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GENDERED DISCOURSE IN TALK SHOW: A CORPUS-BASED COMPARATIVE STUDY OF GENDERED TALK IN MANDARIN CHINESE

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Gendered Discourse in Talk Show: A Corpus-Based Comparative Study of Gendered Talk in Mandarin Chinese

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINALITY

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Abstract

Talk show, as a product of twentieth-century broadcasting, frequently bring issues of gender, sexuality, ethnicity, race, disability, and age to the forefront, providing a rich context for investigating gendered discourse. According to West and Zimmerman (1987), gender is a product of social interaction rather than an inherent trait. This study explores how gender is constructed through media discourse, particularly within the Chinese context. As Ross (2009) notes, any work which includes 'gender' in the title is inevitably related to power, patriarchy, and culture. This study adopts a corpus-based approach to address these themes, drawing data from the talk show *Behind the Headline with Wentao*.

Study 1 examines how language use differs between males and females. By integrating the stance-marking of sentence-final particle (SFP) in Mandarin Chinese with the attitudinal marking function of prosody, this study analyses gendered language and tonal patterns in association with SFPs, focusing on the SFP *le*. The findings reaffirm previous research, such as Chan (1996), which observed that females use SFPs more frequently than males. In addition, the host was found to use SFP *le* more often than the guests, indicating his controlling power in the discussion and his function as a facilitator, as SFP *le* invites interlocutor to participate. Tonal patterns reveal that guests tend to use more assertive tones, while the host's utterances are more tentative.

Study 2 shifts focus to how males and females are addressed, particularly by the host, who, as established in Study 1, plays a controlling role. Using the T/V distinction model proposed by Brown and Gilman (1960), the study examines the distribution of addressing terms and their reflection of gender bias against women. The analysis reveals that females are more often addressed by their first names (FN), suggesting a sense of friendliness and closeness. In contrast, males are typically addressed by name with titles, emphasising respect, intelligence, and career achievement. Although overt underrepresentation of females was not found, subtle gender bias persists, influenced by traditional Chinese culture and norms.

Study 3 offers a broader perspective on the tone and rime motifs and their role in differentiating gender. Through the concepts of motifs, this study illustrates how the systematically self-organizing system represented by tone and rime motifs distinguishes gender in discourse. The analysis shows that the host produces more words and more

tone and rime motifs than the guests. However, due to the pre-assigned role of the host, his utterance is relatively short, giving more opportunities for the guests to contribute. Consequently, the tone and rime motifs of the host's utterance are also short. Tone and rime motifs are observed to create musical effects that facilitate vivid, fluent communication that also attracts audience attention. In addition, the pitch variation extracted based on the 5-point scale proposed by Chao (1968) reflects more pitch variation in female guest's utterances than their male counterparts.

The findings from studies above also reveal that women have gained more opportunities to voice their perspectives, reflecting the significant evolution of women's societal roles since Lakoff (1975) first observed gendered language decades ago. Additionally, the host, as a facilitator in the discussion, exhibits different linguistic patterns compared to guests, as evidenced by the accommodation patterns and tone and rime motifs between host and guests. These results contribute to our understanding of how language use both reflects and challenges gender norms and stereotypes.

This dissertation explores how gender - encompassing the constructions of both male and female - manifests in different ways in different conversation types, as well as how genders are treated in the context within Chinese culture. Theoretically, it affirms that by combining the stance-marking function of SFPs and attitudinal marking function of prosody through intersubjectivity, gender differences in conversations can be observed through tonal patterns. Moreover, the application of the T/V binary distinction model proposed by Brown and Ford (1961) highlights the asymmetrical use of addressing terms, strengthening the imbalanced power relation and reflecting the impact of traditional Chinese culture. Through the use of different addressing terms, varying politeness strategies are applied, supporting the 'face' theory and politeness strategies proposed by Gumperz (1972) and Brown and Levinson (1987) having distinct applications in Chinese contexts, as evidenced by data from talk show. Methodologically, the current thesis provides a novel approach to investigate multi-party conversations involving gender. By adopting the gender dynamic approach, it was observed that males employing different roles have different gendered performances in the Chinese context. Practically, the study enhances understanding of gendered language use as well as how genders are treated in the Chinese context, offering valuable insights for further analysis in gender studies in China.

Publications

Conference papers:

Luo, X., & Huang, C. R. (2022). Gender-related use of tonal patterns in Mandarin Chinese: the case of sentence-final particle ma. *Workshop on Chinese Lexical Semantics*, 96–107

Luo, X., & Huang, C. R. (2022, October). Gain-framed buying or loss-framed selling? The analysis of near synonyms in Mandarin in prospect theory. In *Proceedings of the 36th Pacific Asia Conference on Language, Information and Computation* (pp. 447-454).

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Presentations:

Luo, X., Huang, C. R. and the HKLO Team. (2019, December 7). Hong Kong Linguistics Olympiad: A Brief Introduction. The Linguistic Society of Hong Kong-Annual Research Forum 2019, Hong Kong.

Luo, X., & Huang, C. R. (2020, December 2-4). Gendered Linguistic Features in a Gender-Neutral Subject Context: A study based on written solution from Hong Kong Linguistics Olympiad Students [Conference presentation]. International Conference on Gender, Language and Education (ICGLE), Hong Kong.

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Dedication

致我最亲爱的爸爸妈妈，感谢你们的爱与一路相伴。

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Talk show in media discourse

Talk show, a product of twentieth-century broadcasting, have evolved in tandem with broad cultural, economic, and technological development. Since talk show usually exposes issues related to sexuality, ethnicity, race, disability, and age, interest in talk shows began in 1990s. The term *talk show* includes various forms, such as chat and celebrity talk. Talk show is a popular and influential form of media that often feature discussions on social issues and current events. Talk show is a focus of considerable public debate and crucial to the landscape of popular television. Shattuc (2014) claimed that talk show became the most popular genre on American TV in the 1990s with Oprah Winfrey being one of the most popular one. However, the popularity is certainly culturally dependent, as evident by the fact that the most popular TV genre is soap operas in Britain rather than talk show. The sparking interest was further fueled by emerging books and numerous critical scholarly works. Some notable contributions include Munson (1993)'s examination of talk show as a cultural form and Livingstone and Lunt (2002)'s exploration of the value and significance of public discussion and debate on television. Women's representation in the media is addressed in Ross (2009)'s work. Although various approaches have been discussed in Tolson (2006), especially the conversation analysis (CA) approach, the corpus-based approach is not explicitly referenced, and gender difference has not been a primary focus in much of the existing work. The book written by Paul Baker (Baker 2004) is one of the most popular books using a corpus-based approach to analyze gender, but the focus is not on conversation. Further corpus-based studies related to sociolinguistics and communication are elaborated in more detail in Baker (2010a) and Baker and McEnery (2015).

The following excerpt is from the talk show *Behind the Headline with Wentao* in Chinese. This short segment is presented to illustrate the general context and topic of

my thesis. The conversations in this talk show involve multiple participants: a host and two guests. It begins with a warm welcome to the guests and is followed by a discussion. At first glance, I was intrigued by the content of their interactions. A closer examination reveals that the host and the guests exhibit different conversational behaviors with the host taking more initiative and the guests providing supportive follow-ups. This back-and-forth question-and-answer interaction, though a basic form of normal conversation, highlights the appeal of the talk show. This thesis employs a corpus-based method to closely analyse the verbal interactions and how gender constructed their identities, focusing on various aspects within the context of the talk show.

Example 1.1.

1 H ：　　今天咱们又隆重推出白发红颜组合，白发是马先生，这么隆重是欢迎咱们的这个玉女掌门人采妮。

Today, we are once again grandly presenting the 'Silver Hair and Fair Beauty' duo. The 'Silver Hair' is Mr. Ma, and this grand welcome is for our 'leader of the fair lady', Cai Ni.

2 FG ：　　没有，没有，谢谢。

No, no. thank you.

3 H ：　　杨采妮，本来咱们应该在香港，但是没想到咱们在北京。

YANG Caini, we were supposed to meet in Hong Kong, but unexpectly, we are in Beijing.

4 FG ：　　反正现在是在这里碰。

Well, we are meeting here now anyway.

5 H ：　　对，因为杨采妮拍了一个很刺激的电影，这个电影是关于我们最感兴趣的性侵犯。

Yes, because YANG Caini has made a very exciting movie, which is about the topic we are most interested in - sexual assault.

6 FG ：　　很刺激，最感兴趣的。

Very exciting, the most interesting topic.

7 H ：　　是，敏感题材，所以马先生对采妮有什么了解？

Yes, it is a sensitive subject. So Mr Ma, what do you know about Caini?

8 MG ：　　就是偶尔看到电视或者电影上，我这了解不是很多。

I have only occasionally seen her on TV or in movie, so I don't know much.

H=host, FG=female guest, MG=male guest

The scope of discussion in talk shows has always been extensive, ranging from daily topics such as culinary to more confrontational political debates. The wide-ranging in-clusiveness of topics, described by Munson (1993) as 'promiscuous inclusiveness' makes it challenging to develop a coherent understanding of the various forms within the genre.

However, talk show consistently involves highly structured normal conversations governed by specific rules. From this perspective, Timberg (2002) stated that talk show 'is the television show that is entirely structured around the act of conversation itself'. Three main features are commonly shared in talk shows, which also guide the study of media discourse. First, as Munson (1993) described, a talk show is a fusion of conversation and interpersonal communication with mass-mediated spectacle. Ilie (2006) expanded on this concept, describing it as a combination of institutional conversation and casual conversation which she termed *semi-institutional discourse*. Secondly, talk show always maintains the illusion of the present tense. Whether live or relatively unscripted, the host plays a pivotal role in shaping the show's flow, employing conversational techniques such as greeting to create a scene that resembles a natural conversation. The talk show is steered by a host who sets the tone and direction, guiding and establishing boundaries for the discussions with guests on air. For instance, the host skillfully uses first-person pronoun like 'I' to refer to himself or herself and second-person 'you' to get the audience's attention, while 'we/us' is used to construct a collective identity. This direct address is a distinctive feature in the talk show, setting them apart from other genres like comedies, where such direct interactions is much more limited. Thirdly, talk show usually involves spontaneous yet highly structured give-and-take interactions, which are related to the concept of *interactivity* proposed by Tolson (2006). However, the disciplinary and theoretical roots of media talk have primarily focused on visual cultural. The study of the conversations within the talk has been relatively neglected in the development of media studies, especially concerning gender issues. This thesis investigates the talk show as verbal interaction, particularly focusing on gender differences. Investigating talk show as verbal interaction aligns with Austin (1965)'s concept of analyzing speech acts by examining how words are used to perform actions rather than merely analyzing the words themselves. Words endow with meaning and power only in socially structured practices and historical situated circumstances (McConnell-Ginet 2020b). Unlike cinema, which primarily relies on visual elements, talk show engages the audience through sound. As Ellis (2015) metaphorically described, talk shows are like 'talking to us', capturing our attention through speech.

1.1.2 Talk show in Chinese contexts

In the Chinese context, several talk shows frequently attract research interests, including *A Date with Lu Yu* 鲁豫有约, *Here Comes Kang Xi* 康熙来了, *Behind the Headline with Wentao* 锵锵三人行 and *If You Are the One* 非诚勿扰. These talk shows are popular not only because their topics resonate with daily life, but also due to their lively atmosphere and humor. While some studies focus on investigating politeness in these talk shows based on Brown and Levinson (1987) model, others compare the spoken programme with its caption (Biq 1993) or analyse the identity construction of

migrant workers through social interaction analysis (Wang 2015). This diversity in focus may contribute to the lack of a comprehensive overview of talk show analysis in China. Mills (2003) challenged the stereotypical notion that females are more polite than males, arguing instead that politeness is constructed through interaction rather than being a simple classification. Mills acknowledged the sufficient theoretical foundation of Brown and Levinson (1987) politeness theory but contended that it may not fully apply to the Chinese context because of different cultural backgrounds. Wu and Wang (2019) echoed this view as they found that positive politeness strategies are frequently used in the talk show in the Chinese context, which contrasted with Brown and Levinson (1987)'s model. Additionally, the use of silence varies between the talk shows in mainland China and Taiwan, even when hosted by the same hosts, highlighting the importance of contextual and cultural considerations. However, research on talk shows in the Chinese context appears to be somewhat fragmented, with limited research investigating gender differences available. Regarding the scope of talk shows in the Chinese context, most existing studies are limited to small-scale dyadic conversations. For instance, Han and Wang (2014) examined the translation of swearwords using eight episodes of reality TV series in Australia. Fu and Ho (2022) conducted a comparative study of discourse markers (DMs), specifically *and*, *so*, *but* by using 2 episodes from *The Point with Liu Xin* as Chinese corpus data. Additionally, Yu (2019) studied the gender-marking derogative term *leftover women* in English news articles, noting the limited results she obtains.

1.1.3   Power of words in media discourse

The media, in particular television with its huge audience share, have the power to perform a crucial function of the gendered framing and gendered representation (Byerly 1999). The history of the feminist movement and development of media have witnessed the changing relationship of power and hegemonic tendencies and women's strive for greater control over their representations (Byerly and Ross 2008). When Zhong (1998) examined the characteristics of talk shows in China, she observed that despite the changes of national reform towards a market economy, the talk shows in the new era retain hierarchical structures where the authoritative figure remains to be the host, with guest speakers playing subordinate roles. The authoritative status is noticeably constituted through their language use. I would like to recall the excerpt at the beginning of this chapter to illustrate the power of words. First of all, the talk is initiated by the host's introduction of the guests. The host introduces the guests form a duo which shows obvious contrast on their appearance. The host addresses guests differently by using a respectful title to introduce the male guest while using an intimate form of the given name, which is modified by a label appraising her youth (line 1). The different addressing forms placed the guests into different power relations, with the male guest being more respected and the female guest having a lower status. The different address-

ing term is actually a reflection of the global phenomenon, which is also observed in feminist media studies (Byerly and Ross 2008). The discussion was followed up with a movie directed by Ms. Yang which the host described the theme of the movie as the most exciting and the most interesting. Satirely, it is a movie which that has been described as the most interesting, where a female is the victim in sexual assault. In 1995, a monitoring project that examined the proportion of women featured in news stories in more than 71 counties found that 'women-as-victim' was the most popular (World Association for Christian Communication 2000, cited in Byerly and Ross 2008, p.41). As a result, women's portrait of being eternally passive and dependent was 'successfully' built and extended through media. The above mentioned are some aspects of the power of words manifested through linguistic devices. In this thesis, I will explore more linguistic devices that denote the power of words on gender. While it is impossible to explore every facet of linguistic influence, the focus is specifically on sentence-final particles, addressing terms, and linguistic motifs. These focal points align with the two domains in language and gender studies, which investigate differences in language use associated with gender and how gender bias is perpetuated through language. Although words have the power to place women as passive and dependent, words are also a powerful weapon for women to fight back.

Gender in media

According to Ross (2009), any book that has 'gender' in its title is inevitably related to power, patriarchy, and culture. Tuchman (1978) published one of the first studies of women's representation in popular media in 1978. Their study highlights women's situation at that period as 'symbolic annihilation'. At that time, women were mostly absent from the media, and when they were made visible, they were often rendered the one to be sympathised and/or in need of men's protection (Tuchman 1978). The gender representation has changed since the development of media products and technologies over the past few decades. Because of the increasing status of women, the description of women has changed, and there are talk show aiming for female audiences such as *The Oprah Winfrey Show*. Ross (2009) explored the extent to which the change in women's roles signals genuine progress rather than the replacement of one set of stereotypes with another. The notion of *performing gender* by Butler (1990) challenges biological essentialism. The changing society is good for researchers to investigate if our understanding of gender difference is still meaningful based on the previous findings. We can make sense of male's lengthening utterances by considering not only the males are still the dominant of the conversations, but also by recognizing that the female's supportive role is remarkably similar to the previous label of 'powerlessness' in Lakoff (1975)'s discussion more than 40 years ago. The addressing form for females in the cross-gender conversations by mentioning their relationship with males is merely the contemporary manifestation

of a historical insistence on women's dependence to males. Women and men's different behaviors - with women using more hedges, such as *I think* and men's dominance of talking time - mirror the more traditional sex-based behaviors we see manifest elsewhere in society. The linguistic behaviors of males and females have often been interpreted through the *Difference* approaches (Tannen 1994; Coates 2013). However, this perspective overlooks the dynamic nature of linguistic exchanges. As Cameron and Kulick (2003, p.57) argue, ways of talking are linked to specific roles, stances (e.g., assertiveness, modesty, kindness, confidence) and activities. These roles, stances, and activities are culturally coded as gender and the associated ways of speaking become indices of gender. Adopting a social constructionist approach to study gender allows for a more nuanced understanding of how linguistic behaviors vary across different contexts. For instance, a female who 'talks like a man' in a meeting is not necessarily identifying as a man but rather signaling a professional identity by performing qualities like authority, confidence, and determination.

1.1.4   Power of words in Chinese

The power of words perpetuates in different aspects. I would like to draw attention to some aspects that are related to gender. Sentence-final particles (SFPs) are a distinctive linguistic feature in tonal languages such as Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean and Japanese. The particles, known by various terms in linguistic literature, underscore their diverse functions. According to Blakemore (1987), SFPs are elements that 'have little or no lexical meaning but provide a predominantly interpretive cue to speaker or hearer', highlighting the functional versatility and social features of SFPs. They are regarded as *clitics* (Huang 1989) and 句末语气词 in Chinese, which occur at the end of the sentence. Examples include monosyllabic SFPs like 了 *le,* 吗 *ma,* 吧 *ba* and disyllabic forms such as 是吗 *shima,* 的吧 *deba.* In contemporary colloquial speech, the power of SFPs can be found in their ability to facilitate the interpretation of intentions and the understanding stance in conversations, thereby enhancing communicative effectiveness. While most modern Mandarin Chinese grammar books acknowledge sentence-final particles as a distinct class of words, their pragmatic use in conversations using a corpus-based approach remains underexplored. For instance, Chao (1968)'s seminal work discusses SFPs from a syntactic, constituent-oriented perspective, yet it lacks empirical data. Li and Thompson (1981) and Zhu (1982) on the other hand, focuses on the communicative functions and emphasises the contextual importance of SFPs but still falls short of utilizing natural colloquial data. Building on these foundational work, there has been an increase in studies focusing on SFPs. Notable examples include Goddard (2005)'s discourse-oriented research, 冯胜利 (2015)'s study on SFPs and intonation, and several corpus-based analyses of Cantonese SFPs by Chan (1996, 1998, 2002). Additionally, Shih (1986) examines in one section of her paper the gender-related use of SFPs as a softener while Yang (2003)

and Yueh (2016) observe how power dynamics influence the use of SFPs. More recent sociolinguistic and corpus-based studies reveal that SFPs serve functions beyond softening language and are not exclusively used by females. For example, a study on Singapore English observed that SFPs acted as utterance-final particles as well as audible commas in formal interview settings (Ling and Deterding 2003), with males using them more frequently when they felt nervous in the interview. In contrast, females use fewer SFPs in this formal setting, indicating their preference for using more prestigious forms. In the Chinese context, most of the previous studies are content-specific on vocabulary use. He and Ren (2016) and Gao and Lee (2017) observed a close relationship between adverbs and SFPs in the corpus data. The multi-function of SFPs presents challenges for second language learners (Xu et al. 2019) and even for subtitling translators (Yang 2022). As these studies indicate, the gender-related use of SFPs varies by context, suggesting that a thorough investigation of SFPs must consider situational variables. Our recent study of gender differences in tonal patterns in association with SFPs lays the foundation for further analysis (Luo and Huang 2022). Analyzing verbal production through the lens of SFPs can provide valuable insights into gender differences in language use. In terms of the interactions between verbal productions and gender, linguistic features that appear to be less situation-specific and less influenced by the interaction's content than lexical choice are selected. We will see more discussion later.

Previous research on language and gender in Indo-European languages suggests a possible universal pattern in the linguistic marking of the feminine, with the masculine form often serving as the generic or sex-neutral one. This phenomenon has obvious implications for giving more power to the masculine form and eventually influencing the person's perception of the ideas and beliefs we hold about women and men and how these values get transformed into the social process. In Chinese, where the patriarchal bias is deeply rooted, men have been the generic form and the cultural code for dominance for a long period of time. As a result, men are always be the standard against which women are measured, both cognitively and socially. Gender is a convert category in Chinese, as the language lacks grammatical gender marking (Farris 1988). In this study, we will focus on the asymmetrical addressing practices that have been observed in various contexts in China. For instance, in family (Cao 2007), at the workplace (Pan 1995), in the academia setting, (Takiff et al. 2001; Ren and Chen 2019) and in the talk show (Tao 2023). Brown and Gilman (1960)'s classic work on pronoun of power and solidarity has profound influence on the field of sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, and the study of language and gender. In a language that has covert gender marking such as Chinese, this work is helpful in understanding the hierarchical pronoun usage. Take the excerpt at the beginning of this chapter as an example. The inclusive use of the pronoun 我们 wo3men2 (we) is a powerful means to establish and reinforce group identities (Hausendorf and Kesselheim 2002), as seen in the excerpt in line 3 and line 5. In addition, because masculine terms are usually the unmarked default in many occupational titles, females

who enter this professions are explicitly marked (Su et al. 2021). For example, Ms. YANG Caini, the director of a film, is likely to be referred to as 女导演 nv3dao3yan3 (female director). In contrast, 男导演 nan2dao3yan3 (male director) is rare because the semantic feature `<+masculine>` holds canonical status in Chinese, reflecting and perpetuating social realities. These social identity terms serve as linguistic windows into cultural forms, revealing insights into the sociocultural construction of gender.

1.2   Aim and motivation

The study of language and gender is a particularly interdisciplinary field within the broader study of language and society. Language use reflects, reinforces, and challenges gender norms and stereotypes, while gender identity influences how we use language. Our language use shapes social interactions, beliefs, and attitudes, which are intimately connected to gender identity. According to West and Zimmerman (1987), gender is a product of social interaction rather than an inherent trait. This study takes us on a journey to explore how gender is constructed through media discourse. The notion that 'the personal is always political' acknowledges that our personal lives are intertwined with the broader political and social environment, influenced by systematic structures and power relations (Ross 2009). Following the two domains that govern the study of language and gender that have been discussed and re-evaluated - differences in language use associated with gender and gender bias in the language (e.g.: Tannen 1994; Crawford 1995; Lakoff 2004). This thesis is given a large proportion of the discussion about gender representations in Chinese context and how they are similar to or different from the previous studies. The analysis acknowledges the contextual and cultural dependencies of gender construction in media discourse. Compared to what Lakoff (1975) described about women's language in English nearly fifty years ago, it is clear that the representation of women has evolved because of the feminist movement and the development of society and technology. However, is it better in Chinese context? As observed in the excerpt, female guest's utterances tend to be shorter than those of male guests. Does the length of utterances serve as a gender indicator, highlighting differences in conversational behavior? While 杨采妮 (YANG Caini)'s involvement might be seen as an indication of increased female status in society from a post-feminist perspective, her language style and the way she is treated in the talk show can also be read as reinforcing gender stereotypes, reducing her power by emphasizing her youth and appearance in line 1. Despite 杨采妮 's career accomplishments, including her role as a director of the film, she is not addressed with a title such as 杨导演 yang2dao3yan3 (Director Yang) which would acknowledge her professional achievements. This could be an effect of the talk show's attempt to humorously contrast the old male guest and the young female guest, but more importantly, it shows a sense of gender bias in the hierarchical addressing practice influenced by traditional Chinese culture. The question-and-answer

pattern observed in this excerpt shows the typical conversational format of the talk show, guided by the host. Despite having the same role as guest speakers, the contradictory behaviors of males and females in this excerpt signal the complex ways in which notions of femininity and masculinity are portrayed in contemporary media. This makes clear the constructed nature of these sex-based renditions and thus the reason why 'gender' appears in the title of the thesis rather than 'sex'. It is precisely the disclosure or even revelation of these constructions that are the principal concern of this thesis, both in terms of making clear how gender - constructions of both women and men - manifests in different ways in different conversation types (i.e., same-gender and cross-gender conversations), as well as how gender are treated with making a few suggestions about why the differences happen in the semi-institutional discourse.

1.3   Outline of this dissertation

Chapter 2 provides the theoretical background for conducting the analysis. Chapter 3 mainly focuses on methodology and data preparation. Chapter 4 considers the gendered usage of sentence-final particle (SFP) in Mandarin Chinese, with a particular focus on the SFP le-formulated utterances. This investigation combines the stance-marking of Mandarin Chinese SFP with the attitudinal marking function of prosody in relation to gender. Previous studies have consistently shown that males commonly dominate talking time in conversations. However, research also indicates that females tend to use more SFPs than males in many, indicating a softening effect on speech. For instance, in the phrase 是真的吧 shi4zhen1de5ba5 (It is true, isn't it?), the SFP particle 吧 ba5 reduces the illocutionary force of speech, making the statement less assertive. The particle *le* is particularly noteworthy as it serves as a marker for *intersubjectivity*, which refers to the speaker's awareness of the addressee's attitudes and beliefs (Traugott 2010, p33), and is used to show politeness and employ strategies to engage others in conversation. Despite the general trends in gendered language use, it has been observed that organizational roles and power relations have a more significant impact on communicative patterns in the workplace than gender alone in the workplace (Holmes 2008). The distribution of usage of SFP *le,* total word length uttered, as well as the tonal patterns that are associated with SFP *le* will be investigated.

Chapter 5 shifts focus to an area more closely linked to traditional Chinese norms, examining how individuals of different genders are addressed. This chapter explores the differential use of vocatives - direct addressing by the host when addressing male and female guests. Naming is a process of categorizing people and things, and when a person is named, personal perception inevitably influences this process. For example: 今天许老师很兴奋，因为听说我们请来一位话题人物，彭丹姐姐，彭丹来了 (Today, Teacher Xu is very excited because we have invited a popular figure, Peng Dan jiejie.), it is noted that the male guest is addressed by his professional title 老师 lao3shi1 (teacher),

while the female guest is addressed by her full name accompanied by a pseudo-kinship term 姐姐 jie3jie5 (older sister) in this example. This practice reflects a cultural norm where the male guest is placed in a higher power position to show respect, whereas the female guests is approached with a term that denotes friendliness and intimacy. The choice of one rather than another can reveal underlying gender stereotypes and personal perceptions of the addressee. Addressing practice is also a reflection of cultural values. For example, the pseudo-kinship term is a popular term in Chinese culture to convey intimacy and familiarity. Such terms are frequently employed in various social contexts, including service encounters between stallholders and customers (e.g., 大哥 da4ge1 big brother) as well as within academic circles among research team members (师兄/师姐 shi1xiong1/shi1jie3 senior fellow apprentice). This chapter explores the frequency and types of vocatives used, analyzing how their usage reflects politeness strategies and power relations. The use of pronouns and gender marking of occupational terms are also discussed. By examining addressing patterns, we aim to understand the different forms of address as well as the politeness strategies employed. Finally, we look at whether gender bias towards females still persists through the use of addressing forms.

A focus on gender classification using tone and rime motifs is the substance of chapter 6. In chapter 4, the distribution of total word length is considered to be a meaningful way to investigate gender differences as evidenced by the result. In this chapter, the focus shifts to the distribution of rhythmic units. Linguistic motifs, which follow Zipf-Mandelbrot models, are analyzed to reveal linguistically meaningful patterns. This chapter investigates gender differences through the lens of linguistic motifs. Previous analysis on gender differences focused mainly on verbal features such as adjectives and pronoun usage. However, these features largely depend on context and may vary in different contexts. Therefore, linguistic motif, specifically tone and rime motifs are chosen as units to represent texts in conversations. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study to investigate tone and rime motifs using conversational data. The connection between language and music is particularly strong in the tonal language (Cheng 1966), this chapter investigates whether tone and rime motifs and pitch variations are capable of distinguishing males and females. Chapter 7 is the general discussion and conclusion of the thesis. Limitations and further development will also be mentioned in this chapter.

1.4 Methodology

1.4.1 Brief description of data

The data for this study were collected from the talk show *Behind the Headline with Wentao* (Qiangqiang San Ren Xing), which is available in the Phoenix Television website. This thesis includes all episodes broadcast in 2013. The programme was chosen

for analysis because of its long-standing presence on air for more than a decade and its significant popularity in China, as evidenced by a Douban rating exceeding 9, a website known for media ratings and reviews[1]. Each episode of the show features a multi-party conversation, with Mr. DOU Wentao serving as the show host and two guest speakers - either male or female - joining the discussion, which typically lasts around half an hour. The topics discussed are diverse, ranging from current headlines to specific individuals or common societal phenomena. The host and guests bring a mix of general knowledge, personal experience, and unique insights to the table, making this programme particularly suitable for gender-related analysis.

