suggests powerlessness. La France and Mayo (1979) believe that when women are talking, they are reacting. LA France and Mayo (1979) believe that this makes female speakers sound unsure of their answers. The answers that are stated so as to seek the listener's confirmation that the answer is correct or that it is all right to state an opinion at all. Studies, which ask men and women to express specific emotions generally, find a greater capacity in women than men to produce facial expressions that viewers can interpret correctly (La France & Mayo, 1979). The

presenter has needs for approval, and only the audience can give it. According to Ron Hoff (1998), "The audience reflects the attitude and manner of the presenter," furthermore, presenters should be building relationships with every person in the room" (p.39). The Audience of the speaker really relies and develops a trust with the speaker. For an example Ron Hoff (1998), explains that if the speaker is nervous it is very important not to announce to the audience the nervousness. This is due to the fact that those presenters who cause worry do not inspire great confidence amongst the audience. Hoff (1998), that the audience is a mirror of the presenter, mood for mood, minute by minute. For an example, if the speaker is funny, the audience will laugh; if the speaker is not funny and tries to be, the audience will be very embarrassed for the speaker. Ron Hoff (1998) believes that the speaker has the responsibility of "keeping the ball alive." Meaning that keeping the ball up in the air, gliding it, tapping it higher, boosting it toward someone in your audience. By this, the ball will move around a lot, people will get involved and the ball will always come back to you. According to Hoff (1998) it is important to connect the knowledge of the speaker with the needs of the audience.

"People buy emotion and justify with fact" (Decker, 1993, p. 15).

Ron Hoff (1998) also asserts that "presence" is what the audience feels. Research shows that communication with others, trust, believability are virtually synonymous, intertangible, you can't have one without the other (Decker). Decker (1993), has three fundamental truths:

Truth 1, The spoken word is almost the polar opposite of the written word; Truth 2, In the spoken medium, what you say must be believed to have impact: Truth 3, Believability is overwhelmingly determined at a preconscious level.

Decker asserts there are nine ways to transform the personal impact of a speaker. The following skills relate to the two key principles of the eye factor and the energy factor, 1. Eye communication, 2. Posture and movement, 3. Dress and appearance, 4. Gestures and the smile, 5. Voice and vocal variety, 6. Words and non-words (the pause), 7. Listener involvement, 8. Listener involvement, 8. Humor. The natural self. People form their first and lasting impression of you in the first two seconds. According to Decker, this is primarily due to the dress and appearance of the person.

Ron Hoff (1998) also describes a presentation as a visual medium. He asserts that the audience thinks visually and as a presenter that is very important because it will help the speaker in terms of pictures, or hold a mental image in your brain. Decker (1993) believes that effective communication hinges the ability to make emotional contact with the listener. There are two things to remember that are happening with the audience and presenter simultaneously. According to "I Can See You Naked" book author Ron Hoff (1998), (1) "The presenter is making a commitment to the audience. The presenter is working to prove something that will win the support of the audience that will generate-action." (2) "The audience is making a judgement on the commitment. 'Does this make any sense?' 'Are those facts accurate?' 'Do I really trust this person'? (p.5). Hoff (1998) claims the best definition one will find of the presentation one will be making. "A presentation is a commitment by the presenter to help the audience do something. Simultaneously, throughout the presentation, the audience is evaluating the presenter's ability to deliver-to make good on the commitment"(p.6). Past research has shown that 9 times out of 10 audiences remember what they participate in. Furthermore, "audience

participation is the fastest form of teaching-and the most titillating" (Hoff, 1998, p. 104). According to Saine (1975) assures that, "a persuasive message might cause a receiver, who has a favorable attitude toward a proposal, to perceive that three undesirable consequences will result from the proposal; however, the receiver also believes that the consequences would be only slightly important to self and others" (p.127). Rapport, as Hoff (1998), defines, the circulation flowing smoothly between the presenter and audience, no gaps a less distance between the two. Another important factor when giving a speech is seeking out individuals in the audience to engage with the eyes of the speaker. According to Hoff (1998), it is like making a collection of friends with the eyes of the speaker, moving person to person within the audience. According to Decker (1993) if the speaker appears boring, anxious, or insecure, the words will actually be given more impact and energy by the listener's first brain. In order for this to happen, the speaker must make emotional contact with the listener.