Talk shows have become a pervasive media genre, offering rich material for research. However, when considering talk shows in the Chinese context, most existing studies have explored programme like *A Data with Lu Yu* (lu3yu4 you3 yue1), *Jin Xing show* (jin1xing1 xiu4) and *Kang Xi is coming* (Kang1xi1 lai2 le5). These talk shows primarily feature dyadic conversations, typically involving either a host and a guest or two hosts and multiple guests. Notably, there is a scarcity of studies on talk shows that involve three-party conversations. Our study will contribute to this type of data to fill the gap. According to Zimmerman and West (1975), the lack of multi-party conversations in research is partially because of the complexities inherent in determining speaking turns and leadership within the conversations. As a result, existing studies on multi-party conversations often rely on the conversation analysis (CA) approach in contexts of small-scale data such as family dinner and casual conversation among friends. In contrast, the data in my study are more structured and straightforward to analyse, as the roles of host and guest are pre-assigned. The host typically controls the topic and flow of the conversations while the guests hold equal status as guest speakers. This setup provides an ideal platform for investigating gender differences in communication between individuals of equal status. While we acknowledge that variables such as education backgrounds and social status cannot be fully controlled, the following chapters will explore how gender influences communication dynamics in the context of talk shows, particularly within both same-gender and cross-gender interactions.

1.4.2 General method

Taking the corpus-based approach, this thesis aims to investigate unsolved problems in terms of gender in the talk show context in Mandarin Chinese. The research for investigation is within the two domains in language and gender of differences in language use associated with gender, as well as ways in which gender bias is perpetuated through language. For investigate gender difference, a social constructionist approach will be adopted to examine how gender is socially constructed through language use in the talk show context. The notion of 'community of practice' (CofP) will be helpful to understand

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[1]https://movie.douban.com/subject/26100432/

variation between gender groups. As Meyerhoff (2004) proposed, the CofP is suitable for the study of language variation and change. All episodes of the talk show *Behind the headline with Wentao* in 2013 are selected to be a representative sample for the gender talk in the context of talk show. While I notice the shortfall of this data for lacking of the female host as well as female-to-female conversations, I have tried my best to make good use of the data for suitable quantitative and qualitative analysis. For instance, males in same-gender conversations are randomly selected into two groups for equal comparison. Another investigation I will draw in Chapter 4 is comparing the conversation with and without females to see if the presence of females will make a difference on the results. In chapter 5, since most of the addressing terms are made by the host, only cross-gender conversations are selected here for analysis. The restricted number of this analysis also enable more qualitative analysis on the use of politeness strategies. Because politeness strategies are not easy for quantitative investigation, tone and rime motifs and tone pitch will be selected to represent texts for gender difference investigation in chapter 6.

Context is crucial when examining issues related to gender difference because the results vary across different contexts. First of all, because of the tendency toward increased awareness of equality, gender bias may not be pervasive but subtle, as evident in different contexts such as the workplace (Slobin et al. 1968), casual conversations, (Weatherall 1998) and Baker (2010b)'s corpus-based analysis of a range of written genres. Therefore, it is suggested that bias is best studied in the context, especially examining bias in conversation (Kramer 1975). Additionally, because of different cultural backgrounds, the politeness strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) may function differently in the Chinese context. For instance, camaraderie is one of the politeness rules suggested by Lakoff (1975). However, since Chinese politeness is hierarchical in nature, camaraderie may not be applicable from subordinate to superior, resulting in different uses of politeness compared to Western societies. Given the multi-function of SFPs and direct addresses (i.e. vocatives), their functions need to be interpreted within context. Similarly, pronouns are polyvalent, necessitating context-specific analysis. Therefore, understanding gender differences in language use requires careful consideration of the contextual and cultural factors that shape communication dynamics.

Chapter 2

Theoretical backgrounds

2.1 Linguistic gender differentiation

Before discussing the theoretical background of language and gender, the difference between 'sex' and 'gender' should be mentioned first because this distinction influences the approach that will be described in the next section. In the study of language and gender, scholars view 'sex' and 'gender' differently. 'Sex' refers to the biological distinction assigned at birth that differs males and females. In contrast, 'gender' is a category that is constructed socially, culturally, and psychologically through interaction. Therefore, 'gender' is understood as a social category that emerges through interaction (Gumperz 1972). This notion is grounded in Judith Butler's idea of performativity, as presented in his influential work in Butler (1990). Butler's idea has been further developed and elaborated by scholars such as West and Zimmerman (1987), who introduced the concept of 'doing gender'. This perspective views gender not merely as a set of static traits but as a process in which individuals adapt their language to fit different situations. In other words, gendered language is constructed through conversation (Thomson et al. 2001). The concept of gender as constructed through social interaction paved the way for the development of communication accommodation theory (Thomson et al. 2001). Penelope Eckert and Sally McConnell-Ginet further argue that gender is constructed in communities of practices (CofPs) which are groups of people who come together through mutual engagement in an endeavor (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1992).

2.1.1 Dominance approach

Nearly 50 years ago, Lakoff (1975) proposed the profound male dominance theory for gender difference from sociolinguistic and feminist linguistics perspective. One of the contributions of this work is the emphasis of gender inequalities which is reflected and reinforced by language which also mark the females' status in the period of time. Women at the period of time is even not being regarded as a 'whole person' as can be indicated

by some of the specific features that mark *women's language*. Specifically, the features such as hedges, politeness and the use of empty adjectives is suggested to mark females' powerlessness and marginality. These features, on the other hand, also determines how females are perceived and treated by others, especially by men. For instance, women's use of hedges in their language makes them less competent than male which can affect their professional and personal lives. As the first work that explicitly mark women's language, the work is inevitably facing criticism and challenges. Among these criticism, it has been criticised for not based on empirical research and other social factors such as context, class and race are not in consideration to determine the features of women's language listed in the study. Given these, this work is still influential throughout the study of language and gender until now and it is expected to continue influencing in the future. The study of Lakoff (1975) is further supported by Fishman (1978) by indicating the role of women in interaction. According to Fishman, it is women's responsibility to respond to the interaction but never not take, or even try to, control of it. A conversation is considered bad without a female's response and women who take control of the conversation are supposed to be criticised for not 'being a real woman'. For females who take control of the conversation are likely to be called 'bitchy' or 'aggressive'. According to Fishman (1978), there was a boundary for defining a men or a woman that we cannot cross. In his own words, 'we must constantly behave as male or female in order for our gender to be taken for granted in interaction'. Based on Fishman's idea, females' identity is determined by the male's judgment. A 'good' woman is supposed to take good care of the house and children at home, as well as interact in the interaction in which the male is in control. The status and dominance of males are actually built upon female oppression. This seems unacceptable in today's society but we need to based on the context at that period of time.

2.1.2   Difference approach

Later at the end of the 1980s, the difference theory, built on the foundation of the dominance theory proposed was proposed by Deborah Tannen, who was once a student of Robin Lakoff, within the field of sociolinguistics. The book entitled 'You just don't understand - Women and Men in Conversation as a followup for the previous book (Tannen 1987) - *That's not what I meant!*: *how conversational style makes or breaks relations* has saved some issues in marriage by giving more understanding of the different communicative styles of each other. The difference theory not only gives males the excuse for being dominant in the conversation but more importantly, gives women positions of authority to 'speak for themselves'. This theory helps illuminate the issues between male and female communications. According to Tannen (2007b), the miscommunication between males and females was due to the different cultures they are brought up with. This theory criticises women cannot talk like men because they will be judged

differently and harshly. While Tannen mentioned the influence of personal factors such as psychological problems and social factors like political and economical inequity. The main factors for the differences is the different styles of communication.

Comparing the dominance and difference theory, the usefulness depends on how one views feminism. As a work influenced by the second-wave feminist movement, the dominance theory reflects the oppression of females as well as the gender inequality sustained by men while the difference theory has been criticised for being unable to explain the miscommunication between women and people of different power relations. As Cameron (1992) argued, the difference theory obscures the fact that gender is an issue of inequality. Therefore, Cameron (1992) proposed that the focus should be on how gender differences manifest in different sorts of talk between sorts of people. This notion has given the possibility to investigate speech differences between same-gender and acknowledge the feminist theory that gender is not a fix category or monolithic entity. Rather, it is socially constructed and reproduced in concrete practices and activities. This notion is further systematically analysed as 'gender performance' by Butler (1990, 2004).

2.1.3 Post-structuralism

The notion of 'gender performance' proposed by Butler (1990) was built on the shoulder of J.L. Austin's invention of the term 'performative' to describe how people can 'do things with words' (Austin 1965). This notion challenges the biological essentialism and encourages the reframing of the old assumptions based on male dominance which focus on sexism of language showing males' power and females' powerlessness. Instead, 'woman' and 'man' can be treated as internally homogeneous groups for comparison. Because of this reason, it is also possible to investigate the interaction between gender and other identity categories that influence the way men and women talk as well as difference among women or difference among men (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1992). Before Bulter, there exist various explanatory models for the category of sex depending on the view of power towards gender. Wittig (1985) argued that the sex of females is always marked while males are not in heterosexuality. Contrary to Wittig, Irigaray (1991) argued that masculine is the only sex ('always-ready-masculine subject' as described in Sunderland (2006) because of males' power in society. The contribution of Butler (1990) has been in criticizing the gender binary distinction as well as the masculine as the only sex hypothesis. The concerns of post-structuralism has been shifted to how gender is performed, and socially constructed in spoken and written texts which leads to the the notion of discourse. Foucault has a great contribution of discourse and power in his profound but yet hard-to-understand book entitled *Archaeology of Knowledge*. According to Foucault (1969, p.54), discourse was 'practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak'. Based on this definition, discourse is beyond a set of simple signs

but practices that actively shape the objects they discuss. Cameron (1998) defined the linguistic definition of discourse as 'language above (organised in units larger than) the sentences' which highlights the discourse function beyond the sentential meanings. Discourse analysis includes conversation analysis (CA), critical discourse analysis (CDA) as well as some categories of CDA focusing on specific genres such as classroom discourse analysis and feminist post-structuralist discourse analysis (FPDA). Goodwin (1990) investigated the face-to-face interaction between a group of urban black children using the conversation analysis approach. Within this approach, it is possible to present the detail structure and procedures used to build social organization in face-to-face interaction which is regarded as the most pervasive type of social activities among human beings. However, the CA approach has been criticised for lacking the analysis of the culture and common knowledge of both participants in the conversation as well as the researcher who analysed the conversation (Stokoe and Smithson 2001). However, the gender study using CDA approach usually hypothesises male's image as villains while females as victims, indicating asymmetrical power relation (Baxter 2003, p.10). On the other hand, power in FPDA is multiple with females adopt multiple subject positions (Baker 2004). Given the discourse-based types which involved more micro-level of interaction, the above-mentioned approaches usually involve a small number of datasets for analysis. Thus, they are better for qualitative analysis to provide empirical support in particular sociocultural contexts with a range of properties marking the subtitle features.

2.2 Corpus analysis to study gender

Corpus linguistics gained popularity in the 1990s, largely due to the advent of personal computers. McEnery and Wilson (2001, p.1) described corpus linguistics as a study grounded in real-time language usage data. From this perspective, a corpus is a large, representative collection of real-world language samples. However, there is debate among scholars about whether corpus linguistics is a methodological approach or a theoretical framework. Proponents of the methodological view, such as McEnery and Wilson (2001), argued that corpus linguistics is a method derived from a set of theoretical principles about language. In contrast, opponents like Teubert (2005, p.4) contended that corpus linguistics is centered on the analysis of actual language data from discourse. Regardless of these differing views, it is undeniable that corpus linguistics provides valuable insights through the analysis of real language data. Numerous studies integrate discourse analysis and corpus linguistics to explore gender-related issues. Baker (2006) suggested that corpus linguistics, with its vast repositories of real language data, provides substantial empirical support for discourse analysis. When examining variables such as gender, corpus analysis can reveal linguistic patterns that enrich and inform qualitative studies.

The study of corpus linguistics can be approached through various methodologies, commonly categorized as corpus-based, corpus-assisted or corpus-driven. According to

Tognini-Bonelli (2001), a *corpus-based* study uses a corpus primarily as a source to test the researcher's pre-existing hypothesis, where a *corpus-driven* study involves an inductive analysis, where the corpus itself is explored for patterns and regularities without preconceived notions. This methodological flexibility allows researchers to uncover and analyse gender-specific language use, providing a more comprehensive understanding of how gender is constructed and represented in discourse. Through this synergy, scholars can achieve a deeper and more nuanced insight into gender dynamics within language.Examples of these methodologies are illustrated in Baker (2004) work. In Chapter 2, Baker (2004) investigated the dispersion of vocabulary use between males and females in British English. Although similarities often overweight differences, subtle differences within gender groups are observed, indicating the importance of investigating *gender roles*. Chapter 3 of the same work adopted a corpus-based approach to focus on women's language of disagreement in academic context through targeted concordance searches. The results indicates more similarities than differences in terms of disagreement strategies used in female groups and also emphasise the importance of contexts. This study has made the possibilities to use corpus tool to investigate intra-group differences. Additionally, Jaworska and Hunt (2017) adopted a corpus-assisted discourse approach to study gender representation in the British press during different periods around the London Olympics 2012. The corpus-based approach is particularly effective for handling large amounts of data and extracting patterns by techniques such as keyness, frequency, and collocations. For instance, Charteris-Black and Seale (2009) adopted a post-structuralist perspective to study gendered emotion talk in a particular CofP using the corpus tool WMatrix. It is evident that men use 'feminine language' to construct new identities.

In terms of the corpus analysis studies in Chinese contexts, it is evident that the existing studies proved usefulness of corpus analysis in study specific linguistic features such as the use of swearing words, discourse markers, and gender-marking terms. Han and Wang (2014) observed that subtitling from English to Chinese tend to tone down the swearing words using a corpus-based approach. Although this study does not include gender differences, it provides evidence that corpus-based analyses are useful for investigating media data. Another study related to media discourse is the comparative study by Fu and Ho (2022) which compares the discourse markers in TV interviews in China, US and UK. The frequency, position and pragmatic function of discourse markers in three media programmes are compared in dyadic conversations. However, conversations involving multi-party may be more challenging, as indicated in the introduction chapter that determining the next speaker is a challenging issue in multi-party conversations.

2.3 Media discourse and gender

As Munson (1993) reported, talk shows were first introduced on the radio as early as the 1930s, when audience participation and interactive talk radio started to emerge.

It was Donahue who adapted the audience participation talk show format from radio to television in 1967, giving rise to what is now known as daytime talk shows. As a type of media discourse, talk shows became the most popular genre on American TV in the 1990s, largely because of the popularity gained from Oprah Winfrey's programme (Shattuc 2014). It is worth noticing that the majority of the guests on Oprah Winfrey show are women. Several factors contribute to the significance of talk shows in daily life. Informative content, entertainment value and interactive nature are three key features that define the talk show format. First, talk shows are attractive because they provide a wealth of information on different topics in discussion that are closely related to people's daily lives or focus on a person that the public are interested in. Second, talk shows are popular because of their format, which often includes public debate and what (Tolson 2006) referred to as the *performance of talk*. This feature suggests that the controversy and the popularity of talk shows are fundamentally rooted in the pleasure of watching and listening to people engage in conversation that mirrors the colloquial style of everyday interactions. The features of this performance of talk include ordinary conversation as a form of entertainment and humor (Fairclough 1995). Finally, talk shows are inherently interactive, involving discussions among participants. For instance, in political television programme, Rendle-Short (2007) studied simulated conversations in the political interviews and observed the comedy routine that emerged through interaction.

Ilie (2006) provided an overview of the features in talk shows, proposing them as a form of semi-institutional discourse. While talk shows have garnered popularity and attention for decades, research on gender-related issues in this context remains limited. The notion of the 'performance of talk' shows that talk is constructed in progress through performance, similar to the concept of 'performing gender', which shows that gender is constructed progressively through interaction. West and Zimmerman (1987) also argued that 'doing gender' is often a way of 'doing power'. Therefore, when participants are performing gender in the talk show, they inevitably construct their gender identity. In this process, power differences are likely to emerge, especially when people of different genders are involved. Although talk shows, as a popular form of media discourse, have been explored for decades, many existing research relies on a small scale of data using in conversation analysis (CA) approach. According to Gregori-Signes (2000), talk shows were ideal for detailed analysis because they provide consistent and structured dialogue. However, CA analysis usually falls short in limited small data, making it challenging to approach larger amounts of data. If the focus is on gender differences in conversations, it is preferable to analyze more extensive data for broader generalization. A corpus-based approach provides useful tool for handling large datasets, yet it has received relatively little attention, especially in the context of gender differences in talk shows.

Wood (1994) identified three key themes in the representation of gender in media: the underrepresentation of women, stereotypical portrayals of men and stereotypical images of relationship between male and female. These themes parallel the three forms of sexism

in language described by Henley (1987) but apply specifically to media discourse. Media, as a powerful form for shaping and transmitting cultural norms and stereotypes, plays a significant role in reinforcing and perpetuating the gender biases outlined by Henley. One critical issue of gender representation in media is the polarization of male and female roles, and understanding this can strengthen our understanding of gender dynamics. For instance, males are often depicted as strong, authoritative. and intelligent, yet typically portrayed as inept in domestic tasks. Conversely, women are depicted as tender, dependent and attractive, with primary responsibilities centered around family care. While there may be cases that defy these stereotypes, such portrayals reinforce traditional gender roles, limiting the representation of individuals who do not conform to these norms. Therefore, these concepts serves as valuable theoretical lens in investigate whether the media underrepresents women or perpetuates stereotypical male images. In the contexts of talk show, these dynamics can be observed through the interactions between males and females, particularly in examining whether women are marginalized or their contribution devalued. By applying these concepts, we can gain deeper insights into how gender is constructed and performed in media, and how these representations influence broader societal perceptions of gender roles.

2.4 Communicative of Practice (CofP)

The term 'Community of Practice' was introduced to language and gender research by Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992, p. 464). Following Lave and Wenger (1991), they defined a CofP as follows:

> An aggregate of people who come together around mutual engagement in an endeavor. Ways of doing things, ways of talking, beliefs, values, power relations – in short, practices – emerge in the course of this mutual endeavor. As a social construct, a CofP is different from the traditional community, primarily because it is defined simultaneously by its membership and by the practice in which that membership engages.

Holmes and Meyerhoff (1999) elaborated on the concept of Community of Practice (CofP) by outlining its distinctive characteristics, setting it apart from other sociolinguistic and social psychological frameworks. In their work, they discuss the differences between speech community, social identity and CofP, emphasizing the unique aspects of each and the suitability of CofP to study the relationship between language and gender, as it highlights how gender is socially constructed through interaction (Holmes and Meyerhoff 1999, p. 179-180). A key feature of CofP is its recognition of individual differences within the community, where some members are central and others are peripheral. Unlike social networks, which focus on the quantity of interactions, a CofP requires quality of interaction. This perspective is further supported by Cameron (1992, p.13).

Chapter 3

Corpus and Methodology

3.1 Description of corpus

The data of this thesis are extracted from *Behind the Headline with Wentao* which is a talk show featured on the Hong Kong-based Phoenix Satellite Television channel, a popular medium that enjoys tremendous popularity for almost 20 years on air. This talk show was suspended in 2017 and the new programme named *Qiang Qiang Talk Show-World Tour* 锵锵行天下 was resumed on Youku Channel in 2021 with a different format. The topics discussed in this talk show are usually highly problematic and controversial, but widely shared, concerning current issues in the public and in the private sphere, such as social and professional conflict, movies, gender and race, marriage, etc. Mr. DOU Wentao 窦文涛 is the host of every episode in this talk show with equal number of guest speakers. The guests consist of experts and laypeople from various backgrounds from mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and abroad. The conversation types contain same-gender conversations, which involve two male guest speakers (M-M) and cross-gender conversations with one male and one female guest speaker (F-M). DOU Wentao is sitting in the middle, a symbolic position of importance and power in many cultures (Zhong 1998) with two guest speakers sitting on either side in the studio. This seating arrangement also places the guest speakers on either side just like the opponent. The atmosphere in this talk show is more relaxing than the political debate. The 'chat' in the talk show genre is a combination of institutional talk and ordinary conversations which Ilie (2006) refers to as a semi-institutional discourse. According to Fairclough (1995), humor was a design feature of talk shows which thus encourages the use of jocular forms of teasing. The data consists of one-year episodes in 2013 which can be downloaded in the official webpage of Phoenix Satellite Television channel website[1]. There are a total of 115 episodes for cross-gender conversations and 128 same-gender conversations. The total token and words in Table 3.1 are calculated by Sketch Engine (Kilgarriff et al. 2014). Each episode lasts around 30 minutes. The main characteristic of this corpus is

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[1] https://phtv.ifeng.com/program/qqsrx/list_0/0.shtml

Conversation types	Role/Gender	Tokens	Words	%
Cross-gender conversations (n=115)	Male host	169,289	145,573	17.7
	Female guests	154,406	132,775	16.2
	Male guests	147,175	126,557	15.4
Same-gender conversations (n=128)	Male host	180,248	154,997	18.9
	Male guests 1	157,872	135,755	16.5
	Male guests 2	145,496	125,113	15.2
Total (n=243)			954,486	820,770	100

Table 3.1: Statistics for the data in cross-gender and same-gender conversations

that they are natural colloquial language and highly representative of gender talk.

3.2 Data preparation

This thesis investigates *Behind the Headline with Wentao* from different perspectives, making data preparation crucial for the subsequent analysis. As a tonal language, Chinese has the pitch reflection function with each syllable capable of carrying one of four tones (Chao 1968). These tones in the tonal repertoire can signal contrastive meanings of lexical items, such as ma1 (mother), ma2 (hemp), ma3 (horse), ma4 (scold). To facilitate further analysis, transcript of the episodes were downloaded from the website and prepared accordingly.

Original text: 窦文涛: 梦鸽成秋菊了，上访去了。
Word segmentation: 梦鸽 成 秋菊 了，上访 去 了。
Pinyin: meng4ge1 cheng2 qiu1ju2 le5, shang4fang3 qu4 le5
Tone: 4 1 2 1 2 5 4 3 4 5
Tone pitch: 51 55 35 55 35 0 51 214 51 0
Rime: eng e eng iou v e, ang ang v e

The original text 'Meng Ge became Qiu Ju. She went to court' contains both the speakers' identity and the words he/she speaks. HanLP, developed by He and Choi (2021), was used for word segmentation. After segmentation, the text consists of 7 words and 10 characters. In conversation analysis, a *turn* is the basic unit of inter-action, defined as an instance of a participant speaking during a conversation. Since the data are derived from transcripts, full transcripts including false starts, fillers, and other linguistic components are included in calculating the total word counts. A *turn* is further divided into *utterances* following the approach of Hou and Huang (2020). Specif-ically, segments seperated by commas, semicolons, colons, period, exclamation marks, and question marks are treated as separate utterances. The calculation of word counts is based on syllables, which Chen and Liu (2016) identifies as the most accurate meth-

odology for determining the total number of words in spoken discourse. Therefore, the original texts yield two utterances: 梦鸽成秋菊了 and 上访去了. Notably, 2% of the sentences were manually corrected after HanLP word segmentation using a custom dictionary to improve accuracy, particularly for names (e.g, 广美 guang3mei3, 佐佐木更三 zuo3 zuo3mu4geng1san1) and idioms (耕者有其田 *land to the tiller*). After these manual corrections, pinyin, tone, tone pitch, rime can be extracted using Pypinyin (Huang et al. 2024), which is user friendly in PyCharm version 2024.1.3 and well-suited for the data in the current thesis. Particularly, tone pitch is extracted using the 5-point scale in Mandarin Chinese (Table 3.2). The pitch of neutral tone is handled according to Chao (1968). The five-point scale offers a valuable method for quantifying tone and pitch in Mandarin Chinese. The neutral tone following each of the other tones will be labeled according to the corresponding points on the scale (i.e., high=5, half high=4, middle=3, high-low=2, low=1). Foreign words and Arabic numerals are marked as 'none'.

Tone	Chinese Name	Description	Pitch
1st Tone	阴平yinping	High-level	55:
2nd Tone	阳平yangping	High-rising	35:
3rd Tone	上声shangsheng	Low-dipping	214:
4th Tone	去声qusheng	High-falling	51:

Table 3.2: Five point scale of tones in Mandarin Chinese in Chao (1968)

Pitch of neutral tone	Position	Example
half-low	after 1st Tone	他的
middle	after 2nd Tone	黄的
half high	after 3rd Tone	你的
low	after 4th Tone	大的

Table 3.3: The pitch of neutral tone in Chao (1968)

Tone sandhi in Mandarin Chinese has complex morphological and prosodic features (Kaisse and Shaw 1985; Shih 1986). The 3rd tone is characterized as a low-dipping tone with a pitch value of 214. However, this full contour [214] is typically realized only when the 3rd tone occurs in isolation or at the final syllable of an utterance followed by a pause (Cheng 1966). There are two widely accepted tone sandhi rules in Mandarin Chinese:

Third tone rule: $214 \rightarrow 35/\_214$

Half-third tone rule: $214 \rightarrow 21/\_\{55, 35, 51\}$

When a sequence of Tone 3 occurs in an utterance, the whole utterance is not simply applied to Tone 3 sandhi of [2 2 2 ... 3] . There are two main approaches to deal with the tone sandhi issue in Mandarin Chinese. In the direct phonology-syntax mapping approach, Cheng (1973) proposed that Mandarin Tone 3 sandhi is obligatory between words with a syntactic distance of 1 juncture, while deeper junctures in this hierarchical

syntactic structure (i.e. words in the 2-juncture depth or 3-juncture depth) are exempt. Using the same approach, Kaisse and Shaw (1985) proposed that tone sandhi applies when the sandhi pair is on the edge of a constituent (i.e. either a contains b or b contains a in the branch on an edge) (see Cheng (1987)). Using Kaisse and Shaw (1985)'s proposal, the tones in utterance *lao3 li3 mai3 hao3 jiu3 will be changed to [2 3 3 2 3]*. However, in actual usage, *li3* to be changed to Tone 2, a phenomenon that Kaisse and Shaw (1985) could not explain, indicating the need for a different approach. Shih (1986) proposed a prosodic model, the Foot Formation Rule (FFR), which shows a prosodic hierarchy for the application of Tone 3 sandhi in Mandarin. In her PhD thesis, she identifies prosodic units such as disyllabic feet (formed by monosyllabic words), super feet (formed by disyllabic feet and their adjacent units), and phrases. The tone sandhi rule is mandatory within a foot but optional in super feet and phrases. For example, when *li3* changes to Tone 2, it occurs in Cycle 2 in a super feet, where the sandhi rule is optional (Figure 3.1). Therefore, the tones for [[领导]者] ling3dao3zhe3(leader) after applying tone sandhi rule will be marked as [[2 3] 3], and for [吐[苦水]] tu3ku3shui3 (complain), they would be [3 [2 3]].To maintain consistency in the analysis, Shih (1986)'s prosodic approach is applied for the data in corpus. The results were further validated by reviewing the exact pronunciation of the words spoken by the speaker in the video episodes on YouTube. After accounting for the tone sandhi adjustments, pitch variation, calculated as the summation of neighboring pitch differences, can be determined.
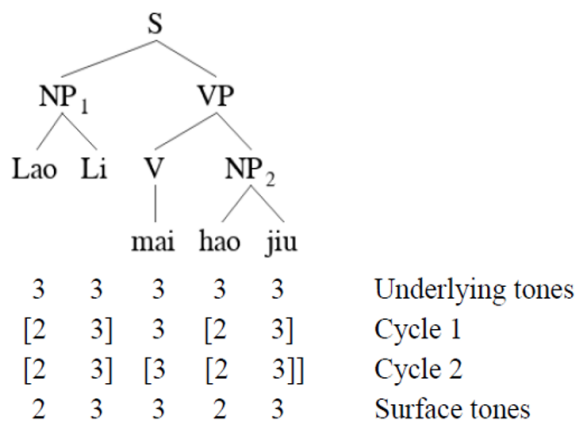
Figure 3.1: An example of prosodic model for the application of Tone 3 sandhi in Mandarin extracted from Shih (1986)

3.3   Methodological approach

This section provides an overview of the methodological framework of the thesis and the specific focuses employed in each chapter. The study of language and gender is an expansive and interdisciplinary field, encompassing a wide range of areas. Given

the breadth of this topic, the primary methodological approach of this thesis is corpus-based. A corpus-based study leverages large datasets, encompassing both written and spoken genres, to perform detailed linguistic analysis. These datasets can be analysed using various corpus tools, which provide the computational means to explore linguistic patterns and phenomena. Among the widely recognised corpus tools, Wmatrix, Sketch Engine and AntConc are notable examples. In this thesis, Sketch Engine is chosen as the primary tool for analysis due to its demonstrated reliability in previous gender-related studies (Baker 2004, 2010a) and its suitability for analyzing talk show data in Mandarin Chinese (Luo and Huang 2022; Luo et al. 2024). The choice of Sketch Engine ensures a robust analytical foundation, enabling precise and replicable results across the different dimensions of language and gender examined in this thesis.

Corpus tools facilitate both diachronic and syncronic analysis, making them invaluable for examining language use across different time periods as well as within specific contexts. Previous corpus-based studies have observed notable differences in linguistic usage between males and females. For instance, Baker (2010b) conducted a diachronic analysis of the terms Mr., Mrs., Ms., and Miss in American English, drawing from a large dataset. The study highlighted the asymmetrical usage of these gender-marked social titles, with a notable decline in the frequency of Mr. and Mrs, as observed through corpus frequency analysis. Beyond frequency, corpus tools also emphasise the importance of context by providing insight into the situational use of different terms. Moreover, many corpus tools such as Sketch Engine offer visualization features (e.g., thesaurus) and statistic measures (e.g., MI score and LogDice) allowing for the clear presentation of linguistic patterns and trends. While conversation analysis (CA) excels in the detailed analysis of turn-taking and other interactional features between genders, corpus-based methods enable large-scale investigations that reveal broader linguistic trends. The studies in this thesis primarily employs corpus-based tools, complemented by SPSS version 27 to provide a comprehensive analysis of gendered language use.

For research investigating language and gender, two main issues are of primary concern. The first is how males and females use language differently, while the second explores how language is used differently towards males and females. To address the first question, Chapter 4 focuses on how male and female use the sentence-final particles (SFP) *le* differently. In particular, after performing word segmentation and part-of-speech (POS) extraction using HanLP, all utterances ending with the SFP *le* are analysed for frequency and total word length. In addition, the tonal patterns in association with SFP *le* are compared between groups in cross-gender and same-gender conversations. The second issue, concerning how males and females are used language differently through language, is explored in Chapter 5. Here, the addressing terms used by the host for male and female guest speakers in cross-gender conversations are analysed. By utilizing the Corpus Query Language (CQL) search tool in Sketch Engine, utterances containing addressing terms are quickly matched, and these terms are manu-

ally categorised to identify whether they are used to address males or females. Chapter 6 approaches the language and gender issue from a broader perspective. By using tone and rime motifs to represent the texts in the conversations, this chapters demonstrates how these motifs, along with tone pitch variation, can distinguish gender in asymmetrical relationships.

Chapter 4

Does Gender Matter? Gendered Usage of *Le*-Formulated Utterances in Mandarin Chinese

4.1 Introduction

Gender stereotypes pertain to diverse cultural contexts across the globe. These stereotypes influence our expectations and understanding of men's and women's behavior and language use and consequently influence individuals' opportunities and experiences based on their gender (Holmes 2013). The stereotype of men as breadwinners and women as caregivers has been widely used to describe the relationship between men and women in China for a long period of time. Females are expected to embody qualities of politeness and tenderness, adhering to societal expectations of being ladylike. Men, on the other hand, do not face the same level of expectation (Jing-Schmidt 2022b). Despite efforts to promote gender equality, gender differences still persist in intimate relationships and in the workplace (Rudman and Glick 2021). As an example, the majority of domestic duties are still taken by women, reflecting conventional gender norms and expectations (Teixeira et al. 2021).

Social stereotypes continue to influence how men and women behave in communication in workplace where males predominate and where masculine standards are valued (Holmes 2000). These stereotypes reinforce gendered power relations and interactional behaviors. Divergent opinions exist among researchers who study the dominance of talking time. On the one hand, it is a popular belief that men often contribute the majority of the conversation and that women speak less in public. This belief has been covered in publications in different contexts by many scholars (e.g.: Lakoff 1975; Fishman 1978; Eakins and Eakins 1978; Swacker 1979; Edelsky and Adams 1990). However, it is also noteworthy to acknowledge other studies offer opposing findings. For instance,

females have been found to be more effective in face-to-face group discussions (Hogg 1985). In online discussion, female students are more active participants than their male counterparts (Aziza 2021). Regarding communication strategies, women utilise more communication strategies than men do, such as sentence-final particles (SFPs) (Chiang and Tsai 2003) and there is gendered use of tonal patterns in association with SFP *ma* in Chinese (Luo and Huang 2022). In fact, organizational role and status have a more significant influence on determining who contributes the most in talk, rather than gender, in the workplace. Holmes and Stubbe (2003) discovered that the meeting chairs usually take the lead in speaking, irrespective of gender. Consequently, organizational hierarchies and power dynamics play a crucial role in shaping communication patterns within the workplace.

In response to the essentialist notion that gender is a fixed characteristic dictated by biological sex, the dynamic or post-structural approach emerged in the early 1990s. Sociolinguists that support this approach view gender as a social construct that is actively created through behavior and discourse rather than a simple binary division of biological sex (Butler 1990). In fact, people whose behavior go against the prevalent standards of masculinity or femininity may face repercussions and sanctions in their local context. However, understanding these 'non-mainstream' behaviors as valid and appropriate may seen as a challenge the traditional norms. Gender also interacts with various other categories, such as age, socioeconomic status, and ethnicity. The choices made by men and women to use culturally influenced 'masculine' or 'feminine' language for specific communication goals or in certain conversational activities are described as 'indexing gender' (Ochs et al. 1993; Alvanoudi 2020) or 'doing gender' (Goffman 1976; West and Zimmerman 1987; Speer and Stokoe 2011). Gender appears to be salient in workplace, as observed in studies conducted in New Zealand (Holmes and Stubbe 2003). Among the widely accepted masculine and feminine styles of interaction, for instance, dominance of talking time, aggressive, and competitive are categorised as 'masculine' styles while indirect, supportive and collaborative are categorised as 'feminine' styles. In the gendered workplace, participants may behave in stereotypically 'masculine' or 'feminine' ways interchangeably even in the same interaction (Holmes and Stubbe 2003). In China, there is a noticeable gap in the research on gendered workplace partially due to the lack of grammatical gender in Chinese, there is a significant gap investigate the gendered workplace. An existing related study in Chinese study can be found in Su et al. (2021).

SFPs are considered one of the communicative strategies employed in Chinese as previously indicated. However, as Iwasaki and Yap (2015) pointed out, a comprehensive understanding of SFPs relates to the concept of intersubjectivity, which refers to the speaker's awareness of the addressee's attitude and beliefs (Traugott 2010, p.33). SFP is called 'utterance particles' in discourse-oriented studies and 句末语气词 in Chinese. These terminologies emphasise the interaction of SFPs in the sequential organization of

conversations and conveying stances such as assertion, doubt, challenge, etc. Therefore, talk shows have provided rich resources to investigate how males and females were engaged in an ongoing process of negotiating and building their contributions and behaviors. These negotiations in talk show as a CofP reflect the communicative strategies in the conversations, especially when people of different genders are assigned in different roles.

The current study compares verbal production in a language that lacks grammatical gender marking. More specifically, by combining the stance-marking of SFPs in Mandarin Chinese as well as the attitudinal marking function of prosody, our research aims to explore the similarities and differences in the le-formulated sentence production of gender (males vs. females) in same-gender and mixed-gender conversations. Additionally, we aim to investigate the impact of female involvement on male performance. Considering the significant influence of organizational roles, we will examine the verbal production between genders assigned different roles (host vs. guest). Our research also focuses on non-lexical component of tonal patterns since they appear to be less situation-specific and less influenced by the interaction's content than, for example, lexical choice.

4.2 Studies on SFPs in Mandarin Chinese

4.2.1 Studies on SFP *le*

SFP *Le* is one of the most frequently used particles in Mandarin Chinese, especially in spoken conversations. Chao (1968) proposed 6 semantic functions for particle *le*, which laid a strong foundation for understanding its usage. These functions were later simplified by Li and Thompson (1981) into a single overarching function: signaling a Currently Relevant State (CRS). They also introduced five sub-categories that emphasise the importance of context in determining the specific type of CRS being conveyed. The five types of CRS suggested by Li and Thompson are: 1) a changed state, 2) correct a wrong assumption, 3) report progress so far, 4) alert the hearer about what will happen next and 5) wrap up a story. It has been found that *le* is frequently used with adjective, such as 高了 gao1le5(taller), 贵了 gui4le5 (more expensive). Li and Thompson (1981) proposed that this usage implies that the situation is new or has been newly noticed. The constuction 'jiu...le' typically marks a changed situation related to general or future-time reference. While Chao (1968) and Li and Thompson (1981) focused on *le* as marking a change or new situation, some other scholars have argued that *le* is related to past events. For instance, Zhu (1982) and Liu (2001) suggested that *le* serves as a marker for indicating past tense. Taking a discourse-oriented approach, *le* functions as a discourse-final particle that marks the end of a discourse unit or the division between topical units (Chang 1986) indicating a shift between sub-topical discourse units. From a pragmatic cross-linguistic perspective, Bisang and Sonaiya (1997) noticed the flexible reference time

of particle *le* and proposed that it operates under a more general pragmatic function of Reference to a Pre-constructed Domain, related to previous situation. According to Bisang and Sonaiya (1997), the effect of *le* is either conformity or confrontation, which is speaker-focused and reflects the speaker's interaction with the addressee. This speaker-oriented notion marks the attitudinal function of SFP *le* and pave way to a more interactive understanding of how speakers use SFPs to express their reactions or attitudes. However, the Reference to a Pre-constructed Domain account does not seem to include the use of *le* in Chao's analysis of past events. Using the 'language-as-action' approach, particle *le* is a co-ordination device, prompting the addressee to pay special attention to the ongoing interaction and to synchronize on the shared common ground (Van den Berg and Wu 2006). In this context, *le* is often associated with assertion and politeness. In line with Van den Berg and Wu (2006), Lu and Su (2023) argued that the particle *le* in Mandarin Chinese exhibits a high degree of intersubjectivity. It has been observed that *le* is more frequently followed by a new turn (i.e. occur at the end of a turn). In this sense, the use of *le* can be seen as an invitation for the other interlocutor to participate in the conversation.

4.2.2   Gender difference and SFPs

SFPs are one of the main aspects of investigating language and gender. It has been well documented that SFPs have softened effects, thus associated with feminine style. For instance, SFPs can be used with rising intonation in *sajiao* performance (Farris 1992; Yueh 2016). It is regarded as a hedging device to persuade customers to buy products in sales talk (Lin 2005). The distribution of SFP usages seems to vary in cross-gender and same-gender conversations. In same-gender conversation, females tend to use more SFPs while males do not have this tendency in male-to-male (M-M) casual conversations (Shih 1984). Using the conversation collected from Bulletin Board System (BBS) sites in Taiwan, Chiang and Tsai (2003) proposed that the convergence in SFP usage between men and women (i.e. men use more SFPs while women use fewer) indicates that they accommodate each other in cross-gender conversations. Apart from gender, role is also important in understanding the gender difference in conversations. In Yang (2003)'s MA thesis, it is observed that people in higher social class tend to use more SFP *ne* than people in the lower social class in Hongloumeng (The Dream of Red Chamber). Moreover, people tend to use more SFPs with hearers of the same social class in this study. For *sajiao* performance in different cultures, it is mainly used by girls but as well as boys such as a little boy in conversation with his mother. As a result, *sajiao* is not exclusive to a certain gender group but is used by powerless participants in conversations (Yueh 2016). While *sajiao* performances occur in a wide range of languages, it is typically linked to SFPs in tonal languages such as Mandarin Chinese. Therefore, it is imperative to take Chinese cultures and contexts into consideration to see how gender

is constructed. The sociolinguistic research and corpus-based research have proved that SFPs are not just softeners but the property of stance-marking functions and the inter-subjectivity management of SFPs help us to get a fuller picture in understanding the stance and attitudinal behaviors of the speakers in conversations. Conversation analysis (CA) further addresses the importance of sequential environments in which SFPs are used in talk-in-interaction. Noting the complexity due to the turn-taking allocation (Sacks et al. 1974) in conversations involving multiple participants, many current studies focus on SFPs used in conversations focus on two-person discussions (e.g.: Shih (1984) and Chan (1996)). Therefore, the use of SFPs in conversations involving more than two participants needs to be carefully scrutinised. SFPs appear to be a valuable tool for examining gender difference, as they provides insights into the dynamics and complexities of communications in a context with multiple participants.

4.2.3 Tones and tonal patterns with SFPs

There are four distinct tones in Mandarin Chinese, each with unique phonetic characteristics. The system of these lexical tones relies on pitch height and pitch contour to differentiate lexical meanings. The 5-point scale proposed by Chao (1968) can be used to assess the tonal pitch, with pitch number 1 being the lowest level and 5 being the highest level. Alternatively, the framework of autosegmental phonology can also describe Mandarin tones. As proposed by Goldsmith (1976) and Yip (1980), Mandarin tones can be characterised by their tones ([+raised] or [-raised]) and register ([+upper] or [-upper]). To be more precise, Tone 3 is categorised as [-upper] whereas the remaining three tones are [+upper]. Regarding tone pitch direction, a level tone is indicated by H which is a level tone whereas LH, L, and HL stand for Tone 2, Tone 3 and Tone 4. Tone 3 and tone 4 both carry falling contours. Therefore, the four tones in Mandarin Chinese are: a high, level tone [H] (tone 1, 55), a rising tone [LH] (tone 2, 35), a low tone [L] (tone 3, 214) and a falling tone [HL] (tone 4, 51).

Apart from the comprehensive description of lexical tones in Mandarin Chinese provided above, the use of SFPs enhances our understanding of the interaction between tone and intonation. Mandarin Chinese SFPs always have a neutral and unstressed tone (Chao 1968). Research suggests that there may be a general conclusion that intonation patterns and SFPs exhibit mutual compensation (Yau 1980, p. 51). This notion is reinforced by Yip (2002, p.272) who stated that SFPs are recognised as toneless carriers for intonations. The acoustic analysis in Cantonese has provided evidence of the interaction between tone and intonation, specifically observed on the fundamental frequency (F0) of SFPs (Wu 2008, 2013; Zhang 2014). Within the framework of quantitative analysis using linguistic motifs, Hou and Huang (2020) have introduced a novel approach to investigate authorship attribution using tonal motifs as categorical variables that can be measured in sequential patterns. This approach has been expanded to investigate gender differ-

ence in the use of tonal patterns in association with SFPs, yielding promising outcomes in Luo and Huang (2022)'s preliminary investigation. Luo and Huang (2022)'s corpus-based investigation on SFP 吗*ma1* and 嘛*ma2* reveald that there is gender difference of tonal patterns in different sentence types. SFP *ma1* is a marker for yes-or-no questions while *ma2* is frequently used in declarative. The results showed that females tend to use more H + *ma* in questions while males prefer to use more H + *ma* in declarative. Nevertheless, further analysis is still required to comprehensively examine tonal patterns in Mandarin Chinese. In addition to the examination of SFPs in Mandarin, a significant amount of research has been conducted on Cantonese SFPs, offering important insights into how SFPs convey stronger or weaker force, thereby reflecting different stances and attitudes. In Cantonese, the abundance of SFPs has led researchers to classify pairs of SFPs that have different tones but similar phonetic shapes and meanings. Law (1990) categorised these SFPs as strengthener (e.g.: 'a'11) and weakeners (e.g.: 'a'13) based on Yip (1980). According to Law (1990)'s classification, the strengthener and weakener affect the utterance to which they attach. Specifically, the strengthener reinforces the idea or conveys a sense of coldness or bluntness whereas high tone weakeners soften the effect, making the utterances more tentative, less aggressive and infuse a sense of warmth or politeness.

4.3   Gender difference in verbal productivity

The existing studies on gender difference in verbal productivity show various results. The verbal productivity can be measured from different perspectives, the most commonly used are dominance of taking time, frequency of interruption, the use of back-channel and laughter etc. While some of the verbal and non-verbal features for investigations rely heavily on subjective judgment or lexical choice, such as interruption and laughter. They neglect the linguistic properties that produce by natural language. The verbal productivity selected in this study is dominance of talking time. In general, males are more talkative than females in different contexts in public speech such as in staff meeting (Eakins and Eakins 1978), in professional conference (Swacker 1979), in political debate (Edelsky and Adams 1990) and in the German TV discussion Troemel-Ploetz (1992) cited in Holmes (1995, p. 33). Using the conversation analysis (CA) approach, male participants post longer messages and greater variability in message length while females produce short messages in asynchronous computer-mediated communication (CMC) (Panyametheekul and Herring 2003). Females are also observed to dominate the floor with tentative language in the high gender-salience condition. For example, the utterances of males are significantly shorter than those of females in the laboratory setting (Bilous and Krauss 1988). The aforementioned research disparities of verbal productivity in different gender can be linked to inequalities in power relations and social status. As stated by Coates (2013, p.116), when social status difference exists, the one who with greater so-

cial status and more power control speaks the most. Conversations where three or more participants tend to be more intricate. Troemel-Ploetz (1992)'s analysis on German TV discussion observes that host plays the moderating role in the discussion so the speech is succinct in order to be courteous. Conversely, talk show guests exhibit their politeness by talking for extended periods of time, indicating their thorough comprehension and active engagement in the conversation (Holmes 1995, p. 34). According to communication accommodation theory (CAT), interactions involving different genders typically elicit more accommodation than conversations involving the same gender (Chiang and Tsai 2003). In interactions involving different genders, women are frequently seen to converge towards male behavior (Mulac et al. 1987). However, convergence and divergence can co-exist in the mixed-gender conversation interaction (Bilous and Krauss 1988). Nonetheless, other studies suggest that the language style of the recipient has a greater impact on language use than the speaker's gender. For example, participants' language use in email communications has been found to be significantly influenced by the linguistic style of their netpals, suggesting that the recipient's language style is important (Thomson et al. 2001).

4.4 Research questions and methodology

The present study utilises a corpus-based approach as its primary methodology to systematically analyse a substantial amount of linguistic data in Mandarin Chinese conversations in the talk show. Nevertheless, this research also incorporates elements of conversation analysis to understand the use of SFP *le* in turn-taking allocation. In addition, a post-structural approach is adopted to explore how gender is negotiated and constructed through interaction. The dependent variables in the current study are 1) the frequency of SFP *le*, 2) word lengths uttered, and 3) tonal patterns in association with SFP *le*. Three research questions will be addressed in this study:

1. What is the distribution of SFP *le* in the talk show among participants of different genders and roles to reflect stance and intersubjectivity management?

2. How does SFP *le* interact with utterance length in the talk show among participants of different genders and roles?

3. What are the gender/role differences in the use of strengthened, weakened and neutral tonal patterns?

SFPs are generally used by women more often than by men. However, communication accommodation states that convergence frequently occur in cross-gender conversations, with females showing a greater propensity to modify their language use to more closely resemble that of men. SFP *le* is one of the most commonly used sentence-final

particles in Mandarin Chinese. Based on the study of discourse and pragmatic investigation, Van den Berg and Wu (2006) has claimed that SFP *le* functions as a marker for coordination. According to the framework of turn allocation model (Sacks et al. 1974), SFP *le* can occur at the end of utterances, but it can also appear at the end of the turn when the conversational floor changes to another participant. As a result, SFP *le* signifies a high level of intersubjectivity because, in ending a turn, it invites other participants to contribute to the discussion (Lu and Su 2023). Given the distinct roles assigned in the talk show setting (host and guest), males and females may have different communication styles and strategies. Previous studies have shown that interviewers, or hosts, usually act as facilitators, resulting in their speech being concise. Conversely, extended speech from interviewees is encouraged, because it shows their understanding and politeness. In light of this, the first two hypotheses in this study are:

H1: Females will use more SFP *le* than males in general but the distribution of SFP *le* will not differ in cross-gender conversation because of convergence.

In terms of the length of utterances, two dimensions of distribution of SFP *le* is examined. The overall distribution of SFP *le* (*le* utterance) is the first factor. The second only concerns with SFP *le* occurring at the end of the turn in particular (*le* turn). For instance, '梦鸽成秋菊了，上访去了' (Meng Ge became Qiu Ju. She went to court.) is one turn consists of 2 utterances. Taking the utterances as basic units for analysis, there will be two SFP *le* while there is only one SFP *le* if turns are the basic units. As suggested by Chen and Liu (2016), character is the most appropriate unit for measuring word length. Therefore, the length of turns and utterances is calculated by syllables. This approach provides a comprehensive and standardized metric that captures all verb contributions, including false starts, repetitions, and fillers, thereby ensuring validity and reliability in the analysis. Taking the two measurements mentioned above, the second hypothesis is:

H2: Longer utterances will be produced by guests who engage in more in-depth discussion whereas shorter utterances are employed by host in his facilitative role.

Previous studies on gender differences have consistently highlighted certain intonation patterns associated with women, such as rising intonations and wide pitch range indicating their tentativeness, while men typically display falling contour that strengthen the force of assertion (Lakoff 1973; McConnell-Ginet 1978; Edelsky 1979; Sybesma and Li 2007). In our earlier work, we combined the stance-marking of Mandarin Chinese SFPs as well as the attitudinal marking function of prosody to study gendered language patterns in Chinese. Focusing on the SFP *ma*, we found that gender influences the choice of tonal patterns and varies across different sentence types (Luo and Huang 2022). Building on these discoveries, the third hypothesis in this study is:

H3: Females will employ a higher frequency of rising tones which is usually connected to a more tentative effect. Conversely, males are expected to use more falling tones which are typically associated with a more strengthening force.

To examine our hypotheses, a three-way interaction between gender (male guests vs. female guests), role (host vs. guest) and type (cross-gender conversation (M-F) vs. same-gender conversation (M1-M2)) is analysed. However, due to the specific design of the talk show, there is a lack of female-to-female conversations, and there is only one male host. Notwithstanding these constraints, we minimise these drawbacks and make effective use of the current data. The details of the corpus are presented in Chapter 3. We will evaluate the male guests and female guests' performance in cross-gender conversations (MGC vs. FGC) in order to compare gender difference. In terms of role comparison, we examine how male guests and male host engage in cross-gender conversations when having cross-gender talks with females (MGC vs. HC). Furthermore, we contrast the interactions between male guests and male host in same-gender conversation where there is no females involved (MGS vs. HS). In terms of conversation type, we compare male guests' performance in same-gender (M-M) conversations and cross-gender (M-F) conversations. (MGS vs. MGC)

Following Goldsmith (1976) and Yip (1980)'s description of tone pitch direction, Tone 1 is a level tone described as [H], tone 2 has the rising contour [LH] while Tone 3 ([L]) and Tone 4 ([HL]) both carry the falling contour. Thus, we further classify the four lexical tones into three strength categories: weakened tone (W), strengthened tone (S), and neutral tone (N).

Weakened tones (W)	Strengthened tones (S)	Neutral tone (N)
T1+SFP	T3+SFP	T5+SFP
T2+SFP	T4+SFP	

Table 4.1: Tonal patterns of monosyllabic word + SFP

4.5   Results and Findings

To analyse the statistical significance and compute the discriptive statistics, Chi-square test and Mann-Whitney U test are used. To verify if there is any significant relationship between gender and frequency of SFP *le* turns as well as tonal patterns, chi-square tests is used, with the Bonferroni Procedure for multiple testing correction. The Mann-Whitney U test, a non-parametric alternative to the t-test for independent samples is used to test the significanct difference for utterance length with gender, gender role and conversation type as the independent variables. All statistical analyses has a 2-tailed alpha level <.05 for defining significance.

W+W	S+W	N+W
T1+T1	T3+T1	
T1+T2	T3+T2	T5+T1
T2+T1	T4+T1	T5+T2
T2+T2	T4+T2	
W+S	S+S	N+S
T1+T3	T3+T3	
T1+T4	T3+T4	T5+T3
T2+T3	T4+T3	T5+T4
T2+T4	T4+T4	
W+N	S+N	N+N
T1+T5	T3+T5	T5+T5
T2+T5	T4+T5	

Table 4.2: Tonal patterns of disyllabic word + SFP

4.5.1   Distribution of SFP *le*

The results taking two measurements by utterance and by turn is presented below. It includes the overall distribution of SFP *le* (*le* utterance) as well as SFP *le* occurs at the end of the turn in particular (*le* turn).

Utterances with SFP *le*

Taking utterances as the basic units, the distribution of SFP *le* is presented in Table 4.5. When comparing the use of SFP *le* by female guests and male guests in cross-gender conversations, we observed that 6.2% of the female guests' utterances ended with SFP *le*, while only 5.6% of the male guests' utterances contained SFP *le*. The result is statistically significant (χ^2=7.529, df=1, p <.05), indicating that female guests used more SFP *le* than male guests in cross-gender conversations. In addition, we observed that male host used significantly more SFP *le* than male guests in cross-gender conversations (χ^2=5.381, df=1, p <.05). However, such difference was not observed in same-gender conversations between male host and male guests. This may imply that females' involvement in the conversation affects males' performance. A further comparison of *le* utterances and roles showed that the significant difference between male guests and male host was due to the divergence in cross-gender conversations (Figure 4.1). In addition, as a result of convergence between male guests and host, the use of SFP *le* did not differ significantly in same-gender conversations. No statistical significance was observed between different conversation types.

Turns with SFP *le*

Table 4.6 shows the interactions of *le* turn and different groups in cross-gender and same-gender conversations. We observed the asymmetrical distribution of *le* between roles.

group	N of utterance	% of Total N	N of characters	% of Total Sum	Mean	Median	SD
FGC	1224	53.10%	12675	54.40%	10.36	10	5.02
MGC	1080	46.90%	10605	45.60%	9.82	9	5.156
Total	2304	100.00%	23280	100.00%	10.1	9	5.09

group	N of utterance	% of Total N	N of characters	% of Total Sum	Mean	Median	SD
MGC	1080	43.90%	10605	44.30%	9.82	9	5.156
HC	1382	56.10%	13321	55.70%	9.64	9	4.895
Total	2462	100.00%	23926	100.00%	9.72	9	5.011

group	N of utterance	% of Total N	N of characters	% of Total Sum	Mean	Median	SD
MGS	2329	62.50%	23610	63.00%	10.14	9	5.135
HS	1397	37.50%	13839	37.00%	9.91	9	4.912
Total	3726	100.00%	37449	100.00%	10.05	9	5.053

group	N of utterance	% of Total N	N of characters	% of Total Sum	Mean	Median	SD
MGC	1080	31.70%	10605	31.00%	9.82	9	5.156
MGS	2329	68.30%	23610	69.00%	10.14	9	5.135
Total	3409	100.00%	34215	100.00%	10.04	9	5.143

group	N of utterance	% of Total N	N of characters	% of Total Sum	Mean	Median	SD
HC	1382	49.70%	13321	49.00%	9.64	9	4.895
HS	1397	50.30%	13839	51.00%	9.91	9	4.912
Total	2779	100.00%	27160	100.00%	9.77	9	4.904

Table 4.3: Descriptive statistics of *le*-formulated utterances

Although female guests produced more turns ending with SFP *le* than male guests in cross-gender conversations, the differences was not statistically significant. However, a notable difference was observed in male-to-male (M-M) conversations, where male guests produced significantly more turns ending with SFP *le* than male host (χ^2=5.611, df=1 *p*-value <.05). This result indicates that male guests tend to invite other participants by using *le* in M-M conversations more frequently than the host. When comparing the use of SFP *le* by males (including host and guests) in cross-gender and same-gender conversations, we observed asymmetrical convergence between male guests and the host in cross-gender conversations, with male guests showing greater convergence than the host (Figure 4.2).

In sum, the percentages highlight an important aspect of spoken Chinese communication in the talk show context - the extensive use of sentence-final particles. Overall, females surpassed males in terms of producing SFP *le*. Particularly in the case of males, they produced more *le* utterances when females were involved in the conversations compare to conversations without females. In addition, male guests had a higher frequency of SFP *le* at the end of the turn indicating high degree of intersubjectivity in M-M conversations. In terms of patterns of accommodation, divergence of the use of *le* utterance was observed between MGC and HC while convergence was found in the use of *le* turn between MGS-HS where females were not involved.

Groups	N of turn	% of Total N	N of characters	% of Total Sum	Mean	Median	SD
FGC	256	51.70%	10323	52.70%	40.32	14.5	58.299
MGC	239	48.30%	9253	47.30%	38.72	15	52.71
Total	495	100.00%	19576	100.00%	39.55	15	55.62

Groups	N of turn	% of Total N	N of characters	% of Total Sum	Mean	Median	SD
MGC	239	45.40%	9253	51.40%	38.72	15	52.71
HC	288	54.60%	8765	48.60%	30.43	13	37.086
Total	527	100.00%	18018	100.00%	34.19	14	44.996

Groups	N of turn	% of Total N	N of characters	% of Total Sum	Mean	Median	SD
MGS	472	65.60%	18221	63.90%	38.6	15	53.88
HS	248	34.40%	10298	36.10%	41.52	18.5	51.71
Total	720	100.00%	28519	100.00%	39.61	17	53.125

Groups	N of turn	% of Total N	N of characters	% of Total Sum	Mean	Median	SD
MGC	239	33.60%	9253	33.70%	38.72	15	52.71
MGS	472	66.40%	18221	66.30%	38.6	15	53.88
Total	711	100.00%	27474	100.00%	38.64	15	53.453

Groups	N of turn	% of Total N	N of characters	% of Total Sum	Mean	Median	SD
HC	288	53.70%	8765	46.00%	30.43	13	37.086
HS	248	46.30%	10298	54.00%	41.52	18.5	51.71
Total	536	100.00%	19063	100.00%	35.57	15.5	44.754

Table 4.4: Descriptive statistics of *le*-formulated turns

4.5.2   Average length of *le*-formulated turns

The following section answers RQ2 of the interactions between SFP *le* and turn length. Similar to the previous analysis of SFP *le*, there are two ways to measure length. One is to use turn as basic units so that we extract the turns with SFP *le*. Another way is using utterances as basic units to extract utterances that are divided by any punctuation. The Mann-Whitney U test is used to assess differences between groups.