What television has taught us? Hoff (1998), questions, "How would your presentation play on television (would you watch it or zap in the first 5 seconds)? When watching television, research shows that people "zap" or channel

surf, if you will every five seconds. This is why Hoff (1998) explains in a few tips the importance of a speech/presentation as if it were on television. Research shows how it is believed that one should think about their presentation in scenes by listing points one would want the audience to remember. It is also believed that the speaker should "nail down exactly what he/she wants to say." Hoff (1998) describes this by "planting a flag at every scene" (p.74). Another important factor, which may be overlooked, is the colors of the speaker's clothing. Not only can it help the speaker, but also the audience. Movement is important not only for the speaker, but also the audience. "When moving, it reduces your own stress and keeps the audience awake" (Hoff, 1998, p. 74). A smile makes a difference in both mind and body. Are these assets feminine? "Strong self-confident posture is absolutely vital to any speaker, but very hard to achieve when we know that our skin "should" be clearer, our teeth whiter, our hair shinier, our breasts bigger or smaller, our muscles firmer and our clothes completely different" (Stone & Bachner, 1992, p. 5).

Gestures should be genuine and spontaneous, resulting from normal freedom of action and the absence of nervous

movement (Stone & Bachner, 1992). Audiences take on the emotions of the speaker (Stone & Bachner, 1992). People's faces will tell the speaker that they are puzzled, or they can't hear, or if the speaker becomes rattled. According to Reardon (1993) she thinks that women should think about style. "

Studies have shown that women are more positively lenient than men are. "When they are alone, women smile more than men and they increase their smiling when another person enters the situation" (Mackey, 1976, p. 127).

Furthermore, research shows that smiles elicit smiles. The smile may be interpreted as an appeasement gesture, a sign of non-threat (Van Hoof, 1972). Mothers of girls were observed to touch and a handle their infants at six months more than did mothers of boys (La France & Mayo 1979). Past research expresses that eye contact should be equal time per person. Nonverbal communication expresses the feelings of one self through body orientation, gestures, and many facial expressions. Bostrom (1964) results in his study that persons who were rigid in their behaviors rated lower, on the average, than non-rigid persons. A nonverbal

behavior, such as, nervously darting eyes, impact the first brain directly, immediately, and adversely (Decker).

Research shows that the visual sense dominates all the senses. What counts with this powerful sense is believability. "For effective eye communication requires only about 5 seconds of steady eye contact" (Decker, 1993, p. 88). There are many benefits of good eye communication. Research shows that not only will the speaker appear confident and focused but also can motivate the movement of the speaker by seeing the individuals in the audience. According to Stone and Bachner (1992), body language is the eloquent message we send with our stance and gestures. According to Stone and Bachner (1992), slouch and you look tired and discouraged, hang your head and refuse to face people and you appear embarrassed or ashamed, clench your teeth or your fists and you communicate anger or fear. According to Stone and Bachner (1992), eye contact is power. "The simple act of looking someone squarely in the eye is more persuasive than a hundred words" (Stone and Bachner, 1992, p. 13). There was a study by Maccoby (1958) that monitored the eye movements of college-aged subjects as they watched two standard Hollywood films (Jacklin, 1974). In the scenes there was both male and female leads

(no other characters were present), male viewers spent proportionally more time watching the male leading character while female viewers spent proportionally more time looking at the female lead (Jacklin, 1974). Mehrabian and Ferris (1967) compared spoken words with facial expressions in a similar fashion and found that the facial channel conveyed attitudes more forcefully than the spoken word. Leathers (1976) writes about the role of eye contact in interpersonal interaction and states that, "the type and duration of the gaze probably have a great quantitative impact on interpersonal communication. Without eye contact between the individuals attempting to communicate with each other, facial, gestural and postural communication becomes impossible" (Leathers, 1976, p. 36). In a study of the relationship between embarrassment and eye contact, Modigliani (1971) concluded that subjects decreased eye contact when addressing a disliked individual. Exline and Winters (1965) found that subjects decreased eye contact in the face of critical messages concerning their intelligence and maturity (Frandsen & Greene, 1979). In the past fifteen years, empirical research has grown rapidly and a commanding aspect of that research is the existence and persistence of sex differences in nonverbal behavior (La

France & Mayo, 1979). "A woman's face may be less reflective of her own inner state than of the inner states of those with whom she is interacting because sex-role expectations call for women to be reactive and responsive. In contrast, men are expected to be proactive, that is, they are expected to be active, independent, self-confident, objective and decisive" (La France & Mayo, 1979, p. 96).