Average word length of turns

The results presented in Table 4.7 reveal that there is no significant difference observed between average turn length and gender, as well as average turn length and role. The result indicates that participants in this talk show seem to produce relatively similar turn lengths in the conversation in the presence of a moderator, specifically the host in current study. Comparing the average turn length and roles, it was observed that the average turn length of the host was shorter than male guests in M-F conversations while the host produced longer turns in M-M same-gender conversations. No statistical significance was found for turn length and role (p=.563 in cross-gender conversations and p=.071 in same-gender conversations). However, the host significantly used longer utterances in same-gender conversations than he did in cross-gender conversations (p <.05). A further investigation of average turn length and conversation types showed

	Groups	Frequency	%	χ^2	df	*p* value
le utterance * gender	FGC	1224	6.20%	7.529	1	.006
	MGC	1080	5.60%			
le utterance * role	MGC	1080	5.60%	5.381	1	.02
	HC	1382	6.10%			
	MGS	2329	5.80%	0.336	1	.562
	HS	1397	5.70%			
le utterance * type	MGC	1080	5.60%	1.171	1	.279
	MGS	2329	5.80%			
	HC	1382	6.10%	3.799	1	.051
	HS	1397	5.70%			

Table 4.5: *le* utterance*groups crosstabulation

	Groups	Frequency	%	χ^2	df	*p* value
le turn * gender	FGC	256	7.70%	0.199	1	.655
	MGC	239	7.50%			
le turn * role	MGC	239	7.50%	0.573	1	.449
	HC	288	7.00%			
	MGS	472	8.20%	5.611	1	.018
	HS	248	6.90%			
le turn * type	MGC	239	7.50%	1.554	1	.213
	MGS	472	8.20%			
	HC	288	7.00%	0.055	1	.815
	HS	248	6.90%			

Table 4.6: *le* turn*groups crosstabulation

host's divergence in M-F conversations while male guests did not differ in M-F and M-M conversations (Figure 4.3).

Average word length of utterances

By employing the approach in Hou and Huang (2020), which divides the segments between commas, semicolons, colons, period, exclamation marks, and question marks, interactions between average utterance length, gender, and conversation types were observed. The Mann-Whitney U test result on average utterance length by words revealed a significant difference between male and female guests in cross-gender conversations (*p*=.001). The result indicated that females produced longer average utterance length than male guests in these conversations. Comparing the average utterance length across gender roles, no significant difference was found between male guests and the host in either M-M or M-F conversations (Figure 4.4). However, when comparing different between conversation types, it was observed that male guests' utterance was substantially longer in M-M conversations than in M-F conversations (*p*=.019), indicating that male guests tended to talk more when females were not involved. In contrast, the host

Figure 4.1: Frequency of *le* utterances produced by male guests and host in same- and cross-gender conversations

did not show any significant difference in utterance length between same-gender and cross-gender conversations. A comparison of average utterance length across conversation types showed both male guests and the host used shorter utterances in M-F conversations, but only the male guests' convergence was statistically significant (p=.019) (Figure 4.3).

To summarise, when turns are used as the basic unit of measurement, it was found that guests contribute comparatively equal in conversations, as evidenced by similar average turn lengths. In contrast, in M-F conversations, female guests produce longer utterances than male guests, indicating that male guests do not dominate the talking time. When comparing the performance of male guests in M-F and M-M talks, it becomes apparent that they generate shorter utterances in cross-gender talks, while longer utterances are observed in M-M conversations.

4.5.3   SFP *le* and tonal patterns

Despite the tonal variants imposed by tone, some tonal patterns that are associated with intonation can be discerned, especially in the case of sentence-final particles. We not only focus of the SFP *le* at the end of the turn but also cover all utterances ending with SFP *le*. Therefore, the following section extracts the tonal patterns in association with SFP *le* to see if we can observe any tonal pattern differences in each group. Chi-square Goodness of Fit tests were used to investigate the different tonal patterns used across
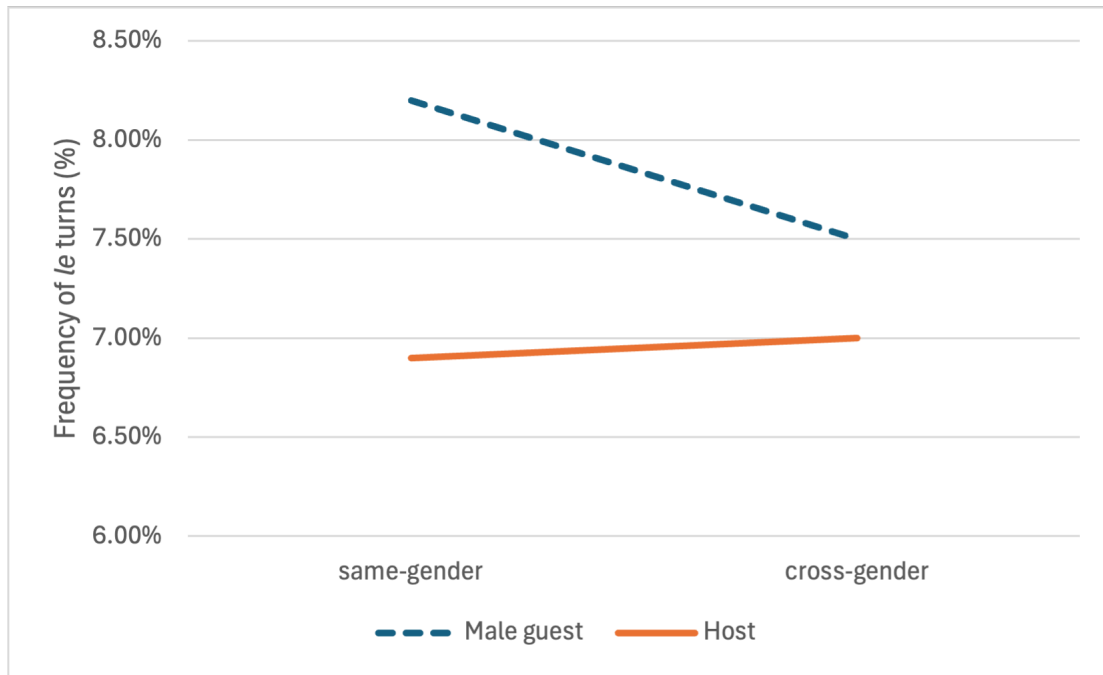
Figure 4.2: Frequency of *le*-formulated turns uttered by male guests and host in same- and cross-gender conversations

groups in cross-gender and same-gender conversations on each tonal pattern, weaken and strengthen tonal patterns of monosyllabic as well as disyllabic tones. All analyses were tested using an alpha level of .05.

Table 4.9 presents the results obtained using the chi-square statistic to determine the significance of the relationships. A chi-square test comparing the monosyllabic tonal patterns with SFP *le* in different groups, using turn as basic units, did not yield significant differences. However, the results using utterances as basic units showed statistical significance. As can be seen, male guests and the host in cross-gender conversations differed significantly (p=.01) while no significant difference was observed in the same-gender conversations (p=.586). More detailed tonal patterns can be found in Table 7.1 and Table 7.2 in the appendices. In Table 7.1, male guests and the host in cross-gender conversation differed in T1T5 and T4T5 tonal patterns. The host used a higher proportion of high-level T1 (20.1%) than male guests (16.7%) prior to SFP *le*, while male guests used more falling tone T4 (42.3%) than the host (35.7%) before SFP *le*. In addition, 42.3% of the tonal patterns in male guests involved T4 preceding SFP *le*, which was significantly different from the 36.8% of T4 used by male guests in M-M conversations, as shown in Table 7.2. Although there are several potential explanations for these tonal rates (e.g., declination mechanism in the sentence, significant bias in the word choice in conversations, gender/role-related use SFP *le*), the data presented here provide no further information that bears directly addresses these possibilities.

Therefore, we further classified the tonal patterns into strengthened tonal pattern (S),

	Groups	N	Mean	SD	*p* value (2-tailed)
le turn * gender	FGC	256	40.32	58.299	.914
	MGC	239	38.72		
le turn * role	MGC	239	38.72	52.71	.563
	HC	288	30.43		
	MGS	472	38.6	53.88	.071
	HS	248	41.52		
le turn * type	MGC	239	38.72	52.71	.751
	MGS	472	38.6		
	HC	288	30.43	37.086	.04
	HS	248	41.52		

Table 4.7: Mann-Whitney U test statistics for average word length by turn
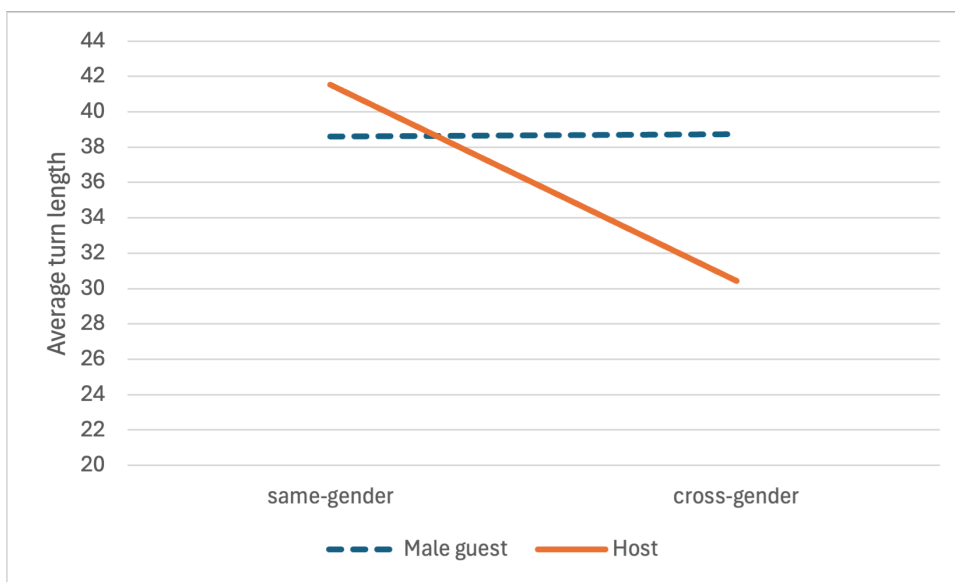
Figure 4.3: Average turn length uttered by male guests and host in same- and cross-gender conversations

weakened tonal pattern (W), and neutral tonal pattern (N). Table 4.10 presents the chi-square results and S/W/N types of tonal patterns in association with monosyllabic tones. Most studies focusing on gender-related use of strengthened or weakened tones have found that gender is an important determinant that may explain the difference between strengthened and weakened tones. Females tend to use weak tones, characterised as more tentative, while males tended to use more strengthened tones, which involve more assertive effect (Lakoff 1973; McConnell-Ginet 1978). However, in our study, statistical significance was indicated by role rather than by gender. Interestingly, the results based on role showed differences, as evidenced by the chi-square test result ($\chi^2 = 9.958$, *p* <.05). The most commonly used tonal pattern was the strengthened tonal pattern for both groups. Two types of tonal patterns showed significant differences (Table 7.3): in

	Groups	N	Mean	SD	*p* value (2-tailed)
le utterance * gender	FGC	1224	10.36	5.02	.001
	MGC	1080	9.82	5.156	
le utterance * role	MGC	1080	9.82	5.156	.672
	HC	1382	9.64	4.895	
	MGS	2329	10.14	5.135	.233
	HS	1397	9.91	4.912	
le utterance * type	MGC	1080	9.82	5.156	.019
	MGS	2329	10.14	5.135	
	HC	1382	9.64	4.895	.09
	HS	1397	9.91	4.912	

Table 4.8: Mann-Whitney U test statistics for average word length by utterance

Tonal patterns of monosyllabic tone + SFP *le* (turn as basic unit)		χ^2	df	*p* value
Tonal pattern * gender	FGC-MGC	0.681	4	.954
Tonal pattern * role	MGC-HC	4.044	4	.4
	MGS-HS	3.608	4	.462
Tonal pattern * type	MGC-MGS	3.751	4	.441
	HC-HS	0.45	4	.978

Tonal patterns of monosyllabic tone + SFP *le* (utterance as basic unit)		χ^2	df	*p* value
Tonal pattern * gender	FGC-MGC	3.385	4	.496
Tonal pattern * role	MGC-HC	13.337	4	.01
	MGS-HS	2.832	4	.586
Tonal pattern * type	MGC-MGS	10.023	4	.04
	HC-HS	0.4	4	.982

Table 4.9: Chi-square tests results for tonal patterns of monosyllabic one + SFP *le*

weakened tones, the host accounted for 43.4%, which was significantly different from male guests (38.00%); in strengthened tones, the tonal pattern also showed significant difference, with the host (53.7%) using S tonal pattern significantly less than male guests (59.9%). No significant difference was observed for N tonal pattern. Such differences were not observed in disyllabic tonal patterns (Table 4.11).

In conclusion, we noticed role differences in the use of tonal patterns. In particular, male guests tend to employ more strengthened tones, especially T4 (falling tone) preceding SFP *le*, when females are involved in the conversations. In contrast, the host employs more weakened tones, particularly Tone 1 (high level) before SFP *le*. The hypothesis that females use more tentative tones while males use more assertive tones is not supported by our analysis.
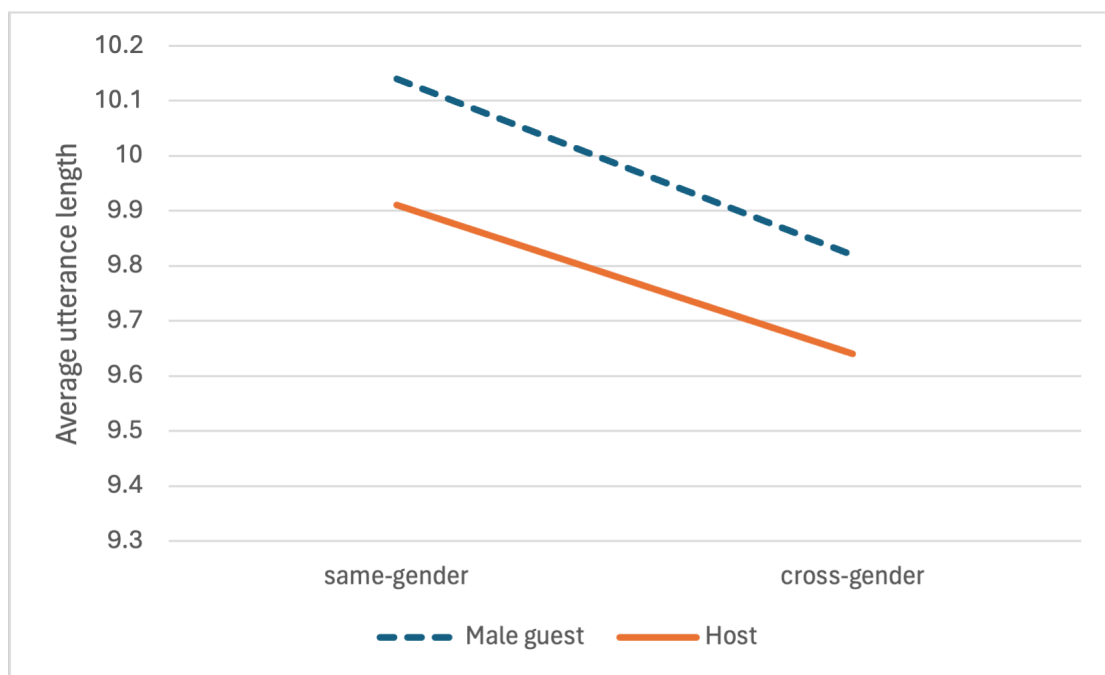
Figure 4.4: Average utterance length uttered by male guests and host in same- and cross-gender conversations

4.6   Discussion

4.6.1   Gendered use of SFP *le*

The overall distribution of SFP *le* in the current study aligns with the distribution observed in previous studies. The hypothesis that females use more SFP *le* than males in gender but the distribution of SFP *le* will not differ in cross-gender conversation because of convergence is partially confirmed. Consistent with previous studies, the distribution of SFP *le* used by different gender groups in the cross-gender conversation demonstrates a higher utilization rate of SFP *le* by females compared to males. Additionally, when females are involved in conversations, there is a tendency for the host to use more SFP *le* frequently. The use of SFP *le* by host serves as an indication of employing SFP as a strategy in the conversation. Under the framework of CAT, it also implies that host adjusts his language style when females are involved in the conversation.

Lu and Su (2023) have noted that SFP *le* has a high degree of intersubjectivity which commonly leads to their occurrence at the end of the turn where the floor changes occur. In contrast to Lu and Su (2023)'s finding where they observe a higher frequency of SFP *le* appearing at the end of the turn, our results show that there are more SFP *le* appear within a turn rather than at the end of the turn (i.e. more *le* utterances than *le* turn) in our data. The different results may be due to the different lengths of conversation as well as different conversation genres. Further investigation on the use of *le* turn revealed that

Strength of tonal patterns of monosyllabic tone + SFP le (turn as basic unit)				
		χ^2	df	*p* value
Strength of tonal pattern * gender	FGC-MGC	0.024	2	.988
Strength of tonal pattern * role	MGC-HC	3.522	2	.172
	MGS-HS	2.99	2	.224
Strength of tonal pattern * type	MGC-MGS	1.832	2	.4
	HC-HS	0.173	2	.917

Strength of tonal patterns of monosyllabic tone + SFP le (utterance as basic unit)				
		χ^2	df	*p* value
Strength of tonal pattern * gender	FGC-MGC	0.579	2	.749
Strength of tonal pattern * role	MGC-HC	9.958	2	.007
	MGS-HS	2.001	2	.368
Strength of tonal pattern * type	MGC-MGS	5.854	2	.054
	HC-HS	0.052	2	.975

Table 4.10: Chi-square tests results for the strength of tonal patterns of monosyllabic one + SFP *le*

male guests exhibit a higher degree of intersubjectivity in M-M conversations in which they proportionally use more *le* turn than host. However, no such difference is observed in M-F conversations. Two examples in the M-M conversations are shown below:

Example 4.1.

Discussing how to create stories in Xiangsheng

MG1： 对，现场的临时的反应，再有一个就是抽象思维，就按他想的东西你能再延伸一步想下去就这个。

Yes, a temporary reaction on the spot and then there's the abstract thought where you can go one step further and think about what he is thinking and that's it.

MG2： 整个画面就出来了。

The whole picture comes out.

Example 4.2.

Strength of tonal patterns of disyllabic tone + SFP le (turn as basic unit)				
		χ^2	df	p value
Strength of tonal pattern * gender	FGC-MGC	3.387	7	.847
Strength of tonal pattern * role	MGC-HC	6.681	7	.463
	MGS-HS	8.508	7	.29
Strength of tonal pattern * type	MGC-MGS	8.095	7	.324
	HC-HS	6.462	7	.487

Strength of tonal patterns of disyllabic tone + SFP le (utterance as basic unit)				
		χ^2	df	p value
Strength of tonal pattern * gender	FGC-MGC	3.433	8	.904
Strength of tonal pattern * role	MGC-HC	15.1	8	.057
	MGS-HS	9.444	8	.306
Strength of tonal pattern * type	MGC-MGS	9.555	8	.298
	HC-HS	3.403	8	.907

Table 4.11: Chi-square tests results for the strength of tonal patterns of disyllabic one + SFP *le*

> *Discussing a movie that won the Best Foreign Film award*
> MG1:   太俗了。
>   Too vurlgar.
> MG2:   这个有点太过分了。
>   This is going a little too far.
> MG1:   太三俗了。
>   It is too vulgar.
> H: 为了搞笑。
>   Just for laughs.

When discussing the story creation using abstract thinking in Xiangsheng (Example 4.1), it is observed that male guests use SFP *le* to show how he extended the story with quick abstract thinking based on his partner's information. SFP *le* is used with the conjunction *jiu4* ('then') indicating a subsequent new situation and co-occur with resultative construction *chulai*('come out') and *le*. In Example 2, guests and host constantly use SFP *le* with stative verb *su2*('vulgar'), *san1su2*('vulgar'). They can take up the adverb *tai4* ('too') to index a state of affairs in a comparative way. An interesting finding is shown in M-M conversations where male guests use more *le* than host while no difference is observed in M-F conversations. Male guests seem to have higher degree of intersubjectivity than male host to invite interlocutors to participate in the conversations in same-gender conversations. The use of SFP *le* to end a turn can be seen as a polite strategy because they invite participants to join the discussion. The findings here highlight the importance of investigating role in different gender groups to better

understand the relationship between the use of SFPs and gender due to different roles assigned in various contexts.

In terms of the accommodation patterns, both convergence and divergence are observed when comparing the performance of male guests and host across types of interactions. Notably, the frequency of SFP *le* shows a pattern of mutual divergence in cross-gender (M-F) conversation, with the host using SFP *le* more frequently than the male guests. This mutual divergence aligns with the concept of 'speech complementary' according to CAT (Dragojevic et al. 2016). The host's increased use of SFP *le* in cross-gender interactions can be seen as an effort to retain his communicative style as the show host, while the male guests may feel the need to assert their opinions more firmly, resulting in a distinct speech pattern. This 'speech maintenance' (see Burgoon et al. (2017) for more details) emphasises the role assigned to each participant in the talk show, with the host maintaining a consistent linguistic style to assert his authority, while the male guests adopt a divergent style to distinguish their contributions. In addition, when examining the use of turns ending in SPF *le*, a form of convergence is observed, with male guests using fewer such turns in cross-gender conversations. This convergence may suggest a shift towards a more aggressive and less polite interaction style when females are involved, potentially indicating a more competitive or confrontational dynamic in these exchanges.

4.6.2 Length of *le*-formulated turns

Using turns as the basic unit, we have observed the importance of the role of the host in the conversation in the talk show. The role of the host plays a crucial part in the conversation as he possesses greater control over the discussion. Every participant exhibits a similar proportion of time to contribute to the discussion, resulting in the absence of significance. Under the moderation of the host, we have observed similar total words uttered in different groups. However, the only significant difference is observed between the host's performance in cross-gender and same-gender conversations. One possible explanation may be the different power relations between the host and guests in the talk show, giving the host more freedom in his speech. The high amount of total turns for the host is undoubtedly due to the fact that the host takes the facilitative and supportive role and has control over the conversations to select the next speaker in comparison to male guests.

Using utterances as the basic unit for analysis, we have observed gender and role differences in conversations. While the total word length is controlled, guests have more freedom to take control of what to say within a certain time. On average, female guests speak more words per turn than male guests. This finding contradicts previous findings such as Holmes (1992), which identified an opposite trend that females are less talkative in public speech. The disparity can be explained by the 'speech complementary' of FGC

and MGC's communicative styles. According to the communication accommodation theory, successful communication requires a delicate balance between convergence and divergence (Burgoon et al. 2017). The divergence occurring in the host's speech when he uses shorter utterances in cross-gender conversations shows his politeness and thus gives more chances for guest speakers to speak. In addition, female guests adjust their styles more than men which has been witnessed by the amount of words. Women speak more words in the cross-gender and it shows their accommodation of speaking style in the cross-gender conversations. Therefore, the hypothesis that guests produce longer utterances while host produces shorter utterances is confirmed.

Example 4.3.
> *The host is showing closeness to the female guest that they have something in common.*

H: 幼婷，今天我跟幼婷有共同话题了。

> I have something in common with Youting today.

FG: 对。

> Yes.

Example 4.4.
> *The male guest is inviting the female guest to contribute to the discussion.*

MG: 不知道徐坤怎么看。

> What do you think, Xu Kun?

In Example 4.3, the host addressed the next speaker as a strategy to get female guests involved in the discussion politely using a sentence ending in SFP *le*. At the same time, the guest speaker also has opportunities to select the next speaker as indicated in Example 4.4 without using SFP *le*. Since the issue of addressing will be mentioned in the next chapter, more details will be discussed later.

4.6.3   Gendered Use of Tonal patterns of SFP *le*

In Chinese, tone has played the role of intonation. When a SFP is presented at the end of the utterance, the intonation pattern is closely associated with the SFP. Both rising and falling tones are integral components of SFPs, as noted by Chao (1968).

Comparing the monosyllabic tone preceding to SFP *le*, the most frequently used tone in the preceding position of SFP *le* is Tone 4 while Tone 5 is the least frequently used one. Actually, Tone 4 has been observed as the most frequently used tone in many different contexts, such as in prose (Hou and Huang 2020), casual speech and journalistic speech (Wu et al. 2023). There are some possible explanations for this phenomenon. One is

the robust declination mechanism in speech, in which the register of the sentence tends to start relatively higher and end at a lower level. For example: 按照你这个讲法印度吃东西都很安全，他什么都丢江上去了. '*According to what you said, the food in India is safe to eat, even though they threw everything into the river*'. With the tone that ends in Tone 4, the SFP *le* will be influenced by the falling Tone 4, and the intonation of the sentence ends low. Another possible explanation is the strength of the utterances expressed by the tonal pattern. In this study, we distinguish T1 and T2 as weakened tones and T3 and T4 as strengthened tones and the results show that strengthened tone is more frequently used than weakened tones. Since experts and lay people are invited to the talk show as guests to share their opinions, it is common to encounter confrontation and conflicting viewpoints. Strengthened tones, which imply a more aggressive effect, are more common than weakened tones with SFP *le*. By using strengthened tones, guests can increase their persuasiveness, making their utterance more convincing. For example:

Example 4.5.

    Discussing what happened in history

MG: 现代华人的历史教育里面，我们不断强调什么？百年国耻，这是在耻辱记忆。

      What do we constantly emphasise in modern Chinese history education? A hundred years of national humiliation. It is a memory of shame.

FG   你说的太对了。

      Yes, I totally agree with you.

In the above Example 4.5, the female guest used adverb *tai* ('too') and an adjective *dui* ('correct') to make agreement with the previous statement. The female uses strengthened tones to express a masculine assertive statement to show her agreement.

4.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, the SFP *le* is used to investigate how gender is constructed in Mandarin Chinese, a language that lacks grammatical gender marking. Our findings indicate that organizational roles and power relations play a crucial role in shaping communication patterns within the talk show as a CofP. The results not only align with previous research but also offer new insights from our analysis. The distribution of usage of SFP *le*, total word lengths uttered as well as the tonal patterns that are associated with SFP *le* were investigated. First of all, the distribution of SFP *le* is consistent with the previous findings, indicating that females use more SFPs than males. As a marker of intersubjectivity, the use of SFP *le* turn demonstrates politeness and a strategy to engage interlocutors in discussions. In this context, male guests tend to be more polite in

M-M conversations than those in M-F conversations. Secondly, our results show that males do not dominate speaking time in M-F conversations in our data. Using turns as basic units, it was observed that the host's turns are more flexible in length, while guests generate turns of comparatively equal in length. When examining utterances as fundamental units, it was shown that females produce significantly longer utterances than male guests. Thirdly, our analysis on tonal patterns further strengthens the existence of gender difference in tonal selections. As a marker of requesting coordination, the tonal patterns of utterances ending with SFP *le* are assertive, often featuring strengthened tones (L tones). Regarding gender difference, we observed that the host uses more weakened tones than the guests in cross-gender conversations, indicating that guests' utterances are more assertive in sharing their opinions in discussion, while the host takes a less assertive, more moderate role to facilitate the discussion.

By applying the gender dynamic approach and communication accommodation theory, we have a better understanding of the interplay between gender and role in communication. The use of SFPs is not merely a softener. The use of SFP *le* demonstrates how guests construct their role as polite and fully engaged participants, while the host uses SFP *le* to fullfill a facilitative role in the conversation in this study. When comparing the accommodation patterns, we observe a delicate balance between convergence, which demonstrates a willingness to communicate, and divergence, which maintains group identity. In our data, females are performing masculine style by producing longer sentences and dominating talking time in cross-gender conversations. This behavior is contextually appropriate in the talk show setting, where both experts and lay people are invited to share their opinions, making individual identity crucial in representing one's point of view. This study has implications on understanding the gender difference in cross-gender and same-gender conversations in the talk show context in Mandarin Chinese.

By integrating the stance-marking of Mandarin Chinese SFPs with the attitudinal marking function of prosody, Luo and Huang (2022) observed that there is gender difference in tonal patterns associated with the use of SFP *ma*, which functions as a marker for the yes-or-no questions. Similarly, SFP *le*, a coordination device, also exhibits gender differences in tonal usage. Due to their distinct pragmatic functions, sentences with SFP *le* tend to be more assertive than sentences with SFP *ma* and their tonal patterns may vary depending on the sentence types. For instance, consider the following sentences 1) 她弟弟知情吗？(Does her brother know?) 2) 今天李艾来了 (Ai Li is with us today.). In the first example, it is a yes-or-no question seeking an answer while in the second example, *le* is used by the host to draw attention to the guest's presence, emphasizing the significance of the moment. Further possible studies could expand on the analysis by comparing the usage of additional SFPs across a wider range of contexts, providing further insights into gendered language patterns in Mandarin Chinese.

Chapter 5

How are we addressed?
Analyzing the Gendered Power
Dynamics in Addressing
Practices: A Corpus-based
Approach

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, we examined how individuals of different gender speak. In this chapter, we shift our focus on how individuals of different genders are addressed. Addressing is the product of communication that exist only in interaction. Different from *referring,* which simply identifies the person mentioned in the utterance, *addressing* assigns specific labels to the addressee, placing them into certain categories. *direct addressing,* also named *vocative,* is term of direct address to call persons (Chao 1956). The study of addressing provides significant insights of power dynamics, intimacy relations and gender differences (Wolfson and Manes 1979; Wierzbicka 1991; McConnell-Ginet 2020a). The addressing issues have been studied for decades with different focuses. Many scholars have investigated the factors that determine appropriate terms for addressing, considering various options to identify the most suitable forms. Age, gender, status, and other social factors are commonly observed as key determinants in choosing the addressing forms. However, the determiner seem to vary in written and spoken discourse (e.g., Kramer (1975), Leeds-Hurwitz (1980), Pan (1995), and Lee and Cho (2013)). Another focus of the addressing topics is related to the gender difference in language use. In these studies, researchers examine how males and females use different addressing forms in different contexts (e.g., Wolfson and Manes (1979), Tang (2015),

and Naaman et al. (2022).) However, how people of different genders are addressed has received relatively less attention. Additionally, most existing studies focus on written genres or spoken genres of two-person interactions. In contrast, addressing practices in multi-party conversations in media discourse have received less attention, partially due to the complexity of identifying the next speakers and the the challenges of obtaining relevant data. The current study aims to investigate the addressing, particularly the direct addressing (i.e. vocatives) in the multi-party conversations.

Grounded-breaking study by Brown and Gilman (1960) explored the application of power and solidarity of pronouns in several European languages. Brown and Ford (1961) further extended this topic by examining addressing patterns in American English, while Ervin-Tripp (1971) built on this work by summarizing the addressing system in a chart based in English. Similarly, Zhu (1990) provided a comparable chart for Chinese naming system. These foundational studies have been instrumental in shaping the field of addressing terms. However, there has been relatively little focus on how gender affects addressing terms, though the acknowledgement that some addressing terms such as 'father', 'uncle' are inherently gender-marked. Therefore, the influence of gender on addressing terms requires further investigation. In addition to study of addressing terms in European languages. Chao (1956) initiated with a concern on the pragmatic use of addressing in Mandarin Chinese, especially the use in interaction, and grammatical status and context of occurrence. The study is further elaborated with a more comprehensive study by Blum (1997) on a focus of naming power and its significance on Chinese culture. Politeness and facework are also other focuses of addressing terms in Chinese (Gu 1990; Pan 2000). Noticing gender is a convert category in Chinese because of lack of grammatical gender, Farris (1988) proposed that Chinese is an obvious candidate for investigating gender-marking bias in language.

Language is a reflection of culture, and addressing terms mirror the deeply rooted patriarchal hierarchy in Chinese society. Traditional cultures significantly influences both the addressing terms used as well as the politeness strategies employed in conversations. In traditional Chinese culture, males hold dominant authority which is evident in the language they use as well as how they are addressed. Conversely, the language women use and how they are addressed often reflect their powerlessness and marginalization in the society. Males are often addressed by their last name with titles whereas females are often addressed by their husband's name (Lee's wife) or kinship terms (Lee's mother). Additionally, the terms 'men' and pronoun 'he' are more common than 'women' and 'she' to be used as generic terms. Derogative terms in dictionary and newspapers indicate a common situation to view females as trivial. Despite the deeply ingrained traditional cultures being hard to eradicate immediately, the tendency towards gender equality is inevitable. This is evident by the deduction of biased generic term (Baker 2010b) and decline in occupational gender stereotyping (Su et al. 2021; Naaman et al. 2022). Consequently, addressing practice influenced by traditional cultures may face challenge,

especially when gender is involved in the topic. Therefore, it is important to investigate the addressing terms in the context of involving gender.

Talk show has been a significant example of media discourse for decades, serving as powerful tool to influence the public and reflect the socio-cultural phenomena. It has become popular field for linguistic analysis because of its naturally occurring conversations and the authenticity of data (Signes 2000; Ilie 2006). The stylistic role of terms of address is a key element in the talk show, where the social relationships and the conflicts among participants are punctuated by a specific use of these forms. Different terms of address signify aspects to do with power, closeness, conflict, and affinity. A close analysis of these terms of address helps deepen our understanding of gender difference. When both males and females are involved in the talk show, gender is constructed progressively through their interactions, and so are the terms of addressing. Therefore, it is a suitable platform to investigate gender difference. Existing studies on media discourse have observed that males and females are addressed differently in English-speaking culture (Weatherall 1996). In particular, research on sports program has highlighted that the language of commentary often indicates gender bias and gender marking when referring to female figures (Messner et al. 1993).

While most of the existing studies on how males and females use language differently and how they construct their gender identity through language in society, there have been comparatively less attention given on how males and females are talked about. Addressing issue specifically focus on this aspect. By investigate the vocatives used by the host in the Chinese talk, this research aims to unveil whether the show host addresses male guests and female guests differently and how addressing practice reflects power relation in talk show conversations. Additionally, it seeks to determine if the language used exhibits bias against women. Specifically, the study will examine the frequency and patterns of addressing terms directed at male and female guests, as well as the contextual collocates and politeness strategies employed. This comprehensive analysis will provide an in-depth overview of gendered-related addressing practice in the media genre.

5.2 Addressing forms, gender and power

5.2.1 Addressing forms and gender

Addressing is not random and language is not neutral. According to Gumperz (1972), the term we use to address others (e.g.: nicknames, first name, title) do not change the nature of the message as a form of address but significantly affect how people are perceived and treated in social contexts. A wide range of English and Chinese addressing options have been identified by scholars such as Chao (1956), Leech (1999) and McConnell-Ginet (2020a), providing valuable insights for the analysis of vocatives. These types encompass

a range of forms that are available for addressing people of close relationships or people of different hierarchical structures. These addressing options can be used for *addressing* as well as *referring*. When these options use as direct addressing - *vocatives*, it serves one of the following three communicative functions: 1) getting the attention of the addressee, 2) identifying someone as the intended recipient of the message in multi-party conversations and 3) maintaining or emphasizing the relationship between speaker and addressee (Leech 1999, p.108-109). The use of different types of vocatives can maintain social relationships or strengthen social oppression (McConnell-Ginet 2020a).

Applying the model of addressing proposed by Brown and Ford (1961), a lot of existing studies such as Lakoff (1975), Kramer (1975), Pan (1995) and Weatherall (1996) observe the asymmetrical usage when addressing males and females in both written and spoken sources. The results indicate that men have a broader selection of addressing, reflecting their perceived power and dominance, while women have a more limited choice due to their societal powerlessness and marginalization. As a result, women are more frequently addressed by endearing terms or terms giving emphasis on their youthfulness and immaturity. Asymmetrical usage of forms of addressing are observed in two-person conversations in different contexts, such as in service encounter (Wolfson and Manes 1979), workplace (Pan 1995), film dialogues (Formentelli 2014), academia (Zhou and Larina 2024). Baker (2010b)'s corpus-based analysis observed a higher usage of male title (Mr.) than female titles suggesting the gender difference can be observed using corpus-based method.

Derogatory terms further illustrate the asymmetrical usage of addressing terms between gender groups. Lakoff (1975) observed that the use of first name when addressing women is common in academia, television discussion shows, commentary, and topical comedy. In a more recent study on classroom interactions, Tainio (2011) observed that teachers more frequently reprimand boys, thereby reinforcing the stereotype that boys are more disruptive than girls. In this context, negative connotations associated with males are primarily linked to their classroom behavior before and during puberty. In contrast, negative connotations for girls are more pervasive and multifaceted. In other contexts, females are often called or referred to by their given name in situations where men might not be. This practice varies depending on the respect given to women, which can be influenced by her age, position, and attractiveness. Stirling (1987)'s analysis on the addressing terms in newspapers observed pervasive derogative terms describing women as subhuman, passive, trivial in relation to the events they participated in. Additionally, females are more likely to be seen as a decorative figure, addressed by her first name only. The more attractive a women is, the less seriously she is taken (Lakoff 1975). However, with the rise of females status in the society and the advancement of gender equality, the issues of addressing may be changing. Focusing on media discourse, Tang (2015) observed that gender does not make difference on the politeness strategies in the TV talent show in Taiwan. Similarly, Naaman et al. (2022) also observed that

patients do not make difference when addressing males and female physicians. These studies reinforce the tendency towards gender equality. Does it mean the gender bias has disappeared? As previously mentioned, addressing are different in various context. It is essential to investigate addressing within specific context. In some settings, gender bias and stereotypes still persist, while in others, there is no significant difference. Nevertheless, the tendency of gender equality cannot be neglect and our study aim to explore the current situation in the Chinese context.

In dyadic interactions, the dynamics of intimacy and deference between speakers of differing and similar status are observed. Brown and Ford (1961) observed that reciprocal addressing typically occurs between individuals of equal status, whereas non-reciprocal addressing is used between people from different hierarchical levels. In these interactions, the direction of intimacy is generally initiated by the superior. Focusing on professional settings, Slobin et al. (1968) supported the reciprocal and non-reciprocal addressing patterns described by Brown and Ford (1961) but modified the concept of intimacy direction. According to Slobin and colleagues, intimacy can also be initiated by the subordinate by self-disclosure. These studies provide evidence that power dynamics are unidirectional, while intimacy can be bidirectional. Additionally, Slobin et al. (1968) highlighted that the use of FN often signifies lower status in professional settings. When gender is considered in addressing patterns, Kramer (1975) proposed that females are more frequently addressed, supplying with words describing their appearance, age, intelligence, and education. This observation is supported by Weatherall (1998), who found that females are referred to more frequently than males. In academic setting, Takiff et al. (2001) found that male professors are more likely to be addressed by their professional titles, while females professors are more often addressed by their given names in both public and private contexts. These dynamics patterns offer valuable insights for observation and comparison of addressing patterns in the talk shows.

5.2.2   Power of addressing in Chinese culture

Language has a significant impact on shaping our understanding of the world. Those who have the power to create the symbols and define their meanings hold a privileged and highly advantageous position (Spender 1998). In the patriarchal cultures such as Chinese society, this potential has been realised with males holding positions of authority. For Chinese men, names have a transformative power that binds them as individuals to a recognised collectivity. Influenced by the philosophical systems of Taoism and Confucianism, there is a tension between the concept of the unique individual and the idea of the person connected to society. Traditionally, women are associated with men, as seen in the way women are addressed within the constellation of male names for a married women (e.g., Lee's wife) or address women within the limits of kinship terminology (e.g., second daughter). As Watson (1986) observed in his study of peasant women in a

village in China, peasant women are neither fully individualised nor fully recognised as persons.

The use of addressing is influenced by Chinese culture. Although Chinese is a language lack of gender agreement and linguistic gender markers, linguistic sexism can permeate a language through various forms in vocabulary such as forms of address (Tso 2014). Traditionally, most professions are considered to be male dominance. Women who enter these masculine professions requires explicit and marked feminine modifier with the affix 女 nv3 (female) (Farris 1988; Su et al. 2021). For example, the gendered marking of 女医生 nv3yi1sheng1 (female doctor) is common while 男医生 nan2yi1sheng1 (male doctor) is rare. Zhu and Liu (2024)'s study on analysing the offensive addressing terms in Chinese revealed that a significantly higher proportion of these terms are directed towards women compared to men, highlighting the prevalent gender bias and discrimination against women. Additionally, the offensiveness primarily revolves around appearance and disease, particularly focusing on physical appearance, such as 肥婆 fei2po2 (fat woman) and 疯婆子 feng1po2zi3 (crazy woman). However, we do not expect to observe many offensive terms in vocatives, especially in the face-to-face talk show context. This rarity can be attributed to the specific context and people involved where social norms and format of media typically discourage such language.

In Chinese culture, Confucian respect for the elderly continue to dominate social communication and these values are incorporated in the communicative system and social hierarchy nowadays. Traditionally, Chinese shows avoidance of pronouns usage in addressing, partially because of the relative semantic emptiness (McConnell-Ginet 2020a) to categorise a person or group. Similar situation also observes in pronoun usage in Korean and Japanese where people tend to avoid using pronouns in general and use nominal address term Park (2010). However, the usage of pronouns also denote pragmatic functions. First of all, the notion of connection building is reflected on the use of pronoun 'we' (我们wo3men2). The inclusive and exclusive use of 'we' define explicitly and publicly social groups. Therefore, it is a strong means to establish and reinforce social identities (Hausendorf and Kesselheim 2002). Emphasizing family-centered cultural values of the Chinese society, pronoun 'we' is evident to be used in academia (Ren and Chen 2019) to construct the collective identities. Maltz and Borker (1982) categorised inclusive use of pronoun 'we' and 'you' as feminine style which explicitly acknowledge the existence of the other speakers related to intimacy. Secondly, 'you' shows the importance cultural norms of emphasising connection with others. Lerner (2003) pointed out that 'you' serves as an indicator of recipient in multi-party conversations. The co-occurrence of nominal address terms and address pronouns reinforce the politeness strategies and avoid the unnecessary embarrassment in the conversation between stall-holders and their customers. Thirdly, the traditional culture also influences the use of politeness strategies, with variations that differ across cultures. Gu (1990) and Pan (1995) argued that the politeness strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) was used differently

from the way they are used in the west where collectivism is emphasised. Similar situation also observed in Japaneses by Matsumoto (1988). The politeness strategies may not only differ in different cultures but also in different contexts. According to Pan (1995), deference was one direction in the workplace setting in China. The negative politeness serves as acknowledgement of addressee's social status and institutional power in the official setting in the workplace. Therefore, titles and honorific forms are used by speakers in a subordinate to someone at superior. In contrast, the positive politeness strategies are used as an indication of in-group solidarity from superior to subordinate. As a result, addressing someone at the subordinate by his or her full name from superior will not cause offensive feeling to the address. However, as the continue increase of women's role in the society, traditional hierarchical norms and the way to use politeness strategies are facing challenges. Tang (2015)'s study in the TV reality talent shows in Taiwan where male and female contestants hold equal power, found no significant correlation between judges' use of politeness strategies and contestant's gender. This suggests that judges are striving to maintain impartiality and avoid gender bias in the evaluations, reflecting a shift towards more equitable and unbiased communication practices. Su et al. (2021) study on the diachronic changes in gendered language found an overall declining trend which further confirms the advancement of gender equality in the society. This reduction in gendered language may challenge the traditional Chinese culture, which historically has been deep-rooted in patriarchal norms and gender roles. Meanwhile, the declination does not imply disappearance, it may also suggest the absence of pervasive gender bias.

5.2.3 Pronouns of power and solidarity

The T/V binary distinction model of pronoun system proposed by psychologists Roger Brown and Albert Gilman (Brown and Gilman 1960) has provided profound impact on the social dimensions of pronoun usage. T (from the Latin *tu*) is used to represent the 'familiar or intimate' pronoun while V (from the Latin *vos*) represents the 'formal or polite' pronoun in any language. The authors typically focus on the semantic differences of pronouns of French, German and Italian where they have two singular pronouns for address. The main idea of this system is to show the choice of pronoun reflects nonreciprocal social dimensions in which Brown and Gilman (1960) called nonreciprocal power semantics. The nonreciprocal power semantics is reflected by the asymmetrical use of T/V. In contrast, the solidarity semantics is reflected by the mutual T or V. Apart from the nonreciprocal T and V, the other addressing terms such as proper names and titles that mentioned by Brown and Gilman (1960, p266) open floor for more discussion on more forms that can express power asymmetry in equalitarian societies. McConnell-Ginet (2003, 2020a) further extended and elaborated the polysemy of the T/V binary model in the context of American English. For instance, *sir* can show mutual respect as well as deference from a relatively lower hierarchy. The nonreciprocal addressing

practices sustain hierarchical relations. The corresponding T and V for second-person pronouns in Chinese are 你(ni3) and 您(nin2), the former is the informal form while the later is the deferential form. Given that T and V are not gender marked, it would be applicable to consider the the usage in particular contexts. Previous study on e-commerce live streaming discourse (Yang and Wang 2022) found that males and female use pronouns differently. Particularly, males sellers use more 你(ni3) while female sellers use more 您(nin2) indicating males and females have different strategies to promote successful selling. However, the question of whether males or females are addressed with a variety of pronouns have not yet been thoroughly explored. The usage of T/V pronominal forms of address highlight the importance of cultural and social influences on linguistic choices. A recent case study of T/V pronominal forms of address in Chinese and Russian classroom interaction by Zhou and Larina (2024) observed that the power distance and social distance determines the inter-culture difference in using T/V pronominal forms of address. Particularly, the T form of address to teacher emphasises closeness rather than distance in Chinese is influenced by the familial connection in traditional Chinese culture.

5.3 Research question and hypotheses

This section presents the research questions that guide this study. The primary research questions are as follows. Although there have been substantial research on how males and females address each other in various contexts, there remain significant gaps in understanding how males and females are addressed especially in Chinese context in the media genre. This study aims to enhance our understand of current address practice in Chinese context and to investigate whether cultural influences on addressing people of gender groups have evolved or remained constant.

RQ1: Do TV talk show host address male and female guests differently?

RQ2: How does the addressing reflect different power relations between participants in the talk show?

RQ3: Can the language used to describe female guests and male guests in talk show be understood as biased against women?

While some studies mentioned in the literature review observe the nonreciprocal of forms of address towards males and females, others found no difference partially due to the advancement of gender equality. RQ1 aims to offer a deeper understanding of host's addressing towards male and female guests. Given the power of host in controlling the topic and discussions on the talk show, he/she has significant influence over the

conversational flow, including deciding who to speak next. The vocatives used by the host can reflect how the talk show atmosphere is created and position given to guests within the social hierarchy of the show.

H1: The host will use different vocatives to address male and female guests.

Brown and Gilman (1960)'s ground-breaking T/V binary distinction model of address has shed light to the importance of how hierarchical and power difference influence the address practices. In Chinese, Scollon and Scollon (1995) observed that Chinese politeness behaviors are inherently hierarchical, resulting in an asymmetrical distribution on the politeness strategies used towards people in different status in different contexts. RQ2 focuses on the issue of how does addressing reflect different power relations in the multi-party conversations. This includes examining gender difference in using pronouns (Baker 2010b; Yang and Wang 2022), gender marking of some occupations terms (Su et al. 2021) and varying politeness strategies (Tang 2015).

H2a: Because of the power relation difference, there will be gender difference in using pronouns (e.g. second-person pronoun 'you', first-person plural pronoun 'we').

H2b: Female guests are more likely to be added gender modifiers in professional occupational terms (e.g.: 导演 film director, 主席 chairperson).

H2c: Influenced by traditional Chinese culture, more negative politeness will be used when addressing male guests while more positive politeness will be used when addressing female guests.

Gender bias is perpetuated through language. Stirling (1987)'s study on referential expressions in three Australian newspaper observed that newspaper contained semantic derogation of expressions applying to females, a pattern not found for males. A subsequent study of fictional dialogues in British soap opera found no pervasive bias against women (Weatherall 1996). The differing results of these studies may be attributed to variations in discourse or because of different cultural backgrounds. In the context of parliamentary interaction, Ilie (2018) observed that males tend to objectify female parliament members based on their appearance and uses derogatory forms of address in interaction. This study confirms the importance of context in studying addressing practices. A recent study by Thakur (2023) on AI language models (GPT2 and GPT3.5) also identified gender bias. In Chinese context, Zhu and Liu (2024) found no significant difference in offensive addressing terms for males and females. Therefore, the third hypothesis is:

H3: While gender bias persist, it does not manifest as pervasive gender bias against females.

5.4   Methodological approach

The data are drawn from naturally occurring multi-party cross-gender conversations; i.e, the transcript of the talk show in Mandarin Chinese whose participants are invited to be guest speakers (experts and laypeople) to sharing their opinions under the institutional control of the host, who manages the topic and agenda. The data are therefore representative of multi-party conversations of different power relations. For comparative insights, I analysed the vocatives used by host to address male guests and female guests in the Chinese context. The detailed information of the data can be found in Chapter 3. Since our focus is on the verbal difference, non-verbal features such as gaze are not be included in the current study. 10 percent of the data (n=412) were used for inter-rater reliability test (Cohen's Kappa measurement = 0.6302. The results show substantial. Wilson and Zeitlyn (1995) and Lerner (2003) argued that although gaze provides important information about who is being addressed, especially at the fine-grained analysis of multi-party conversations, it is not appropriate for application to large amount of natural corpora analysis. Addressing include both address terms and reference terms as described in the literature. While most previous studies focus on addressing terms in general or only referring terms, our current analysis focus on vocatives. When multiple vocatives occur, the first referential term is considered. This chapter sets out to examine the distribution of vocatives in natural conversations, and quantification allows us to move beyond mere frequency analysis but how does the addressing terms reflect conversations in different power relations as well as women's place in the conversations.

The text analysis software suite *Sketch Engine* (Kilgarriff et al. 2014) was used to descriptively analysis the use of different types of vocatives in different gender groups as linguistic feature across transcript text files. More specifically, searches using CQL function were performed on individual guest speaker to determine overall addressing frequencies and to highlight possible differences in usage between gender. These queries generated concordance lines that present the search item in a vertical list, along with some co-text to right and to the left collocates According to Baker (2004), the analysis of collocates allowed us to identity particular contexts which seem to be more applicable to one sex than the other. Follow-up manual analysis of the concordances was first performed to extract vocatives. In terms of collocates, the default range in Sketch Engine (3 words either side of the node) was used to see what words have particular collocation relationship with different gender groups. Top 20 list of collocates with each gender group will be presented based on the LogDice statistic. LogDice was used to calculate collocations because it is the best method among many other methods as suggested by Curran (2004)'s extensive evaluation. Additionally, since politeness or respect does not have a specific word or particular forms (McConnell-Ginet 2020a), careful read of the concordance lines in context of original transcripts to identity the pragmatic functions and politeness strategies of the use of vocatives is needed.

5.5 Results and Findings

5.5.1 Distribution of gendered addressing terms

Table 5.1 summarises the frequency of addressing made by host for male guests and female guests. Overall, a greater variety of addressing forms is used for female guests compared to male guests. A total of 211 addressing forms were observed in the cross-gender conversations in the talk show, with 64.5% (n=136) used for female guests and only 35.5% (n=75) for male guests. This difference is statistically significant (χ^2=95.696, df=5, *p* value=.000). Following McConnell-Ginet (2020a)'s taxonomy of addressing forms, both the listed forms and additional forms not on the list were used in the talk show. Table 5.2 provides a comprehensive list of all observed addressing forms. In our data, six types of addressing forms were identified: FL (first name + last name), FN (first name), kinterm + N, TFLN (titles with full name), TLN (title with last name) and LN (last name only). We found statistically significant differences in gender marking for three of these types. The host used significantly more FL (first name + last name) and FN (first name) to address female guests (e.g., 幼婷), while these forms were less frequent for male guests. In contrast, the host used significantly more forms with titles and last name (e.g., 许老师) to address male guests. These results confirm *Hypothesis 1*, which posits that the host uses different vocatives to address male and female guests. Overall, there is a variation in the addressing forms used for male guests and female guests in the talk show. The host tended to use more FL and FN to address females, while terms with titles (TLN) were more frequently used for male guests. In addition, kinship terms were rarely used, and no significant difference was observed in their use.

Chao (1956, p238) highlighted the differences in the use of addressing terms between Chinese and western cultures. According to Hagström (2012), the choice of names reflects personal experience and cultural knowledge. The analysis reveals that vocatives for female guests frequently consist of either the given name or the full name. This usage reflects the traditional systematisation of names in traditional Chinese culture, where a person's name is composed of a family name followed by a given name. For example, 窦文涛 (DOU Wentao) features a monosyllabic family name followed by a disyllabic given name. Another example is 李艾 (LI Ai), which has both monosyllabic family name and a monosyllabic given name. Furthermore, 司马南 (SIMA Nan) has a disyllabic family name and monosyllabic given name. All three types of naming combinations are present in our data. When the host addresses female guests with a monosyllabic surname and a disyllabic given name, the host commonly uses the given name, such as 幼婷 (Youting) for 竹幼婷 (ZHU Youting). In the case of a monosyllabic surname and a monosyllabic given name, the full name is used, as neither part is a grammatically free form (Chao 1956). Examples include 李艾 (LI Ai), 李菁 (LI Jing), 叶檀 (YE Tan), all of whom are addressed by their full names. However, when comparing 李艾 (LI Ai) and

Addressing option		Female guests	Male guests	Total
FL	count	29	4	33
	expected count	21.3	11.7	33
	% within addressing option	87.90%	12.10%	100%
	% within addresser gender	21.30%	5.30%	15.60%
	% of total	13.7%%	1.90%	15.60%
FN	count	88	13	101
	expected count	65.10%	35.90%	101
	% within addressing option	87.10%	12.90%	100%
	% within addresser gender	64.70%	17.30%	47.90%
	% of total	41.70%	6.20%	47.90%
Kinterm + N	count	3	4	7
	expected count	4.5	2.50%	7
	% within addressing option	42.90%	57.10%	100%
	% within addresser gender	2.20%	5.30%	3.30%
	% of total	1.40%	1.90%	3.30%
TFLN	count	6	2	8
	expected count	5.2	2.8	8
	% within addressing option	75%	25%	100%
	% within addresser gender	4.40%	2.70%	3.80%
	% of total	2.80%	0.90%	3.80%
TLN	count	10	51	61
	expected count	39.3	21.7	61
	% within addressing option	16.40%	83.60%	100%
	% within addresser gender	7.40%	68%	28.90%
	% of total	4.70%	24.20%	28.90%
LN	count	0	1	1
	expected count	0.6	0.4	1
	% within addressing option	0%	100%	100%
	% within addresser gender	0%	1.30%	0.50%
	% of total	0%	0.50%	0.50%
Total	count	136	75	211
	expected count	136	75	211
	% within addressing option	64.50%	35.50%	100%
	% within addresser gender	100%	100%	100%
	% of total	64.50%	35.50%	100%

Table 5.1: Addressing option * addresser gender crosstabulation

Personalised options	Descriptions	Example
FN	First name	文涛
FL	Full name	窦文涛
TLN	Title plus last name, either general social title or professional title	窦老师
TFLN	Title plus full name, either general social title or professional title	窦文涛老师
Kinterm + N	Kinterm plus last name/first name/full name	涛哥
LN	Last/family name only	窦

Table 5.2: Addressing options and descriptions

竹幼婷 (ZHU Youting), names containing both monosyllabic surname and given name appear less intimate than the disyllabic ones. What does these results suggest? While using a given name can indicate intimacy, Slobin et al. (1968) suggested that it is also a sign of lower status in professional context. Further analysis will be provided in the following sections.

Example 5.1.

H 今天我觉得有点小兴奋，因为我们请来的这个嘉宾，平常就是比较少交往你们这些朋友，首先是**徐童导演**，纪录片的导演，我是先看他的纪录片，发现他就住在这个城乡结合部，然后专门拍了很多，就是我们报纸上一般管这类人就叫城市边缘人，好像你的镜头就是拍这样一些人。所以呢，我就请**徐老师**呢，我就发现还带了个**美女**，这个美女我们叫她**小雁**，小雁呢，在纪录片里，我看过你，所以我觉得你今天来到我们这儿，让我有个很新鲜的感觉，因为你这样的女嘉宾，我还是头一回碰见。

'Today, I'm feeling a bit excited because the guest we've invited. I rarely interacts with friends like you. First, we have **Director Xu Tong**, a documentary filmmaker. I first watched his documentaries and discovered that he lives in the urban-rural fringe, where he focuses on filming people who are often referred to in the newspapers as the 'urban fringe population.' It seems your camera often captures such people. So, I invited **Teacher Xu**, and I noticed he brought along a **beautiful woman**. This beautiful woman, we call her Xiao Yan. **Xiao Yan**, I've seen you in the documentary, so your presence here today gives me a fresh feeling. You're the kind of female guest I'm encountering for the first time.'

In contrast to the form of vocatives for female guests, male guests were significantly more likely to be addressed with respected terms. Among the addressing forms frequently used for male guests, two forms with titles unsurpassed other options. Specifically, 51 instances (83.6%) of TLN (title with last name) were used to address male guests, compared to only 10 instances (16.4%) for female guests. These titles include both gender-marked terms such as 哥 ge1 (brother), 先生 xian1sheng1 (Mr.), as well as gender-neutral terms such as 老师 lao3shi1 (teacher), 导演 dao3yan3 (film director), 教授 jiao4shou4(professor), 主席 zhu3xi2 (chairman), 主任 zhu3ren4 (director). Does this indicate gender bias or different politeness strategies towards different gender groups? According to Brown and Ford (1961), TLN addressing was more polite than FN addressing. The results revealed distinct strategies in the host's addressing forms for male and female guests. For instance, in the introduction of the guests at the opening of episode in the talk show (Example 5.1), the host used two professional titles to address the male guest as 徐童导演 xu2tong2dao3yan3 (film director) and 徐老师 xu2lao3shi1 (teacher) while the female guest, a street-smart woman who led an unconventional lifestyle, was addressed by the term 美女 mei3nv3 (beauty) and her given name 小雁 (Xiaoyan).

The nonreciprocal addressing forms for males and females, as indicated in the example, suggested that power-laden relations were sustained through address practices.

5.5.2 Gendered addressing terms and their collocations

The results in Table 5.3 and Table 5.4 revealed some gender similarities and differences in the top 20 collocates within a span of three words either side the node word of male and female addressing forms. Pronouns are generally considered as a feature of 'female speech' which frequently used by women in both written and spoken discourse (Rayson et al. 1997). While it is suggested that pronouns should be avoided as they can indicate a lack of respect and relative semantic emptiness (Blum 1997; McConnell-Ginet 2020a), Liu (2009) noted that the co-occurrence of address nouns and the use of address pronouns reinforces and complements each other in the service encounter discourse. The co-occurrences of addressing terms and pronouns were also observed in the talk show which explicitly mark the addressee. The result of LogDice indicated that the host tended to use more pronouns when addressing females than males. The most commonly used pronoun that collocates with female guests' addressing was informal form 你 ni3 (you), followed by two pronouns that express a collective discursive identities (Fetzer and Bull 2008): 我们 wo3men2 (we) and 咱们 zan2men2 (we). For male guests' addressing, the most frequently used pronoun remained 你 ni3 (you) but followed by 我 wo3 (I) and second person honorific pronoun 您 (you). For example:

Example 5.2.