Research shows that the sexes differ in their nonverbal behaviors, and that the differences are in line with societal expectations concerning whom shall play proactive and active roles (La France & Mayo, 1979). Studies show that "communicating attitudes, the addition of words to a vocal message adds little or no impact to the message" (Hegstrom, 1979, p. 134).

Rating

Speakers are always being judged and rated by the members of their audiences. "Ratings have been used as both teaching devices and measures of dependent variables, and, as such have a permanent place in the repertoire of speech communication teachers and researchers" (Bock and Bock, 1970, p. 298). According to Bostrom (1964), the rater should be "objective" free from bias stemming from prior

attitudes or opinions. Bock, Powell, Kitchens and Flavin (1977) suggest that the goal of rater theory is the understanding of the evaluation process that takes place in communication situation. Content such as, topic selection, reasoning, development of ideas, forms of supporting material, organization, attention factors, and audience adaptation. "We seem to assume that good rating starts with objective raters, and that non-objectivity in the rater's personality will lead to poor rating" (Bostrom, 1964, p. 283). Sprague (1971) classified four criticisms according to dichotomies or four basic areas of controversy; content-delivery, positive-negative, impersonal-personal, and atomistic-holistic. Bock and Simmons (1980) define the following criticisms:

Content Criticism: Ideas, reasoning, audience adaptation, level of language, purpose of speech meeting the assignment; Delivery Criticism: Voice quality, volume, posture, gestures, visual aid, eye contact, appearance, time pronunciation, articulation, and grammar; Atomistic Criticism: Isolated elements of a speech; Holistic Criticism: Overall performance of a speech; Personal Criticism: Particular student's improvement reference to student or professors

personal life; Negative Criticism: Weakness, suggestive improvement.

Valuable work has been done on the reliability of rating scales (Brooks, 1957). The matter of reliability in rating scales was first empirically studied by Bryan and Wilke in 1941. The construction of the Bock scale involved the trait of ideas, organization, delivery, and language (Bock, 1972). Comments on speeches should be consistent with the goals and the placement of the speech in the course (Book & Simmons, 1980). Furthermore, studies show there is a slightly closer relationship between liking a person and judging him or her as a speaker when he or she is known than well known. Henrikson (1949) discovered that better liked and better-known students were judged to be better speakers. Bock, Powell, Kitchens and Flavin (1977) demonstrates that an average speaker might receive a lower rating when he is forced to follow an outstanding speaker, since, when compared to the latter. Some positive comments according to Young (1974) include, praise, compliment, or note of some approval. Comments such as, o.k. acceptable, or fair, indicate that a standard was met or an undesirable element was absent are also considered to be positive. Young (1974) also notes some negative comments that

include, criticism, mention of weakness in the presentation, or a suggestion for improvement. Bock and Munro (1979) have three constructs that help explain where and why rating errors occur:

- (1) The act of evaluation is affected by source, message, channel, receiver, feedback, and the environment in which it takes place;
- (2) A major contributor to rating errors is found in the receiver component of the model;
- finally, (3) The underlying basis of rating depends on the demand characteristics of the situation.

This is true for both male and female raters. Thus, an audience may perceive a male or female speaker in the same light due to society thus affecting the rating. According to Rubin (1990) reviewed studies, which indicate that socioeconomic status, race and gender of the students affect the ratings; they receive (Carlson & Smith-Howell, 1995). According to Miller (1964) found both the raters' attitudes related to the topic and speaker and the raters' previous training affected the ratings (Carlson & Smith-Howell, 1995). Bock, Powell, Kitchens and Flavin (1977) suggest that on a possible source of rating error might be found in the sex of the rater, since this factor is a

characteristic of the rater which can affect personality traits. The sex of the experimenter now appears to be a critical factor in communication studies involving the evaluation (Bock and Bock, 1977). Furthermore, sex differences found in persuasibility may also be found in rating errors (Bock, Powell, Kitchens & Flavin, 1977). Bock, Powell, Kitchens, and Flavin demonstrate that rating scales have been related to classroom speech evaluation.