H ： 李艾你是学什么的？

LI Ai, what is your major?

FG ： 我是学工商管理的。

I majored in Business Administration.

Example 5.3.

H: 这个幼婷可以给我们介绍一下。

Youting can introduce this for us.

FG: 她是伊朗本来要到女议员的。

She was supposed to be a congresswoman in Iran.

	Collocate	Freq	Coll. freq.	T-score	MI	logDice
1	你	49	393	6.3791	3.4949	11.5273
2	人行	14	29	3.6559	5.4479	11.3155
3	这个	18	145	3.8647	3.4885	10.9605
4	觉得	12	78	3.2151	3.7981	10.7458
5	我们	12	84	3.1959	3.6912	10.7085
6	看	14	132	3.3515	3.2615	10.6627
7	最近	8	25	2.7307	4.8547	10.5406
8	说	14	165	3.2539	2.9396	10.5036
9	知道	9	61	2.7751	3.7377	10.442
10	咱们	8	48	2.6407	3.9136	10.3634
11	是	23	424	3.818	2.2942	10.3561
12	我	21	395	3.6293	2.2651	10.2996
13	但是	8	65	2.5743	3.4762	10.2451
14	对	8	66	2.5704	3.4541	10.2385
15	给	7	47	2.4493	3.7513	10.178
16	今天	7	54	2.42	3.551	10.1279
17	吗	7	55	2.4158	3.5245	10.1209
18	的	25	593	3.6883	1.9305	10.1047
19	跟	7	60	2.3949	3.399	10.0863
20	可以	6	30	2.314	4.1766	10.0851

Table 5.3: Words located among the top20 collocates of female guests' addressing

Example 5.4.

H: 社科院的雷颐老师，研究语言的流变，尤其是中文，其实太值得研究了，上回您讲到哪了？

Teacher Lei Yi from the Academy of Social Sciences, studying the change of language, especially Chinese, is actually worth studying, where did you stop last time?

G: 就是说到词汇的变化。

The change in vocabulary.

While pronouns may seem semantically empty, their co-occurrence with addressing forms explicitly marked the addressee in the above examples. Regarding gender difference, females tended to be addressed by T form of informal second-person pronoun 你 which signified solidarity. In contrast, males were more likely to be addressed by V form of second-person pronouns 您 which conveyed respect. Additionally, the pronoun 我们 (we) not only expressed membership categorizations but also indicated proximity. The results indicate that there is gender difference in the use of addressing pronouns, thereby confirming *Hypothesis 2a*.

Quantitative analysis of the utterances with pronouns revealed notable gender differences. Females were frequently prompted to perform actions such as elaboration on the host's request for a future act (给我们讲讲 *please tell us*) or answering a question

	Collocate	Freq	Coll. freq.	T-score	MI	logDice
1	先生	10	15	3.1171	6.1296	11.142
2	你	33	393	5.0932	3.1406	11.0137
3	但是	11	65	3.13	4.1516	10.8521
4	我	28	395	4.5807	2.8962	10.7712
5	呢	8	37	2.7039	4.5051	10.6163
6	是	25	424	4.1926	2.6305	10.5301
7	跟	8	60	2.6264	3.8077	10.4301
8	了	14	204	3.2225	2.8495	10.4237
9	有	10	142	2.7347	2.8867	10.2345
10	请教	5	7	2.2063	6.2291	10.2239
11	对	7	66	2.4082	3.4775	10.1927
12	来	6	39	2.2979	4.0141	10.1841
13	这	13	242	2.9665	2.4961	10.1613
14	怎么	5	24	2.1339	4.4515	10.0551
15	您	5	24	2.1339	4.4515	10.0551
16	吗	6	55	2.2357	3.5182	10.0536
17	就	10	206	2.542	2.35	9.92961
18	博士	4	5	1.9762	6.3926	9.92318
19	觉得	6	78	2.1463	3.0141	9.88452
20	给	5	47	2.0359	3.4819	9.85432

Table 5.4: Words located among the top 20 collocates of male guests' addressing

(你回答一下马老的问题 *please answer the question raised by teacher Ma.*). In contrast, males were commonly encouraged to engage by stating facts (您见多识广 *You are well-informed*) and sharing opinions (你觉得最近日本这什么情况? *What do you think about the recent situation in Japan?*). These differences may imply that the stereotyping of women as submissive seems to maintain. Moreover, some linguistic forms underscore the sexism. Women were more likely to receive compliments on their appearance, whereas men were more often to be mentioned by what they do.

Example 5.5.

(5.5a)

H: 幼婷又来了，过个春节，我怎么觉得你更亮丽了，化妆品更贵了是吗？

Youting is here again. After the Spring Festival, why do I think you look even more radiant? Have your cosmetics gotten more expensive?

(5.5b)

H: 李艾真是越来越年轻了。

Li Ai is truly looking younger and younger.

(5.5c)

H: 除了查老师，要给大家介绍我的老朋友，中国国家地理杂志的李拴科，咱们的地球专家。

Besides Teacher Zha, I would like to introduce my old friend, LI Shuanke from National Geographic Magazine of China, our earth expert.

Example 5.6.

H: 你知道，我觉得她身上，为什么我觉得真是一个话题人物，可以当做一个话题讲，咱们也不用讳言，最近说到彭丹，她是有几个关键词，比如说全国青联常委，是全国吧。

You know, I think she is truly a topic-worthy person, someone we can talk about. Let's not shy away from it. Recently, when talking about Peng Dan, there are a few keywords associated with her, such as member of the National Youth Federation Standing Committee, and it is on a national level, right?

FG: 对。

Yes.

H: 甘肃政协委员，然后，现在拍主旋律影片的导演、制片、主演什么都是她一脚踢，甚至连剪辑都是自个剪的。

A member of the Gansu CPPCC, she is now a director, producer, and lead actress of mainstream films, handling everything herself. She even does the editing on her own.

FG: 对。

Yes.

H: 然后，当年的艳星演过一些性感的影片，甚至还有红色家庭，这些关键词组织在一起，许老师，你产生什么胸怀？

Back then, she was a glamour star who acted in some sexy films, and she even comes from a revolutionary family. When you put these keywords together, Teacher Xu, what thoughts or feelings do you have?

MG: 我想知道拍艳星跟做红色经典跟做政协委员，这三件事情有什么共同点？

I want to know what the common points are between being a glamour star, making revolutionary classics, and being a CPPCC member?

For instance, female guest was introduced at the beginning of the talk show with comments on their attractiveness by 你更亮丽了 ni3geng4liang4li1le5 (you look even more radiant) and 越来越年轻了 yue4lai2yue4nian2qin1le5 (look younger and younger) in Example 5.5a and Example 5.5b. Conversely, male guest was introduced with a focus on their occupations and achievements, such as being a psychologist 心理学家 xin1li3xue2jia1 or an earth expert 地球专家 di4qiu2zhuan1jia1 (earth expert) in Example 5.5c.

While the general pattern of addressing did not explicitly reflect sex bias, all forms of naming inherently contain biases, and the act of naming is a process that embeds those biases (Lakoff 1975; Spender 1998). There is evidence to suggest that name choice still

reflect sexism. For example, the female guest was addressed in a manner that suggested gender discrimination in Example 5.6. While people may have multiple titles, the choice of which title is used can imply gender bias. 彭丹 (PENG Dan), who had multiple roles as an actor, film director, and member of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), was addressed by her full name and the kinship term 彭丹姐姐 (sister PENG Dan) at the opening of the conversation 今天许老师很兴奋，因为听说我们请来一位话题人物，彭丹姐姐 (Teacher Xu is very excited today because we have invited a popular figure, sister Peng Dan).

In this example, 彭丹 (Peng Dan) was first addressed by the pseudo-kinship term 彭丹姐姐 (sister PENG Dan) which enhances closeness of the relation (Pan 2000). This addressing term was immediately followed by a more casual addressing form of full name 彭丹. Given the multiple roles 彭丹 had, she was not addressed by any titles. Instead, she was referred to in relation to her previous work as a glamour star.

In another example, the female guest was initially addressed with the social title 李兰妮女士 (Ms. LI Lanni) (Example 5.7). She was identified by her relationship with another guest and acknowledged by her professional achievement as the chairperson of the Writers Association in Shenzhen. However, she was also referred to by the illness she suffered from, which undermined her image as a competent chairperson. Additionally, she was mentioned again in relation to the male guest where she was teased not as a romantic partner, but as an old acquaintance and close friend.

Example 5.7.

H： 今天来了一位很有气质，很有风华的这么一位女士，而且还是咱们许老师的，不是老情人，老熟人，老相好，而且她就是了解了她的事迹之后更让我感觉到文学这条道路是多么的难，因为李兰妮女士现在是深圳作协主席，她深圳作协主席吧文学道路是这么样的难，她不但得了严重的抑郁症，而且还得了严重的癌症，现在叫做带癌生存。

Today, we have a very elegant and charming lady with us, who is also not an old lover but an old acquaintance, an old friend of Teacher Xu. After learning about her story, I feel even more strongly about how difficult the literary path is. Ms. LI Lanni is now the chairperson of the Shenzhen Writers' Association. This literary journey is so challenging that she not only suffered from severe depression but also from serious cancer. Now, she is living with cancer.

From the use of vocatives with titles, it was observed that certain forms are already gender-marked such as 女士 (Ms.), 先生 (Mr.), 爷 (sir). However, for some addressing forms that could be used for both genders, the prefix 女 nv3 (female) was added before occupational titles. This practice was not observed for male guests, supporting *Hypothesis 2b*, although there are limited examples. For instance, 女侦探 nv3zhen1tan4 (female detective) and 女领导 nv3ling3dao3 (female leader). These patterns underscore

the subtle gendered bias present in addressing practice.

Example 5.8.

(5.8a)

H: 我感觉今天我们请来了一位**女侦探**，但是是犯罪心理学的侦探，著名的李玫瑾老师。

I feel that today we have invited a **female detective**, but one specializing in criminal psychology, the renowned Professor LI Meijin.

(5.8b)

H: 今天王蒙老师还给我们隆重举荐一位**女领导**，我们今天来有了**女领导**徐坤大作家

Today, Teacher Wang Meng has also highly recommended a female leader to us. We are honored to have the esteemed writer XU Kun, a **female leader**, with us today.

Further qualitative analysis were conducted to investigate the use of politeness in association with vocatives. It was observed that the host 窦文涛 managed to show positive politeness by using some verbal linguistic strategies to maintain a polite and friendly manner of speech such as joking. Deferential addressing terms and joking might be considered opposite poles. Joking is a sign of in-group membership and needs a context that is appropriate for joking. Without the foundation of an established relationship, it can be highly face-threatening (Norrick and Bubel 2009). In the following section, a few examples of the joking acts and wordplay are presented and discussed.

Example 5.9.

(5.9a)

H: 今天咱们来了香港一只鬼，鬼才导演彭浩翔。不是有句话嘛，说是你吃鸡蛋，干嘛还非要见母鸡呢。但是我倒是看了你的电影之后，就很想请你来，到我们这里来聊一聊。

Today, we have a ghost from Hong Kong with us, the talented director Pang Ho-cheung. There's a saying that goes, "Don't look a gift horse in the mouth." But after watching your movies, I really wanted to invite you here to have a chat with us.

MG: 谢谢。

Thanks.

(5.9b)

H: 2013年是个天方夜谭之年。

       2013 is a year of fantasy.

MG: 对。

       Agree

H: 叶檀你怎么看？我别天方了，元芳你怎么看，叶檀你觉得是吗？

       What do you think, Ye Tan? Am I being too fantastical? Yuan Fang, what do
       you think? Ye Tan, do you agree?

Wordplay can get a distant figure closer. At the beginning of the introduction, the
host introduced one of the guests by his outstanding talent. 鬼才 refers to someone who
is extraordinary clever. Taking the character '鬼' (ghost), the host implied that someone
he was introducing was beyond the ordinary and mysterious. Then the host imitated
the structure of a common saying which means 'Don't miss the forest for the trees' to
express his eagerness to meet the guest. The joking of using wordplay and idiom are acts
to build solidarity. Moreover, the wordplay also serves as a positive politeness strategy.
Examples of wordplay are observed in female guests in Example 5.9b.

5.6 Discussion

5.6.1 Pronouns beyond power and solidarity

Addressing options are not rigid, members of particular Communities of Practice (CofP)
often develop their own practices that may not align with established model (McConnell-
Ginet 2003). In the talk show CofP, the host differentiates vocatives using pronominal
forms to subtly convey his stance and strategies towards male and female guests. Accord-
ing to T/V binary model proposed by Brown and Gilman (1960), the pronominal forms
of T/V languages highlight the roles of power and solidarity in address practices. How-
ever, the T/V forms are polysemous (McConnell-Ginet 2003) with the V form expressing
respect or deference and the T form being either friendly or condescending. Therefore,
addressing practice are perceived differently in different contexts and cultures.

In Chinese, the equivalent of the 'T' form in second-person pronouns is 你 ni3 while
the more formal 'V' form is 您 nin2. As presented in Table 5.3 and Table 5.4, the results
indicate that the 'T' form 你 has higher frequency than the 'V' form, indicating the
tendency of 'T' form towards gender equity (Baker 2010b). Although the traditional
avoidance of pronouns in China stems from their potential to be perceived as insulting
and impudent within the strict hierarchy, the occurrence of pronouns in talk show can
serve as function of indicator of recipient in multi-party conversations. Additionally, the
second-person address form can place the interlocutor at the centre of an experience,
fostering a sense of involvement, as compared to pronoun *I* (Vásquez 2014). For instance,
叶檀你觉得是吗？(YE Tan, what do you think?) in Example 5.9b illustrates the use

of the pronoun *you* co-occurs with addressing form of FL *YE Tan* to seek an opinion. Although 叶檀 has several prestigious social status such as an economist and financial commentator, she was not addressed by any of the social title. Another example is 陶老师您见多识广 (Teacher Tao, you are knowledgeable and experienced), which uses the formal form of pronoun *you* to praise the recipient, Teacher Tao.

In terms of gender difference, Maltz and Borker (1982) observed that women tend to use personal and inclusive pronouns 'you' and 'we' more frequently, explicitly acknowledge the presence of the other speaker. In our study of a particular talk show CofP, the host predominantly uses the 'T' form of pronoun *you* when addressing female guests while reserving the 'V' form for male guests. According to Brown and Gilman (1960)'s dyadic patterns, first name (FN) indicate intimacy and solidarity whereas title with last names (TLN) signify power and hierarchy. In our data, the 'T' form of *you* appears in both FN and TLN context, such as in 叶檀你 (YE Tan you) and 许老师...你 (teacher Xu you). Conversely, the 'V' form of *you* is exclusively used with TLN, as seen in 李玫瑾老师...您 and 陶老师您. The exclusive use of deferential 'you' indicates the one-directional of power while the co-occurrence of 'T' form with TLN and FN suggests an expansion of 'T' forms, indicating move towards gender equity. This finding aligns with previous research by Pan (1995) in Chinese official setting. Additionally, there has been evident that intimacy is expressed from superior to inferior using respectful addressing forms (Brown and Ford 1961) or from inferior to superior by self-disclosure (Slobin et al. 1968). Our result confirm that intimacy can be bidirectional, functioning from the host to guests both in superior and inferior positions, regardless of gender. An example of this dynamic is the host's utterance 叶檀你怎么看？(YE Tan, what do you think?) which uses the informal 'you' to seek the female guest's opinion, demonstrating friendliness (Example 5.9b). The show host humorously incorporated the popular phrase 元芳你怎么看 (Yuan Fang, what do you think?) from a Chinese TV series 'Detective DI Renjie'[1] to liven up the atmosphere. In another example, both informal and deferential forms of pronoun 'you' were used. When addressing the female guest alone, informal 'you' showed intimacy and friendliness. Later, when the male speaker was introduced as a key figure, the deferential form of 'you' was used. This dual approach does not trivialise female guest but rather highlights her importance. Respect is further expressed through the verb forms which carry connotations of power and solidarity values (McConnell-Ginet 2003) like 切磋 (exchange viewpoints) and 请教 (consult) in Example 5.10.

Example 5.10.

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[1]元芳你怎么看 (Yuan Fang, what do you think?) is a popular phrase in the Chinese TV series 'Detective DI Renjie'. It became popular in 2012 because it is frequently used by the main character Detective DI Renjie to ask his assistant, YUAN Fang, for opinion on various cases.

H: 李玫瑾老师，我们又把你盼来了，今天我特别把我们的重量级嘉宾陈丹青请来跟您切磋切磋，互相请教请教。

Professor LI Meijing, we have eagerly awaited your return. We especially invite the key figure CHEN Danqing to exchange opinion and learn from each other.

Apart from the polysemy of pronoun 'you', the use of *we* also carries ambiguous connotations. While the prototypical use of *we* indicates a collective discursive identity, signifying closeness through membership categorization, Camiciottoli (2014) observed that the referent of the first-person plural pronoun *we* may include or exclude the addressees. Levinson (1983, p.69) referred to this as 'we-inclusive-of-addressee' and 'we-exclusive-of-addressee'. These inclusive and exclusive uses of pronoun *we* have been associated with politeness, solidarity and persuasion. In Example 5.11a, Youting, the addressee, was politely invited to provide her opinion, while 我们 'we' refers to the listeners. Therefore, Youting is excluded from the group referred to as 'we' because she is the speaker. Similarly, 马先生 'Mr. Ma' was excluded from the group of people considered poor in Example 5.11b. In the multi-party conversation in the talk show, the use of 'we' explicitly and publicly defines social groups and introduces the relationships to the audience. Although *we* is more frequently used when addressing female guests, the majority of instances have an exclusive meaning, excluding the addressee in order to place him or her at the center of the discussion. However, in some cases *we* has an inclusive meaning which demonstrate solidarity or serve as a performative utterance to introduce a commercial break, as seen in Example 5.11c and Example 5.11d, respectively.

Example 5.11.

(5.11a)
H: 幼婷可以跟我们讲一讲。

Youting can share with us.

(5.11b)
H: 但是马先生你见的有钱人多，这种你看我们没钱的人特别爱有这种想法，你是坏人，你老接近那些人。

Mr. Ma, you've seen a lot of wealthy people. We, who don't have money, often think that you are a bad person because you always get close to those people.

(5.11c)
H: 咱们广美刚从求婚圣地回来。

Our friend Guangmei just returned from a popular proposal spot.

(5.11d)

H: 我们还是去广告。

Let's take a commercial break again.

Instances of the inclusive *we* are strategically used in the position preceding to the addressee to show solidarity (Example 5.11c). In addition, *we* can be employed without directly addressing the addressee, as demonstrated in Example 5.11d, to introduce the commercial break. This usage helps foster a sense of collective involvement and contains connection with the guests.

5.6.2 Vocatives that influenced by Chinese culture

Brown and Levinson (1987, p179) explained that use of honorifics serves to give deference, respecting the 'negative face' of the addressee, which refers to their desire for freedom of action and attention without hindrance. By using TLN, the host can establish or maintain a desirable distance between the addressee and himself. However, consistently using honorifics may not always be appropriate, especially when participants wish to foster a friendly atmosphere in the semi-institutional setting. The use of TLN may come across as distant and can signify 'out-group' status, potentially violating the positive face of the addressee. This brings up the challenge of determining the appropriate level of politeness.

Norms of address can reveal a great deal of information about a culture. Addressing practice is a reflection of different cultures, as unique naming conventions shape how names are understood and used in various contexts. The Chinese language system clearly mirrors traditional gender ideology and the patriarchal structure of Chinese society. Chinese history shows how sexist notions gradually took roots in the culture influencing the language (Tso 2014, p8). Politeness strategies in China are used asymmetrically due to the emphasis on collectivism rather than individualism. This asymmetry is evident in our dataset, consistent with previous analyses in various contexts (Hsu 1981; Matsumoto 1988; Gu 1990). However, the semi-institutional discourse of talk show creates a relative loose hierarchical status compared to other contexts where status are stable, such as in parliament, political interviews and teacher-student interactions. As a result, superior can not only use positive but also negative politeness strategies towards inferiors, and vice versa. For instance:

Example 5.12.

1 H: 咱们还谈咱们原来的话题，还接着刚才的谈。

We shall continue talking about what we just mentioned.

2 MG: 我们随便，听窦领导的，听窦领导的。

No problem. We will listen to leader Dou.

3 H: 要听这个，我还是喜欢听王老师讲讲到美国生孩子的事。

I still love to hear you talking about having a baby in the United States.

In the above example, the host first decided what to discuss next, reflecting his control over the topics in the talk show (line 1). The male guest, WANG Meng, a prominent Chinese writer and politician, used a highly deferential form, 'leader Dou', to address the host. This attends to the host's positive face by making him feel valued, as Wang humbles himself and elevates the host's status as a leader in the conversation (line 2). In this case, the male guest, despite his higher social status, used a deferential address to create solidarity. In return, the host expressed admiration for teacher Wang's opinion, employing positive politeness strategies to preserve the guest's positive face. The host's eagerness to listen and indirect compliments towards teacher Wang show respect and appreciation (line 3). In another example:

Example 5.13.
1 FG： 对，太离谱了，这个国五条细则。
　　　　Yes, the Five Rules are ridiculous.
2 H: 国五条你都懂啊？
　　　　You know the Five Rules too?
3 MG: 她是新闻人。
　　　　She is a news reporter.
4 FG: 窦文涛先生你也太小看我了。
　　　　Mr. DOU Wentao, you underestimate me too much.

In line 1, the female guest shared her opinion on the Five Rules. The host responded with a joking sarcastic comment, indirectly implying (i.e. negative politeness) that he did not expect her to understood the policy in line 2. Another guest supplemented this by categorizing the female guest by her job as a news reporter to minimise the negative impact of the joking sarcasm (line 3). In line 4, the female guest, addressed by her first name, challenged the host by direct assertion to seek recognition on her knowledge on the policy She used the social title 'Mr.' to show respect, albeit with a hint of anger. Despite the power difference in their conversation, an imposition from the subordinate to superior is not considered a face-threatening act in the talk show. This is due to the casual atmosphere in the semi-institutional discourse as well as the relaxed hierarchy present in the setting. From the above two examples, it is evident that social hierarchies and formalities are relaxed in the semi-institutional discourse of the talk show, as indicated by the bi-directional use of asymmetrical politeness strategies. By showing deference to the subordinate, the superior attends to the inferior's negative face, showing humility, a deeply cherished value in Chinese culture, and recognizing the host's authority in topic control. Conversely, challenges from subordinates to the superiors are not considered a face-threatening act.

Names serve as markers of identity that can foster a sense of inclusion and recognition in social setting. Names can reveal gender, and perpetuate stereotypes and biases. Our perception and categorisation of names are shaped by personal experiences and cultural knowledge. In China, where connections to others are seen as inevitable, names carry a collective significance. Therefore, Brown and Levinson (1987)'s politeness theory is not fully applicable in Chinese culture, where collectivism is emphasised. Politeness strategies differ across cultures, reflecting underlying cultural values. The qualitative analysis in this study identified promising trends towards greater equality in gender representation. An increasing awareness of inequality, coupled with traditional Chinese culture, has led to a shift towards non-sexist language and more informal, equal and colloquial ways of addressing. In this context, the choice of the pronouns are influenced by a pronounced we-culture which suggest that the host-guest relationships as akin to a familial connection and by employing T form they emphasise closeness rather than distance.

5.6.3 Women's place in the talk show

Although females are now afforded more opportunities to speak in public and share opinions on equal footing with male guests, the cross-gender conversations in the talk show analysed do not appear to place females in a position of advantage. First, the multi-party combination in this talk show seem to provide females marginally weaker position. Although participants take up specific roles in multi-party conversations, male solidarity of using 'we' pronoun is particularly observable in symmetrical conversations where involve equal number of participants (Berrier 1997), not mentioning the cross-gender conversations in the talk show consists of two males and only one females. Additionally, while the categories of participants involve diverse social status and background, the categories of participants' gender is limited since there is no female to female conversations in this talk show.

Female guest's disadvantage is also observed in the asymmetrical distribution of vocatives used by the host. According to Brown and Ford (1961), three possible patterns emerge when considering only FN and TLN: 1) reciprocal change of FN, 2) reciprocal exchange of TLN, and 3) a non-reciprocal pattern where one person uses FN and the other TLN. Because of the discursive constraints of the conventionalised beginning of the talk show, guest introductions are always conducted by the show host and are not necessarily followed by the reciprocal addressing by the guests. This is partially due to the situational constraints such as time restrictions and agenda restrictions. When the host conducts introductory utterances at the beginning of an episode, the addressing typically includes either FN or TLN for both guests. In cases of non-reciprocal forms, females are always addressed using FN. Below are examples of three patterns. In one example, male and female guests were both addressed by their title but the additional

information about the health issue of the female guest, such as the phrase '身残志坚' (physically disabled but strong willed), was provided, emphasizing her physical weakness compared to male guest. The host employed positive politeness strategy to convey admiration and respect to the female guest. Interestingly, while the host initially addressed the male guest as 许老师 (teacher Xu), an additional title was added. The title 老师 (teacher) may be perceived as lower in status compared to 主席(chairperson). To prevent the male guest from being perceived as disadvantaged, the title 领导 (leader) was also used, highlighting his leadership role. Both guests are addressed by FN in Example 5.15, however, the use of pronoun '咱们'(we) in the context indicates a sense of inclusion and intimacy in the addressing.

Example 5.14.

H:　《锵锵三人行》。今天咱们又迎来了**身残志坚的李主席**，李主席上次在我们节目简直是，我觉得反响很大，因为没见过这样的，就是严重抑郁症，还加上严重地癌症，而且还能够活得这么坚强，所以网友们都夸你是身残志坚。这是**深圳作协的主席**，对吧，**这是许老师，领导了**。

Behind the Headline with Wentao. Today, we once again welcome **Chairperson Li, who remains strong despite physical challenges**. Last time Chairman Li was on our show, I believe the response was overwhelming because we rarely see someone like this—suffering from severe depression combined with serious cancer, yet still living so resiliently. So, netizens praised you for your indomitable spirit. **This is the Chairman of the Shenzhen Writers' Association**, right? **This is Teacher Xu, who is now a leader**.

Example 5.15.

H:　《锵锵三人行》，**幼婷**，你看**咱们小牧**，上次你们俩见过的。

Behind the Headline with Wentao. You Ting, look at our/us Xiao Mu. You two met last time.

In case of the female guests with multiple roles, their professional titles are less likely to be used. Instead, the practice of addressing them by their full name along with a kinship term, as seen in Example 5.6, can have a diminishing effect, highlighting the push down the social hierarchy. One possible reason for not using a formal title is the complexity of their multiple roles, which makes it challenging to choose the most appropriate one. The extended use of pseudo-kinship term 姐姐 (older sister) might be seen as a better option which can express maturity and competence, as well as to enhance the perceived closeness of the relationship. Furthermore, as Weatherall (1998) pointed out, it is often unavoidable for females to be mentioned in terms of their relationships with males, as seen in Example 5.7. In our data, the female guest was initially addressed with the social title 女士 as seen in 李兰妮女士 (Ms. LI Lanni). According to Dion and Schuller (1990), women in managerial roles who were addressed as 'Ms.' were rated

higher in traits such as competence, leadership skills and overall masculinity compared to their counterparts addressed as 'Miss' or 'Mrs.' in the late 1980s. Therefore, the use of 女士 highlights the female guest's professional competence, leadership abilities, and perceived assertiveness.

Historically, talk show was once regarded as a feminine discourse because it was created to address issues with women. This is evident in iconic programme like the Oprah Winfrey's talk show, which frequently tackled women's issues and primarily targeted an audience of housewives. In such formats, women appeared to be at the centre of the discourse, with female host, topics and audiences dominating the scene. However, as the popularity of talk show expanded, various talk show formats emerged, differing in topics, participant categories, broadcasting time and organizational and interactional frameworks (More can found in the typology of talk shows (Ilie 2006)). The complexity of talk shows is even more challenging when participants of different genders are involved. In *Behind the Headline with Wentao,* when both experts and lay people of different gender groups are present as show guests, much of the programm's focus has to do with the interchange between them. The interchange of show guests thus become an issue of interchange of different gender. As observed in the results in our analysis, the choice of vocative form for females were FN which may be used to infer information about the perceived relative lower status and solidarity in social relationships (Brown and Ford 1961; Wolfson and Manes 1979). The frequency of the FN particularly for female guests may have potential for communicating sexism. In talk shows, personal experience and common sense knowledge have considerable status and increasingly appear as a form of knowledge in the talk show (Ilie 2006), the use of FN for female guests may indicate their relatively lacking of experience and knowledge compared to male guests. The choice of addressing may also be the requirement of programme effect, aiming to create confrontational and contrasting atmosphere.

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter delves into a critical aspect of language and gender: the way in which individuals are addressed. Specifically, it investigates the addressing practices by the host in the talk show setting. Talk shows serve a dual purpose of providing information and entertainment, a combination often referred to as 'infotainment' (Ilie 1999). Television, as a cultural medium, has the potential to provide valuable information about social conventions (Fiske and Hartley 1994; Weatherall 1996). Unlike the structured and formal nature of news interviews, talk shows are perceived as public fora that reserve a large place for casual conversation, apart from the typically institutional dialogue. Most existing studies focus on addressing practices focus on dyadic conversations, which involved two participants. However, examining multi-party conversations, such as those in talk shows, poses unique challenges and opportunities. The addressing practices

in the talk show by the host provide a rich source of data on spontaneous language, particularly in the question-answer sequences that involve multiple participants. The interaction between host and guests in this kind of context provides another dimension to investigate gender, especially when they are assigned different role as host or guests. In our analysis, the majority of the addressing terms are performed by the host who plays a controlling role in guiding the conversation. For better illustrating the performance of the host in addressing, this study focuses on cross-gender conversation where there are equal number of male and female participating in the conversations as guests. While there are many different types of addressing terms, the selection of them are not random (Ervin-Tripp 1969). The analysis reveals that names are used to mark intimacy when addressing women, while men are more likely to be addressed with terms that denote respect. Although blatantly stereotyped and negative views about women were not articulated, some subtle evidence of sexism was found in in the quantitative analysis as well as qualitative examples. These findings suggest that while talk shows may appear to promote gender equality on the surface, underlying biases still influence the way individuals are addressed based on their gender.

Asymmetrical differences in addressing forms have been linked to various factors such as age, gender, status, intimacy in previous studies. In the current analysis, gender plays a significant role in determining the addressing forms used in the talk show. The findings reveal that the host tends to use full name (FL) and first name (FN) to address female guests, while male guests are more often addressed with titles, such as title with last name (TLN) and title with full name (TFLN). This choice of address form serves as indicator of how language use can reflect underlying sexism (Weatherall 1996). Although female guests may be addressed by a social or professional titles, these titles often come with additional features that reinforce gender biases. For instance, addressing forms for female guests are sometimes prefixed with gender-marking terms like 女 , as seen in 女侦探 ('female detective'), a practice not applied to male guests. Moreover, when encountering females who hold multiple professional roles, such as being both an actor and a director, the chosen terms often objectify women rather than emphasizing their career achievement. For example, an actress who is also a film director was addressed as 玉女掌门人 'leader of the fair lady', a term that focuses on her appearance and reinforces traditional gender roles, rather than acknowledging her accomplishments in the film industry. These patterns underscore how gendered language in talk shows can perpetuate stereotypes and subtly undermine the professional identities of female guests.

Politeness strategies in Chinese culture are deeply influenced by traditional patriarchal values (Gu 1990; Pan 1995). The findings from the current analysis underscore the distinct ways in which these strategies are employed, particularly within the context of talk shows. Notably, the host places male and female guests at asymmetrical relation. The co-occurrence of addressing terms and pronouns in conversations highlights the different usage of politeness, particularly in relation to gender. For instance, male guests

are often addressed using the deferential pronoun you (您), accompanied by titles such as 许老师 'teacher Xu', which conveys a formal sense of respect. Conversely, the informal pronoun you (你) is slightly more frequently used when addressing female guests, suggesting a tone of intimacy and friendliness rather than formality. This distinction points to a gendered pattern in the use of politeness, where male guests are afforded more formal respects, while female guests are engaged with a more personal, less deferential level. In workplace contexts, negative politeness is generally a one-way direction from subordinate to superior. However, talk show environment demonstrates a more fluid use of both positive and negative politeness strategies towards guests of both genders to not only showing respect/friendliness but also achieve certain commercial effect. For instance, wordplay is employed to draw audience attention to a male director' talent, as seen in the phrase 今天咱们来了香港一只鬼，鬼才导演彭浩翔 'Today, we have a ghost from Hong Kong with us, the talented director Pang Ho Cheung'). Here, the playful use of the term 'ghost' cleverly draws attention to the director's creativity while maintaining a respectful tone. Similarly, the deferential pronoun 您 is used in expression like 跟您切磋切磋 'to exchange opinion and learn from each other' when addressing female guests, thereby balancing respect with an invitation to engage. This dynamic interplay between different forms of politeness reflects the complex social relationship navigated within the show, where politeness serves multiple purposes beyond mere courtesy. Given the multifaceted use of politeness strategies observed in the talk show, a close qualitative analysis was conducted to explore the politeness strategies in greater depth. This analysis reveals the intricate ways in which gender, role, respect, intimacy, and commercial considerations intersect in the language of the show.

Beyond the examination of politeness strategies and the influence of gender stereotypes, it is evident that the addressing practices in the current data set are significantly affected by traditional Chinese culture. Chinese cultural norms around naming deeply influence how individuals perceive and engage in addressing practice (Hagström 2012). In the context of talk show analysed, this cultural influence does not appear to place female guests at an advantage, despite the nominal equal status of male and female guests. This imbalance is observed in the structure of the multi-party conversation, where a male host consistently occupied the leading role. The disadvantage faced by female guests is further highlighted by the asymmetrical use of vocatives by the host, including first name (FN), objectifying forms, and gender-marking prefix 女 nv3 (female). These patterns reveal the subtle yet pervasive gender bias that persists in addressing practice within the Chinese society. The present study reinforces the importance of context in corpus-based approach when examining the addressing practices. Corpus analysis can provide valuable insights into studying the gender difference of addressing forms, particularly in a language lacks of grammatical gender marking such as Mandarin Chinese.

Chapter 6

Gender Difference in Tone Motifs, Rime Motifs and Pitch Variation: A Quantitative Analysis

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we present the quantitative analysis of gender use of motifs, including tone and rime motifs, as well as the pitch variation embedded in lexical tones in Mandarin Chinese. Under the framework of quantitative linguistics, the rhythmic units can be studied by the distribution of length (Best 2002). The rhythmic units are further developed into *linguistic motifs* (Köhler 2015). The property of frequency distributions can be used to understand different linguistic phenomena. Linguistic motifs describe the sequential structure of linguistic expressions which can be measured in terms of word length, their part-of-speech as well as tone and rimes depending on the research focus. Motifs are a concept within quantitative linguistics which concerns with the statistical analysis of units, properties and their relations in the sequential organization. Motifs have been applied to stylometric attributions which separate topic, genres and individual authors and possible for gender (Köhler and Naumann 2008, 2010). In particular, author gender classification is a study to categorise gender according to some linguistic features. It was observed that there is gender difference when investigating email discourse (Corney et al. 2002), blog (Goswami et al. 2009), and the transcript of parliamentary speech (Mandravickaitė and Krilavičius 2017). However, the categorization are mainly based on lexical level such as function words and word length (Kucukyilmaz et al. 2006). It is different from the traditional text classification problems which focus on categorization according to topic. It also differs from stylometric problems that in finding out the consistent habits of styles of individual authors.

In fact, speech and music are integral elements of the human communicative toolkit

(Cross 2023). The connection between language and music is particularly strong in tonal language such as Mandarin Chinese because rhyming is the central motifs of Mandarin phonology (Cheng 1966). Gender groups have similarities and differences in different areas such as phonology and lexical choice and pragmatic use of language. McConnell-Ginet (1978) suggested that the differences in language use between men and women should be systematically studied in a clear context, because the same forms can have a variety of use in different situations. For instance, Ii the workplace where masculine characteristics is more desirable, women would use particular forms and to adjust themselves to meet the needs of the environment (Holmes 2000).

Within the field of authorship distribution, Hou and Huang (2020) proposed phonological features of tone and rime motifs (i.e. the longest of continuous sequence of equal tone/rime) can be reliable indicators for authorship classification. Tone and rime motifs are associated with repetition which is a rhyming technique according to their definition. Rhyming technique has been frequently used in Chinese written and spoken materials. For example, the extensive uses of alliteration and assonance in the poem are effective means to enable a language to be musical and rhythmical, and both important factors to produce musical beauty. In spoken interaction, conversation is regarded as a joint activities where friends become rhythmic which can be wording, rhythms and turns and pitched when they are highly engaged in successful conversations (Hawkins et al. 2013; Norrick and Bubel 2009).

The present study aims to investigate 'rhythmic' units which are tone and rime motifs as well as the pitch variation embedded in lexical tones in order to classify gender difference in Mandarin Chinese in the context of talk show. Section 6.2-6.4 provides the overview of related studies. Section 6.5 illustrates the process of tone and rime motifs extractions and data for this analysis and how these motifs are used for gender classification. Section 6.6 analyses the statistical distribution of the distribution of tone and rime motifs and pitch variations. Section 6.7 explains how these statistical distribution resemble gender similarities and differences. This study is concluded by considering the implications and the potential values of gender differences in tone and rime motifs as a means to understand language and gender.

6.2   Linguistics motifs and the applications

The theoretical background for the distributions of units of different length in texts is based on the assumption that if length is a variable, its different values occur in texts occur in texts are lawfully organised (Best 2002). Linguistics motifs, as defined by Köhler (2015), is 'the longest continuous sequence of equal or increasing values representing a quantitative property of a linguistic unit'. This idea was inspired by the F-motiv for musical 'text' proposed by musicologist Boroda, as cited in Köhler 2015. The idea of motif was named 'rhythmic units' (Best 2002) and 'sequence' (Köhler 2008) before its

systematical overview in Köhler (2015). Any linguistic unit (e.g., phone, word, phrase, syllable, clause) and any linguistic property (polysemy, poly-functionality) can be motif. Within the 'language in line' approach, we are able to see the sequential structure of linguistic expressions in general texts by the distribution of unit pairs of adjacent units in a text (Köhler 2008). Various experiences with the frequency distributions from distributional analysis in syntagmatic dimension in quantitative linguistics show promising differences between authors and genres classifications (Köhler and Naumann 2008).

A lot of different kinds of motifs were defined for text representation, such as L-motifs, F-motifs, P-motifs and T-motifs. In particular, Hou and Huang (2020) defined tone motifs as the longest continuous sequence of tones that are the same. These motifs are not random but behave in a way similar to other intuitive units of linguistic analysis. There are some features motifs denote. First of all, these motifs are self-organised sequence and display a rank-frequency distribution of Zipf-Mandelbrot (ZM) types from empirical research, which captures the distribution of frequency motifs. For example, each of the 66 documents (30 poems and 36 short stories) written by different German authors shows a rank-frequency distributions of the 3 kinds of motifs according to the Zipf-Mandelbrot distribution (Köhler and Naumann 2008). Second, the parameters of the Zipf-Mandelbrot distributions can be used for text classification. Bentz et al. (2014)'s analysis elicited that parameters (α, β and C) in Zipf-Mandelbrot distribution can interpret the significant difference between two diachronic parallel texts of Old English and Modern English. The parameters of Zipf-Mandelbrot distributions separated several genres in BNC corpus successfully (Wang 2017). Third, the length of motifs on word level was found to be distributed according to the Hyper-Pascal distribution. (Köhler and Naumann 2008).

6.3 Hidden musicality in language

Cross (2023) claimed that speech and music are integral elements of the human communicative toolkit. In tonal language such as Mandarin Chinese, there is a strong connection between music and the language in which Chao (1956) calls it 'tonal composition'. In fact, the notion of rhyming has been the central motif of traditional Chinese phonology (Cheng 1966). Materials with rhyme and repetition read pleasantly and easy to remember (Pickering and Garrod 2004). According to Chao (1968), the Chinese words have connections with musical elements. There are four basic identical tones in Chinese: a high, level tone [H] (Tone 1); a rising tone [LH] (Tone 2); a low tone [L] (Tone 3); and a falling tone [HL] (Tone 4).

Additionally, the lexical tones in Mandarin Chinese can be measured by the canonical onset and offset values (Chao 1968; Shih 1986; Xu 1997). As observed in Table 6.1, Tone 1 and Tone 4 exhibit high onset values, while Tone 2 and Tone 3 have low onset values. In terms of offset values, Tone 1 and Tone 2 end on high pitches, whereas Tone 3 and Tone

		OFFSET	
		High	Low
ONSET	High	Tone 1	Tone 4
	Low	Tone 2	Tone 3

Table 6.1: Canonical onset and offset values of the four Mandarin tones

4 end on low pitches. These onset and offset values can be distorted by the neighboring tones (Xu 1994). Phonetic acoustic analysis have further detailed the features of the four lexical tones. For instance, Tone 4 is more likely to be affected by a preceding tone than by a following one. When Tone 4 appears in succession (i.e.: T4+T4), the high onset value of the preceding Tone 4 reduces the range of average fundamental frequency (F0), making the following Tone 4 falls deeper than the previous one. Further analysis have explored the interaction between tone and emotion. Li et al. (2011) studied emotional intonation in Mandarin Chinese across 7 emotions including sadness, happiness, anger, fear, surprise, disgust and neutrality. The results indicated gender difference in the use of emotional intonation compared to neutral tone.

The intricate interplay of tonal features and repetition in Chinese intonation not only shapes its musicality but also enhances communication efficiency and coherence. Chinese intonation is primarily characterised by its tonal features (Shen 1987). These tonal variations specify the intonation patterns. While the number of words in a sentence is unlimited, word tones allow a limited range of melodic variation without losing the identity of the basic tones (Chao 1968). In Chinese, strategies such as repeating the same word or sound are used to form musical quality in speech. The initial or ending places are significant because rhyming syllables, which usually occur at these positions, tend to be more consistent and diagnostic (Pian 2000). Margulis and Simchy-Gross (2016) observed that repetition has robust effect on musical preference and can express musicality. Their study showed that a repeated tone sequence (e.g., 123123) sound more musical than a randomly generated one (e.g., 123). Repetition is commonly found in Chinese poetry, contributing to its rhythmic quality. Sun (2011) observed that Chinese poetry is more rhythmic compared to English poetry because of the limited set of 4 basic tones in Mandarin Chinese, which results in a higher number of homophones with identical pronunciation. Repetition also serves as a communicative strategy in conversations (Tannen 2007a). It is commonly observed in adjacency pairs from dyadic exchange with pragmatic functions summarised by Norrick (1987). Tannen (1987) noted that repetition in conversation extends beyond merely repeating words, but also involves creating parallel rhythm and intonation, even with different words. Hearer-oriented repetition in conversation contributes to discourse coherence (Halliday 1985) and aids in the hearer's understanding. In contrast, speaker-oriented repetition, on the other hand, allows the speaker to hold the floor, gain planning time, and simplify speech production (Norrick 1987). Another musical feature in conversation is the *prosodic*

entrainment, where two speakers adapt their prosody to that of their interlocutor to facilitate smoother communication (Xia and Ma 2016). Prosodic entrainment involves synchronizing elements such as pitch, rhythm, and intonation, creating a harmonious interaction. A study by University of Cambridge, conducted by Robledo et al. (2016), discovered that when speakers are highly engaged with each other, the conversation exhibits more rhythmic features. These strategies can become particularly crucial in conversations involving gender issues, where communication dynamics may be more complex.

6.4 Pitch variation in Mandarin Chinese

Pitch differences between males and females are evident in their average fundamental frequency (F0), with females typically having an F0 above 150Hz and males below 150Hz (Chan 1998). According to the studies published in UK and China (Hawkins et al. 2013; Lawson 2020), spoken interactions between same-sex friends become rhythmic and pitched when the friends were highly engaged. Pitch and intonation play crucial roles in gendered speech, reflecting both social and physiological differences between males and females. Phonetically, one of the stereotypes central to 'feminine' speech is its dynamism, as described by Crystal (2011). This involves a relatively wide pitch range with frequent and rapid long glides, although features such as orality, tense articulation, and breathiness may also play a role. The seminal study conducted by Pike (1945), as cited in McConnell-Ginet (1978) of American English intonation highlights patterns associated with women's speech as 'polite and cheerful', 'unexpectedness and surprise', 'hesitation', and 'incomplete and unexpected'. Conversely, men tend to avoid certain intonation patterns, particularly those that do not end at the lowest pitch level, reserving a final, short upstep for special effects. Intonation tunes are thus a major way speakers express emotional involvement, attitudes, and their general stance in the discourse. Gender preferences in some sound production are evident from a young age. Haas (1979) observed that little girls produce more high, oral and giggling sounds that are soft, whereas boys tend to produce more low and nasal that are tough in English. However, studies assessing the nasalance scores between males and females in Korean and Chinese indicate that females have higher nasalance scores than males, suggesting physiological difference between gender (Park et al. 2014). Hu (1991) found sounds produced with mouth less open, such as fronted palatals and dental sounds, contribute to a more 'lady-like' perception in Chinese, while alveolar sounds tend to be more 'blunt' and 'masculine'. These findings underscore the intricate role of pitch and intonation in conveying social and gendered nuances in speech, highlighting gender-specific patterns across different languages and cultures. However, does the pitch difference shown on tones in Mandarin Chinese?

The four tones in Mandarin Chinese differ in both pitch height and pitch contour.

These tones are measurable according to the tone pitch and contour in the 5-point scale in Chao (1968). According to the five points in the scale, the pitch of four tones in Mandarin Chinese can be measure in terms of pitch height: 1 low, 2 half-low, 3 middle, 4 half-high, and 5 high. For Tone 1, it starts at the highest in the scale and stay till the end resulting a level tone. Tone 2 starts at the middle and rise to the high point, resulting a rising tone. Tone 3 is a dipping tone which start at the half-low position and fall to the lowest point and immediately rises to half high. Tone 4 is a falling tone which start high and falls to the lowest point in the scale, resulting a falling tone. Comparable to segmental phones, Xu and Wang (2001) defined two types of pitch targets which is the smallest operable units associated with linguistically functional pitch units - static and dynamic. Tone 1 is static high ([high]) and Tone 3 is static low ([low]), tone 2 and tone 4 can be measured by their pitch movement as rising (r) and falling (f) respectively. Given the above-mentioned similarities and difference in the tone pitch in Mandarin Chinese as well as the difference in sound production in different gender groups, it is reasonable to hypothesise that pitch variations may be embedded in the lexical tones. Based on this assumption, it is possible to further examine whether there is gender difference in the tone pitch variation.

6.5   Methods and Data

The present study adopts a corpus-based approach as the primary method, incorporating quantitative linguistics, stylometric analysis to examine the tone and rime motifs for gender classification. The data consists of 115 episodes of the talk show *Behind the Headline with Wentao* on Phoenix TV in 2013, and available on its official website. Each episode features three participants: a male host, a female guest speaker and a male guest speaker). Notably, Wentao Dou is the consistent host across all episodes, while the guest speakers vary and come from diverse social backgrounds. The topics discussed in this talk show span a wide range of issues, from challenging current affairs to widely shared private matters. The descriptive statistics of the words and tokens are listed in Table 6.2.

Groups	Tokens	Words
Host	169,289	145,573
Female guests	154,406	132,775
Male guests	147,175	126,557

Table 6.2: Descriptive data for words in 115 cross-gender conversations

The tone and rime motifs have not been taken much notes of in the research up to now. Based on Hou and Huang (2020)'s definition, tone/rime motifs as the longest continuous sequence of tones/rimes that are the same. After converting the Chinese sentence into pinyin, tones of the Chinese characters can be extracted. For example,

the tones and rimes of the Chinese characters in the following sentence were extracted as follows (0 refers to neutral tones and 1-4 refer to the basic tones in Mandarin Chinese):

中国人　　　买　　茶
zho1ngguo2re2n　ma3i　cha2
'Chinese people buy tea.'
The tone and rime of each character can be extracted as follows.
1　2　2　3　2
ong　uo　en　ai　a

This sentence can be represented by the following different kinds of motifs:
tone motifs: (1)(22)(3)(2)
rime motifs: (ong)(uo)(en)(ai)(a)
tone motifs of all initial characters: (1)(3)(2)
tone motifs in absolute initial position: (1)

By using motifs to represent texts, any texts can be converted into numerical values that can be segmented in an objective and unambiguous manner. Motifs are scalable concerning granularity. Following the methodology in Hou and Huang (2020), all segments between commas, semicolons, colons, period, exclamation marks, and question marks that indicate pauses are marked as sentences. The rank-frequency of motifs across gender groups was determined and fitted using Altmann Fitter. The appropriateness of the fit was assessed by the determination coefficient R^2, with values above 0.9 typically considered satisfactory (Mačutek and Wimmer 2013). The Altmann Fitter 3.1.8 (https://www.ram-verlag.eu/software-neu/software/) was employed as the fitting tool to conduct the experiment. It is the most widely used curve fitting tool in quantitative linguistics, encompassing most models used in quantitative linguistics, including nearly all known length distribution models. Additionally, it offers a 'Batch Fitting' feature, allowing for easy parameter extraction from a batch input of texts. Various tone and rime motif data were processed using Altmann Fitter. The sylometric features of tone and rime motifs of all characters as well as all initial/final characters are selected to represent texts. Each stylometric feature was compared across three groups cross-gender conversation groups, i.e. female guest speakers, male guest speakers and the host.

As for model, we apply the well-proven **Zipf-Mandelbrot distribution** which was used in L-, F- and P-motif distribution with excellent result (Köhler 2015) to tone and rime motifs of different positions. If the rank of a word is defined as r_i and its frequency as $f(r_i)$, the expected frequency distribution can be captured in the following Equation 6.1 (derived from Mandelbrot et al. 1953, p. 491):

$$f(r_i) = \frac{C}{(\beta + r_i)^\alpha}, C > 0, \alpha > 1, \beta > -1, i = 1, 2, ..., n \tag{6.1}$$

Tone and rime motifs symbolise the musical tones in the utterances. As a genre, the theme of talk show emphasis on various topics related to everyday life, showing the opinions of participants. The content of talk show is rich as it conveys different people's perspectives on social life from celebrities, ordinary people as well as people's views concerning personal affairs and life in general.

In Equation 6.1, α and β are parameters and C is a normalizing constant. The parameters and the constant account for modification of the original law stated by Zipf. In this equation, C, α and β can be adjusted to change the intercept, the slope and the deviance from linearity of the function. The length of motifs on word level was found to be distributed according to the Hyper-Pascal distribution (Equation 6.2).

$$y = \frac{\binom{k + x - 1}{x}}{\binom{m + x - 1}{x}} q^x p_0, x = 0, 1, 2, ... \tag{6.2}$$

6.6 Findings and results

6.6.1 The rank-frequency distribution of tone and rime motifs

In this section, we analyse the rank-frequency distribution of tone and rime motifs based on a self-built corpus, By extracting and computerizing motifs, motifs on tone and rime level was studied, yielding satisfactory results. Specifically, the tone and rime motifs fitted well with the Zipf-Mandelbrot distribution (Equation 6.1). Each of the 115 text of tone and rime motifs in the talk shows displayed a rank-frequency distribution consistent with the Zipf-Mandelbrot distribution. Figure 6.1(a) illustrates the fit of this distribution to the data from one text based on a log-log scale. The goodness-of-fit, determined using the determination coefficient R^2, was 0.9733 with 17 degrees of freedom. In this text, 1723 tone motifs were identified, forming 21 different patterns. Table 6.3 demonstrates the rank-frequency distributions of tone motifs in a female guest's speech. As indicated in this table, the monosyllabic tone motifs '4', '1', '3', '2' and '5' were the top 5 most frequent ones, indicating Tone 4 is the most frequently used tone motif. These findings underscore the robust application of Zipf-Mandelbrot distribution to tone and rime motifs in spoken language analysis.

In this analysis, fitting the Zipf-Mandelbrot distribution Equation 6.1 to the rime motif data yielded excellent results for all 115 texts with R^2 values exceeding 0.9 in all except one text. Figure 6.1(b) shows the fit of this distribution to the data from one text based on rime motifs on a log-log scale. The goodness-of-fit, determined using

(a) tone motifs

(b) rime motifs
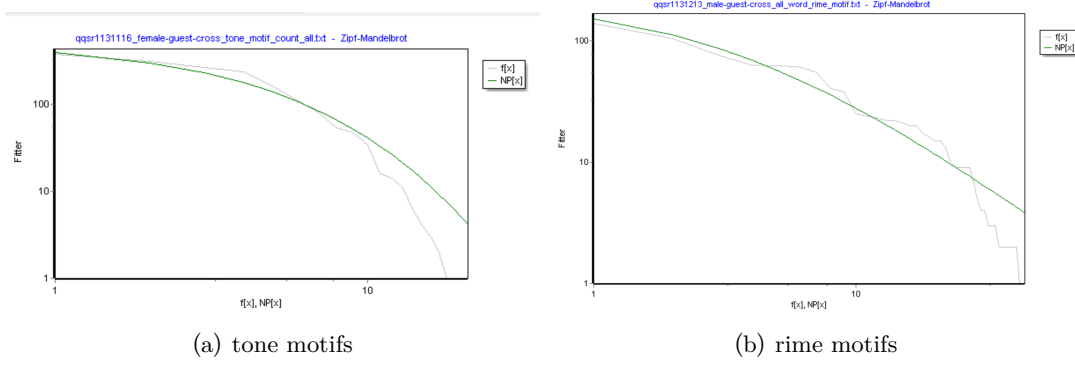
Figure 6.1: Rank frequency distribution of tone motifs of all characters in a text

Rank	Tone motif	Count	Rank	Tone motif	Count
1	4	262	11	333	11
2	1	247	12	111	8
3	3	234	13	4444	7
4	2	219	14	44444	6
5	5	133	15	55	6
6	44	98	16	3333	2
7	33	44	17	222	2
8	11	39	18	444444	1
9	444	39	19	33333	1
10	22	24			

Table 6.3: The rank-frequency distributions of tone motifs of all characters in Text1 for female guests' speech

determination coefficient R^2, was 0.97 with 40 degrees of freedom. In this text, 982 rime motifs were found forming 44 different patterns. The top 20 rank-frequency distributions of rime motifs in a text from male guests' speech (Table 6.4) with the top 5 rime motifs being 'i', 'e', 'a', 'u', 'uo', indicating /i/ is the most frequently used rime motif. These results indicate that tone and rime motifs are self-organizing system in texts. The distribution of tone and rime motifs across different groups in all texts is displayed in Figure 6.2. As shown in the figures, the shapes of these distributions showed some variations across cross-gender conversations, especially the motifs in high rankings. However, it was difficult to determine whether these differences are statistically significant. Therefore, we compared parameter *a* and parameter *b* across different groups to illustrate the variations. This comparison provided deeper insights into the differences in motif distributions among various gender groups in the analysed texts.

Rank	Rime motif	Count	Rank	Rime motif	Count
1	i	240	11	en	60
2	e	165	12	ao	54
3	a	91	13	ang	53
4	u	90	14	ing	37
5	uo	88	15	ong	36
6	uei	83	16	uan	34
7	iou	68	17	iao	33
8	ai	68	18	ie	33
9	ian	65	19	ei	32
10	an	64	20	ii	30

Table 6.4: Top 20 of the rank-frequency distributions of rime motifs of all characters in Text1 for male guests' speech

6.6.2 The parameters of the Zipf-Mandelbrot law

Köhler (2015) proposed that the parameters in the Zipf-Mandelbrot law can be used for text classification. These parameters have been utilised to study diachronic changes of Old and Modern English, as well as for genre and authorship classification (e.g.: Bentz et al. (2014), Koplenig (2018), and Izsák (2006)). The values of parameter a and b in the Zipf-Mandelbrot distribution relate to the extent of steepness and deviation from original slope of the distribution (Bentz et al. 2014), indicating that the distribution varies across groups. Several studies reported that the values of parameters a and b are correlated when the distribution is fitted to data (cf. Izsák (2006) and Koplenig (2018)). The values of parameters a and b were obtained after fitting the 115 texts to ZM model. The box plots in Figure 6.3 and Figure 6.4 show two parameters' indices in tone motifs and rime motifs of all characters (parameter a and parameter b) and divide into in three groups (female guests, male guests and host). The boxes show the data between the 25th and 75 Percentile, the middle line represents the median. Since the data is not normally distributed, Mann-Whitney U test on parameter a and b across different groups in cross-gender conversations were carried out respectively and the results in Table 6.5 and Table 6.6, indicating that it is possible to distinguish gender and role by comparing the parameters in the Zipf-Mandelbrot distribution. The boxplots were obtained. We considered multiplier $G = 1.5$, as per the original definition (Tukey et al. 1977).