Research shows that we experience learning in the first few weeks and months of life brain learning. Belief is a first brain function; an acceptance on faith (Decker). According to Decker, in order to be first Brain friendly the speaker must be natural, learning to use energy, enthusiasm, emotion, and expression. Thus by becoming freer less inhibited-more naturally ourselves. Decker asserts that the first brain doesn't understand words; it speaks a different language: the language of behavior. The language of the first brain is the language of trust. Bock and Bock (1977) assert that both sex of the experimenter and the sexes of the subject are important variables. Past research shows that rating errors are more predominant among female due to having more trait errors on general effectiveness. Bock, Powell, Kitchens and Flavin (1977) assert that the

tendency for females to be more susceptible to these rating errors may be due to the relationship of sex and persuasibility. Ironically, according to Bock and Munro (1979) females receive more positive evaluations than males. Yet, males are rated higher than females (Bock & Munro, 1979). Previous studies have shown that the male raters in the presence of the male experimenter evaluated the speaker positively. Bock and Bock (1977) illustrate that male raters will be unaffected but will show a slight tendency to go along with the comments on analysis. Results of the Bock and Munro (1979) study indicate how male speakers received more positive trait errors on organization than did female speakers. The definition of trait error is, the rater's tendency to judge the effectiveness of a speech based on a personal basis about the ingredients of the speech. As a result of this error, the rater is either too easy (positive trait error) or too hard (negative trait error) on specific trait categories (traits) on a rating scale (Bock & Munro, 1979). According to the research of Bock and Bock (1977) the sex of the experimenter is an important factor in leniency errors. Bock (1972) asserts that "the presence of rating errors in rating scores increases the likelihood that rating scales

may not be as reliable and valid as been assumed" (p. 146). The process of evaluating communicative acts has certain errors associated with it (Bock, Butler, & Bock, 1984). The theory of rating error suggests three major constructs, which support and explain the proposition: (1) Act of speech evaluation. (2) Receiver component. (3) Demand characteristics of the situation (Bock, Butler, & Bock, 1984). "It is puzzling that ratings so frequently yield sex differences in the stereotypical direction" (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974). According to research, rating scales have been open to many forms of error. The errors include:

Leniency Error: Tendency of the rater to rate all speakers either too high (positive leniency Error) or too low (Negative Leniency Error), Halo Error: Tendency of the rater to rate too high (positive halo error) or too low (negative halo error), Trait Error: Tendency of the rater to rate too high (positive trait error) or too low (negative trait error) on particular categories of the rating instrument (Bock, Butler, & Bock, 1984).

The content and delivery of speech plays a significant role to the raters in the audience. The possibility the

behavior that fits their stereotypes (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974).

Based on past research on gender presentational style the following hypothesis is predicted:

H1: The presentational style of females is connected with the audience, therefore, rated more positively on traits that relate to audience adaptation.

H1a: The presentational style of females is connected with the audience, therefore, rated higher trait of material.

H1b: The presentational style of females is connected with the audience, therefore, rated higher trait language.

H1c: The presentational style of females is connected with the audience, therefore, rated higher trait of analysis.

Method

To test the prediction, individuals were evaluated in 5 sections of Speech Communication 1310 classes. This evaluation took place at Eastern Illinois University during the summer 1998 through the spring of 1999. There were a total of 95 subjects, 32 males and 63 females that rated speakers with the Bock Rating Scale. The speakers consisted of four males and four females presenting various topics in a 7-9 minute speech. A t-test was performed based on the set of scores between the male and female speakers.

Measurement

The Bock scale was used by the subjects, in this study, for a reliable evaluation of the speakers. Research shows that the Bock Scale seemed to have the process of eliminating rating errors which substantially improved the reliability of the scale (Bock, 1972). There are 6 traits that make up the rating scale (Appendix): Organization, Language, Material, Delivery, Analysis, and Voice. The 95 subject- evaluators rate the speakers according to the definition of the trait in the comment box. Then, the rating of the speaker will be scored for each trait with numbers 1 (poor) through 10 (superior).

Insert Figure 1.

SPEECH RATING SCALE

SPEAKER _____

DATE _____

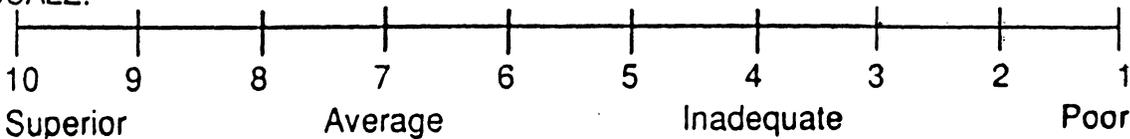
SUBJECT _____

ASSIGNMENT _____

TRAITS	COMMENTS	SCORE
ORGANIZATION: Clear arrangement of ideas? Introduction, body, conclusion? Was there an identifiable pattern?		
LANGUAGE: Clear, accurate, varied, vivid? Appropriate standard of usage? In conversational mode? Were unfamiliar terms defined?		
MATERIAL: Specific, valid relevant, sufficient, interesting? Properly distributed? Adapted to audience? Personal credibility? Use of evidence?		
DELIVERY: Natural, communicative, direct? Eye contact? Aware of audience reaction to speech? Do gestures match voice and language?		
ANALYSIS: Was the speech adapted to the audience? Was the purpose clear? Did the main points support the purpose?		
VOICE: Varied or monotonous in pitch, intensity, volume, rate, quality? Expressive of logical and emotional meanings?		

TOTAL _____

SCALE:



ID# _____

RESULTS

Results of this study prove the hypotheses are correct. The total mean for organization is higher for women with a 9.54 and men 8.72. The language trait had no significant difference (not above .05). The mean score for the males was a 9.44 and females 9.60. Material was evaluated with the mean 9.13 for males and 9.71 for females. Thus resulting women had a higher mean and were better with the use of evidence, credibility, validity and relevancy. The delivery trait had no difference between the mean of the sexes. The males had a mean of 9 and females 9.11, therefore, the voice and gestures match the speech and language. The analysis amounted to the women, in result, a higher mean of a 9.56 in comparison to the male lean of a 9.28. The trait, voice, didn't really differ much with a mean 9.23 for men and women 9.32. The total mean for the 95 students was male 54.78 and female 56.84 resulting that women are rated with a better presentational style than males.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study support the hypotheses accordingly to the past research that has been found. The results from the Organization and Language trait were not anticipated. Past research shows the opposite of the results than what was concluded in this study. The possibility is great when it comes to the increasing differences and changes between males and females. So, it is very possible that the roles and stereotypes effect the differences and the outcome of both organization and language. These roles are important as being a result of the changing sex roles of current society. The notions of male and female traditional roles in culture change as the culture and society changes. As society changes, so do the stereotypes, therefore the roles change. To sum up, communication will change as roles and cultures change. So, it is very possible that culture and society is changing and males and females are sharing more of the same strengths and weaknesses as time passes.

Limitation's

The imbalance of students in the 1310 speech communication classes may effect a different result of the study. The number of females outnumber the males in the

speech communication program at the university. According to Jacklin and Maccoby (1974) assert that the sex mix in the classroom undoubtedly makes a difference in the motivation of students. Furthermore, the grade point averages of the females in speech are much higher than those of males, resulting, a difference of rating and experience when presenting. The classroom make-up may have an effect on the results for there may be more upperclassman. With more upperclassman may mean more speech -presentational experience. This may be due to class registration at the University. The upperclassman receives class choices and/or options before the under- classman. Thus, the upper-class may choose the times that are more convenient, such as, the afternoon classes, where as, the under-class will have no choice but to take the earlier classes in the morning. The time of day and class make-up may impact the results in the study in a different light. A possibility of a different setting, such as, presentations at the park district, may have a different impact than the college classroom setting.

Implications

Results from this study indicate the importance of the differences between genders and gender traits when giving a

presentation. In the future, a different method or structure of teaching speech may be applied more in the realm of 'adaptation'. The Bock scale uses the adaptation in the traits, language, material, and analysis. The females had a higher mean in those traits due to the adaptation. Research has shown that females do have more of a connection with the audience than do males, so, if there were adaptation applied to the trait, organization, the mean result may have varied in a different way. The Bock scale has not been updated since 1990, so it is very possible that rephrasing or defining may be needed according to specific traits on the rating scale.

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