When using tone motifs to represent texts, significant differences are observed between the host and female guests, as well as the host and male guests (p_b=0.0021 and p_b=0.0205 respectively). As shown in the box plot in Figure 6.3 (a), the median values for parameter a are the same across three groups, and the interquartile range (IQR) is very small, with the first quartile (Q1) and third quartile (Q3) being identical. This indicates that 50% of the data is concentrated at a single value. Thus, there is no statistically significant across the three groups for parameter a, as suggested by the Mann-Whitney U test results in Table 6.5. In contrast, there is statistically significant
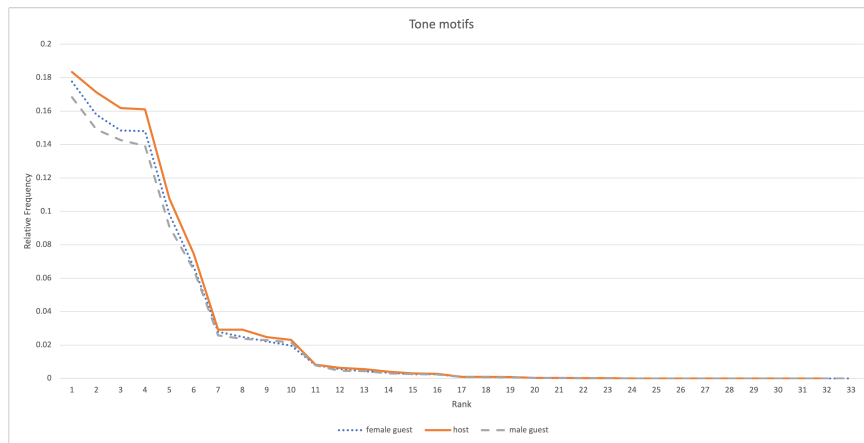
(a) Rank frequency distributions of tone motifs of all characters in cross-gender conversations
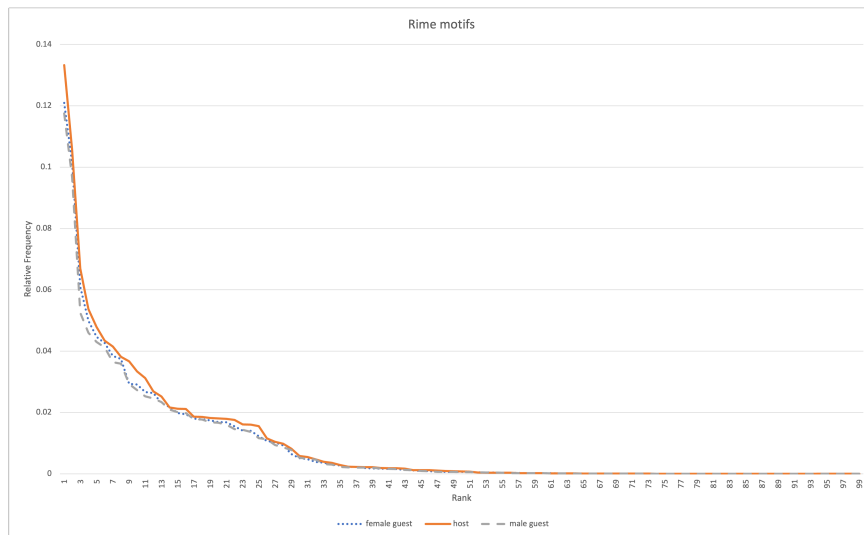
(b) Rank frequency distributions of rime motifs of all characters in cross-gender conversations

Figure 6.2: Rank frequency distribution of tone/rime motifs of all characters

in parameter b. As shown in the Figure 6.3 (b), the median of parameter b for the host's group (median=39.44) is greater than that of the guests (both male guests and female guests) (median=37.64). The Mann-WhitneyU test in Table 6.5 further confirms this difference, suggesting that the variation in parameter b is related to asymmetrical power relations. A higher b value indicates that the host's speech deviates more strongly from the predicted slope of a at higher frequencies compared to the speech of female and male guests. This difference is attributed to the higher frequencies of common tone motifs such as 4, 3, 1, 2, 5, 44, 33 etc. Thus, the b value appears to reflect the host's increased usage of these higher-frequency tone motifs. This finding aligns with the C-value, which indicates that the host's speech contains more tokens compared to the speech of male and female guests.

	Parameter a	Parameter b
Female guest v.s. Host	0.0827	0.0021*
Female guest v.s. Male guest	1.0000	0.4646
Male guest v.s. Host	0.084	0.0205*

Table 6.5: p value of Mann-Whitney U test for parameters in tone motif of all characters in cross-gender conversations (* represents the p value $<.05$)

	Parameter a	Parameter b
Female guest v.s. Host	0.2986	0.6528
Female guest v.s. Male guest	0.0038*	0.0045*
Male guest v.s. Host	0.0000*	0.0013*

Table 6.6: p value of Mann-Whitney U test for parameters in rime motif of all characters in cross-gender conversations (* represents the p value $<.05$)

(a) Parameter a (b) Parameter b
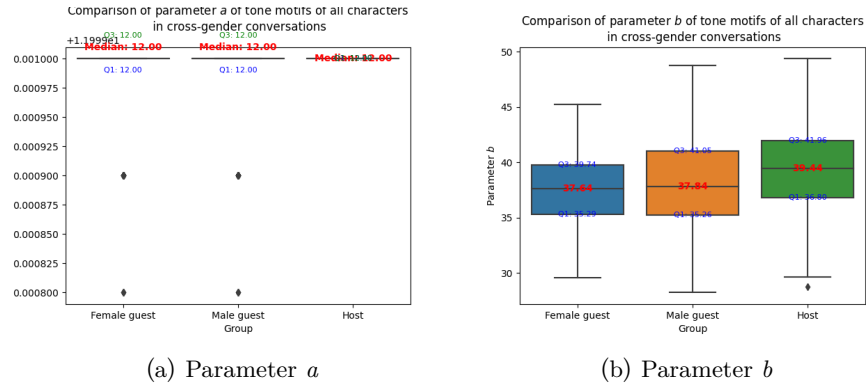
Figure 6.3: Parameter a and b in ZM model for tone motifs of all characters

When using rime motifs of all characters to represent texts, significant differences are found between female and male guests (p_a=0.0038 and p_b=0.0045), as well as between the host and male guests (p_a=0.0000 and p_b=0.0013). The a value, which is associated with steepness of the slope; indicates that a larger a value results in fewer hapax legomena (words that appear only once). However, this relationship is difficult to discern from the figure due to the merging of the 'tail' at the end. A higher a value indicates that female guests had more hapax legomena than male guests (4961 and 4913 respectively). The host also used greater number of hapax legomena compared to male guests (5262 and 4913 respectively). The two groups mentioned above also differ significantly in b value. As shown in Figure 6.4, the median score was similar between host's and female guests' groups but differed from that of the male guests' group for both parameter a and b. The higher frequencies in female guests' speech deviate more strongly from the original predicted slope of a than those in male guests' speech. A higher b value is observed in the host's speech compared to the male guest group. This difference is due to even

higher frequencies for already highly frequent rime motifs such as i, e, a, u and uo. Therefore, the *b* value indicates an increased usage of higher-frequency rime motifs in female guests' speech compared to male guests, as well as in the host's speech compared to male guests. The results indicate that the parameters in ZM models for tone and rime motifs can distinguish gender and role differences to some extent.

(a) Parameter *a*   (b) Parameter *b*
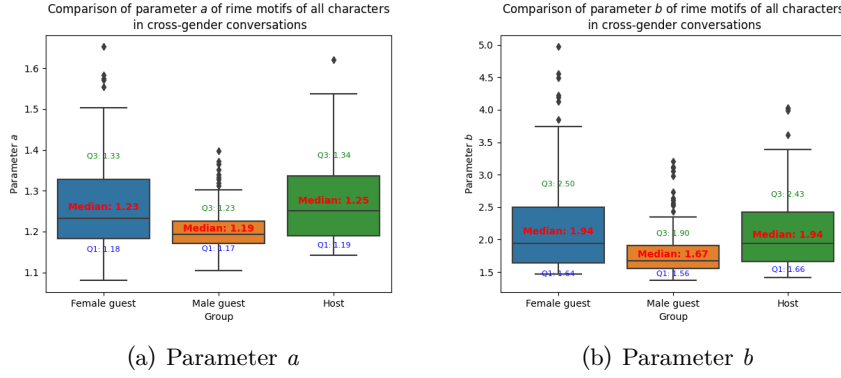
Figure 6.4: Parameter *a* and *b* in ZM model for rime motifs of all characters

6.6.3   Length distributions of tone and rime motifs

The rank frequency distributions of tone and rime motifs in Table 6.3 and Table 6.4 show that the most frequently used tone and rime motifs are short, containing primarily monosyllabic or disyllabic units. Similarly, the word-token frequencies for the number of characters in words, as presented for each group in Figure 6.5, show that the most frequently used word length are monosyllabic words, followed by disyllabic words. Tri-syllabic and multi-syllabic words are significantly less common across all groups. Particularly, the host used a relatively higher proportion of monosyllabic words, followed by female guests and male guests. In contrast, male guests used more disyllabic words compared to female guests and host. For tri-syllabic words, both the host and male guests use them more frequently than female guests, resulting in a higher mean word length for males (including the host and guests) compared to female guests. Table 6.7 shows that the host speaks the most words, suggesting a dominant role in the conversation. Male guests tended to use slightly longer words compared to female guests and the host. While the mean tone length was similarly distributed in all groups, the host had the longest mean rime length, which might indicate a slightly different speech pattern compared to guests. Additionally, groups with a higher mean word length tended to have higher mean tone length. Similarly, group with larger total word count was accompanied by a higher mean rime motif length.

Figure 6.6 presents the length distribution of tone and rime motifs in cross-gender conversations. It was found that maximum of tone motif length was longer than rime
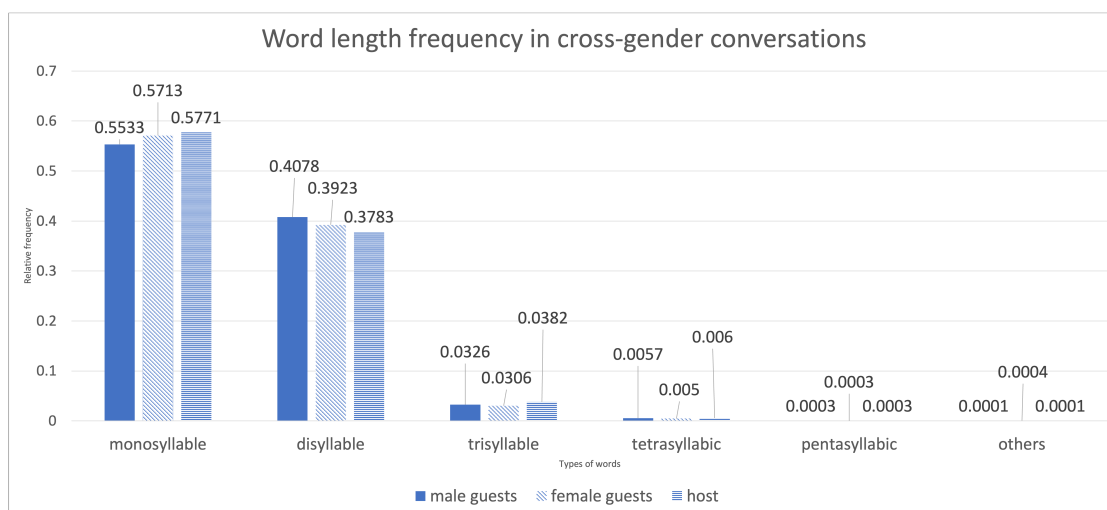
Figure 6.5: Word length frequency by token in cross-gender conversations

	Female guests	Male guests	Host
Total Word Count	154,406	147,175	169,289
Mean Word Length	1.4765	1.4965	1.4783
Mean Tone Motif Length	1.2794	1.2895	1.2878
Mean Rime Motif Length	1.0645	1.0615	1.0700

Table 6.7: Descriptive statistics of total word count (TWC), mean word length (MWL), mean tone motif length (MTL) and mean rime motif length (MRL) in cross-gender conversations

motif length. Theoretically, the maximum size of tone and rime motif are unlimited, but our empirical findings reveal that tone motifs do not exceed a length of 13, and rime motifs do not exceed a length of 8. The longest tone motif, with a length of 13 appearing in male guests' speech when tones of all final characters are considered:

所以 就要 判断 这 件 事 对 这个 反对 势力 是 不 是 有效。

suo3yi3 jiu4ya4o pa4ndua4n zhe4 jia4n shi4 dui4 zhe4ge4 fa3ndui4 shi4li4 shi4 bu4 shi4 yo3uxia4o

'So, it is necessary to determine whether this matter is effective against the opposition force.'

(3)(4444444444444)

In terms of length distribution of rime motifs in cross-gender conversations, the longest rime motif, with a length of 8 was found in the host's speech when rime of all characters were considered :

乐乐 呵呵 乐乐 呵呵

le4le4 he1he1 le4le4 he1he1

(eeeeeee)

'Laughter and chuckles'

Empirical studies on word length in Greek also confirm that longer words length typically have low occurrence (Mikros and Macutek 2017). Similarly, it is observed that the longer the tone motifs or rime motifs are, the smaller the probability of their occurrence.

(a) tone motifs   (b) rime motifs
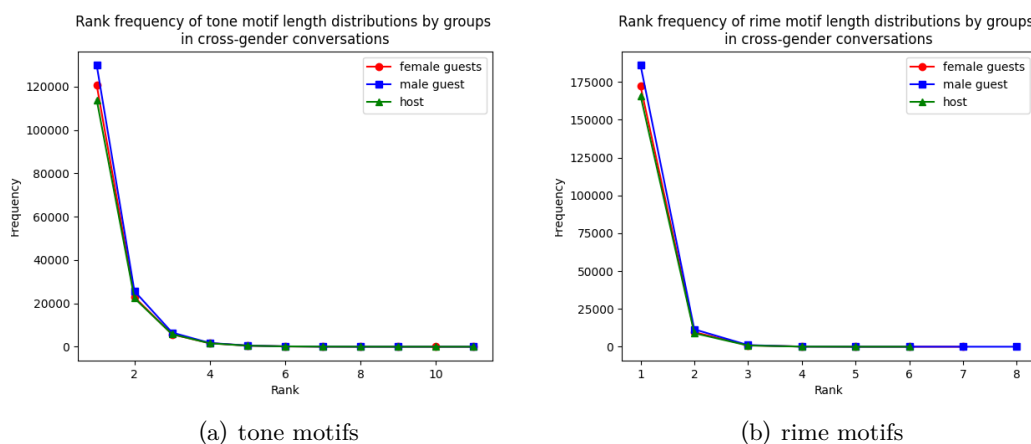
Figure 6.6: Rank frequency of tone/rime motifs of all characters in cross-gender conversations

6.6.4 Initial and final tone and rime motifs of all characters

In this section, the initial and final tone of all characters were extracted and analysed. As shown in Figure 6.7, similar ranking for the tone frequency are shared across groups. Specifically, falling Tone 4 is the most frequently used tone, followed by tone 3, tone 1 and tone 2 in the initial position. A similar ranking of tones is observed in the final position, with Tone 4 being the most frequently used, followed by tone 3 and tone 1. However, in the final position, the occurrence of neutral tone 5 surpasses tone 2 (Figure 6.7 (b)). Comparing cross-group differences at the initial position, it consistently appears that the host has the highest relative frequency across all five tones compared to the guests. Additionally, among the guest groups, females exhibit a higher relative frequency in all five tones than males. Similar patterns are observed at the final positions across groups, except that females produce fewer Tone 2 than male guests at the final position.

A rime consists of a medial, a syllabic vowel and a coda, with the syllabic vowel being essential while the other two parts are optional. According to the rank frequency of top five rime motifs (Figure 6.8), there is a tendency to use monophthongs more frequently than diphthongs, and rimes without nasal codas appear more often than those with

(a) initial position
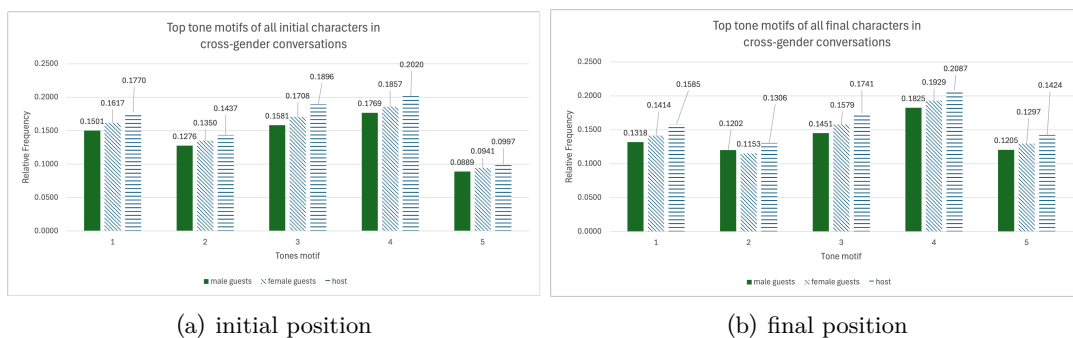
(b) final position

Figure 6.7: Tone motifs of all initial/final characters in cross-gender conversations

nasal codas. In addition, the high front vowel /i/ is the most frequently used vowel in the initial position among all three groups investigated. Notably, females use the high front vowel /i/ relatively more than male guests. While the overall rime usage is similar across the three groups, differences emerge when considering initial and final positions. At the initial position, all groups most frequently use the high front vowel /i/. However, female guests and male guests use /e/ more than /i/ at the final position.

(a) initial position
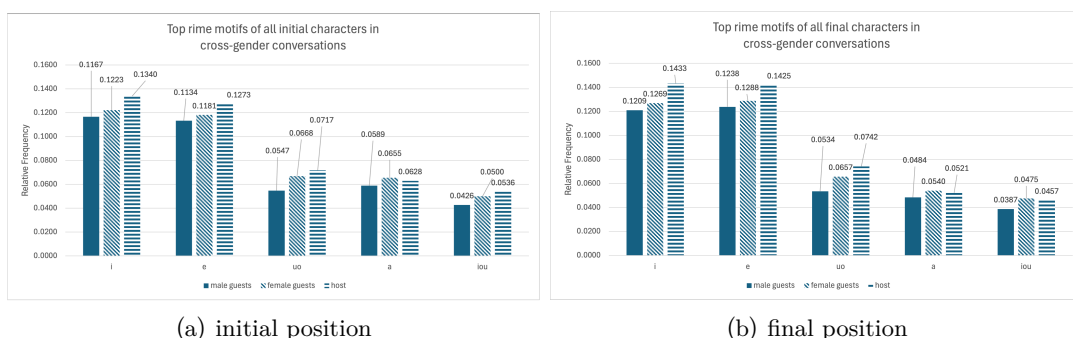
(b) final position

Figure 6.8: Rime motifs of all initial/final characters in cross-gender conversations

6.6.5   Tone motifs at the absolute positions

According to Chao (1956), the rhythmic tone typically occurs at the beginning or end of a phrase to aid listener recognition. Therefore, the absolute initial and final positions in an utterance are considered diagnostic tones.

Initial position

The tone motifs at the absolute initial position are extracted and shown in Figure 6.9 at the end of this chapter. The results indicate that 32 types of tone motifs are used in the initial position. Among these tone motifs, the top 5 include both monosyllabic and disyllabic motifs: 3, 4, 1, 44, 2, respectively. This order is consistent across all three

subgroups. The most frequently used motif among these top five is the monosyllabic Tone 3. In addition, two of the top 5 motifs are associated with Tone 4, which has a high onset and low offset (i.e., T4, T44). Monosyllabic high-level Tone 1 and high-rising Tone 2, both of which have high offsets, are also commonly used in initial positions but not as frequently as Tone 3 and Tone 4.

When comparing the gender difference between male and female guests, it is observed that while the types of tone motifs are similar, their frequencies differ significantly. According to the results presented in Table 7.4 in the appendix, five types of tone motifs show notable gender differences at the initial position of utterances (χ^2=122.426, df=29, p-value <.05). Male guests use the monosyllabic tone motif of Tone 3 more frequently (24.4% vs 23.20%) as well as sequence T444 (4.4% vs 3.5%) and T444444 (0.3% vs 0.2%) compared to female guests. In contrast, female guests tend to use more monosyllabic tone motifs of the high-rising Tone 2 (12.8% vs 10.30%) and the tone motif sequence of T333 (2.00% vs 1.5%). It is important to note that Tone 3 is typically a 'half-third' tone in the non-final position (Chao 1968). The results align with the previous observation that the most frequently occurring ones are relatively short. There is a tendency for longer tone motifs to be less common in the initial position. Additionally, the neutral tone is rarely found at the initial position across all three subgroups.

When examining the role difference between guests and the host, all groups share similar types of tone motifs, but with statistically significant variations in frequency as observed in Table 7.5 and Table 7.6 in the appendix. The host and female guests contain 29 types of tone motifs, while male guests produce only 26 types. Despite the similarity in motif patterns, the frequency of their occurrence varies between the host and guest speakers. As the host takes a leading role in the talk show, he produces more words and consequently more tone motifs than guests. For monosyllabic tone motif, the host frequently uses the dipping tone T3, which has a low pitch register, while the guests use more T1 with its high pitch register, and the falling tone T4 at the absolute initial position. In addition, the host tends to use more T11, T111, and T44 motifs at the initial position while the guests favor T22 and T33. Notably, female guests are observed to use T2 more frequently than the host. When comparing male guests and the host, it is found that the host significantly uses T5 more often, although its overall percentage at the initial position remains very low. In summary, while the host and guests share a repertoire of tone motifs, their usage differs in frequency and type at the initial position, reflecting the distinct roles they play in the talk show.

Final position

Similar to the tone motifs at the absolute initial position, tone motifs at the final position are extracted. It is observed that various types of tone motifs are utilised in Mandarin Chinese (Figure 6.10), Tone 4 (T4) is the most prominent tone motif, appearing most

frequently in both male and female guest groups. There are 10 different types of tone motifs related to T4, making it the longest tone motif with up to 11 continuous T4 tones:

然后 这个 放 在 这个 案件 上面
ra2nho4u zhe4ge4 fa4ng za4i zhe4ge4 a4njia4n sha4ngmia4n
'Then, apply this to this case.'
(2)(44444444444)

The top 5 tone motifs for guest speakers, ranked by frequency, are T4, T5, T2, T3, and T1. Conversely, the top 5 tone motifs for the host are T5, T4, T2, T1 and T3. Monosyllabic tone patterns are the most frequently used across all groups. A closer examination reveals that a large proportion of these T5 motifs represents sentence-final particles (SFPs), reinforcing their importance in conversation as discussed in previous chapter. Similar to the tone motifs at the initial position, the occurrence of longer motifs decreases at the final position, with shorter motifs appearing more frequently than longer ones.

In terms of gender difference, there is statistically significant in 4 types of tone motifs (χ^2=78.824, df=29, p-value <.05). Specifically, female guests use a significantly higher proportion of Tone 5 (T5) compared to male guests (52.30% (n=4097) vs. 47.70% (n=3732)). This large proportion of T5 at the end of the utterances often corresponds to sentence-final particles (SFPs) such as 的de0, 吗ma0, 嘛ma0, 了le0, 呢ne0. Additionally, the tone motif T55 shows a significant gender difference with females guests using it more frequently than male guests (60.30% (n=333) vs. 39.70% (n=219)). The T55 are often associated with disyllabic SFP which are formed by two SFPs such as 的嘛de0ma0. Female guests also use more T333 sequences than male guests. In contrast, male guests produce significantly more T444 sequences than female guests (45% (n=512) vs. 55% (n=625)). In terms of role difference, the comparison of tone motifs between guests and host reveals significant variations. The chi-square test indicates a notable difference in the use of tone motifs at the final position of utterances between male guests and host (χ^2=211.182, df=29, p-value = .000) as well as female guests and host (χ^2=113.476, df=30, p-value = .000). Overall, 32 different types of tone motifs are used in the final position of the utterance among these groups. Specifically, the host predominantly uses high-level Tone 1, followed by neutral tone T5, T22 and T55. In contrast, guests more frequently use T3 and T4 at the absolute final position. A closer examination of these motifs shows that the host tends to use more neutral tones as well as tones with high offsets, while male guests prefer tones with low offset. This suggests that the host's speech feature more stable and high-pitched endings, whereas guests' speech often ends

with a deeper and more assertive tones.

Initial position vs. final position

Comparing the tonal motifs at the initial and final positions within each group reveals statistically significant between groups, highlighting differences in motif usage at absolute positions. Overall, female guests and the host employ more tone motifs at the initial position than at the final position, both in terms of frequency and variety of tone motifs. The host uses a total of 22,606 tone motifs, female guests use 19,633, and male guests use 19,356. Female guests and the host each use 29 different types of tone motifs at the initial position but only 28 at the final position. Male guests, however, uses 26 types of tone motifs initially and increase to 28 types at the final positions. For female guests, more T3 and T4 related tone motifs are used at the initial positions, while T4, neutral tone, and T11 are more common at the final positions (χ^2=6571.157, df=31, p-value <.05). Male guests exhibit similar significant tone motifs to the female guests but with additional differences. Besides sharing similar patterns of T3 and T4 motifs with female guests, male guests also use more rising Tone 2 and T222 sequence at the final position compared to the initial position (χ^2=6246.618, df=28, p-value <.05). In the host's utterance, the tonal patterns closely resemble those of male guests. However, the host uses significantly more T22 motifs at the final position than at the initial position (χ^2=8681.297, df=30, p-value <.05). This indicates a pattern where the host's speech features more rising tones at the end, aligning with the trend observed among male guests but with a unique emphasis on T22 at the final position.

6.6.6 Pitch variation of utterances

This section presents the results of pitch variations, based on measurements taken by utterance and by turn. Comparative analyses of pitch variations by turns reveal that there is a difference in role but not in gender. Specifically, male guests (Mean Rank = 3734.64, n=3207) have greater pitch variations than the host (Mean Rank=3608.11, n=4119) as indicated by the Mann-Whitney U results (U=6376671.50, Z=-2.540, p=.011). The statistics in Table 6.8 further suggest that while the host produces more turns, his mean pitch variation is lower compared to that of male guests, indicating that the pitch variation in the utterances of male guests tend to be more dynamic than that of the host. In addition, while female guests produce more turns and have slightly higher mean pitch variation scores than male guests (252.534±374.714 vs. 250.941±349.269)[1], the result of the Mann-Whitney U tests do not show a significant difference in pitch variation between female guests and male guests (p-value = .061). Using turn as basic units for measurement, there is role difference on pitch variation rather than gender, with male

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[1](mean±SD)

guests demonstrating more variability in pitch compared to the host.

variables	group	N	mean	median	SD	*p* value
	male guests[a]	3207	250.941	98	349.269	
pitch variation	female guests	3305	252.534	93	374.714	[a]<.05
	host[a]	4119	219.606	92	318.17	

Table 6.8: Statistics of pitch variations in cross-gender conversations (turn as basic units)
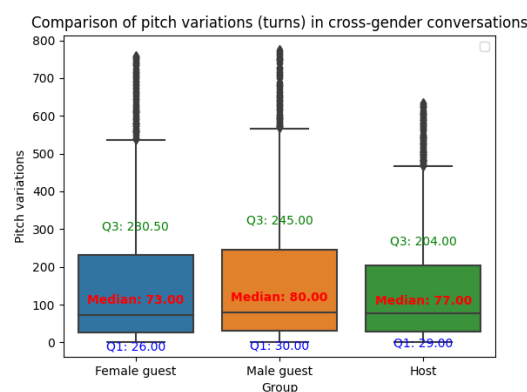
Figure 6.11: Pitch variations in cross-gender conversations (turns as basic units)

Using utterances as basic units for analysis, the results in Mann-Whitney U tests reveal statistically significant differences between genders and between roles, with p-values less than .05. Specifically, female guests have higher mean pitch variations than male guests and this result is significant (U=186156383, Z=-3.691, p-value <.05). Similarly, female guests show significantly higher pitch variations compared to the host (U=209482859, Z=-10.169, p-value <.05). As shown in Table 6.9 and Figure 6.12, female guests demonstrate slightly larger pitch variations in the middle of the data than both male guests and host, as observed by the interquartile range (IQR = Q3-Q1). The whisker, extending from minimum and maximum values with 1.5 times, are similar in male guests and host's group but is a bit larger for female guests. In addition, the higher median pitch variation in female guests group (mean=40.887) indicates that female guests tend to have greater pitch variations than both male guests and host. In contrast, the lower mean in host's (mean=38.43) also indicate that host have less pitch variations than guests, reflecting an asymmetry that may point to power dynamics within the conversation. Using utterance as basic units, there are role and gender differences in the use pf pitch variations, with female guests showing greater pitch variability than their male counterparts.

variables	group	N	mean	median	SD	p value
	male guests[a,b]	19370	39.927	36	24.376	
pitch variation	female guests[a,c]	19645	40.887	36	25.208	[a,b,c]$<.05$
	host[b,c]	22622	38.43	34	24.026	

Table 6.9: Statistics of pitch variations in cross-gender conversations (utterances as basic units)
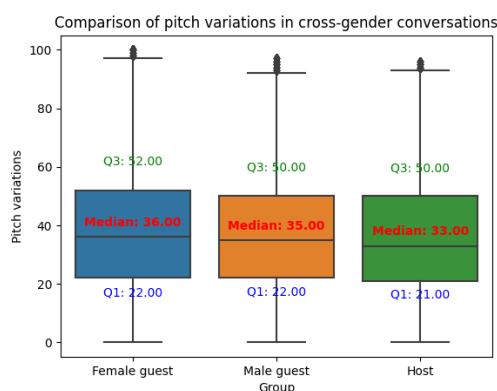
Figure 6.12: Pitch variations in cross-gender conversations

6.7 Discussion

This chapter examines the 'rhythmic units' - tone and rime motifs and the pitch variations in Mandarin Chinese in the context of cross-gender conversation in the talk show. The tone and rime motifs are extracted from the conversations by female guests, male guests and host in the talk show. The results of tone and rime motifs as well as the pitch variations embedded in the lexical words. As Hou and Huang (2020) suggested, tone and rime motifs are promising stylometic markers for authorship classification. We adopt this idea and apply to investigate whether tone and rime are also reliable indicators for gender identification.

According to the central idea of synergetic linguistics, tone and rime motifs can be modeled by the Zipf-Mandelbrot type, which suggests that they function as a self-organising and self-regulating system (Köhler 2008, 2015). In the current analysis, these motifs exhibit behavior similar to their basic units, i.e., tone and rime. It is observed that there is a limited number of tones compared to rimes in Mandarin Chinese, more different types of rime motifs are produced than tone motifs across different groups. Given the tone and rime motifs are self-organising and self-regulating system that fit in the Zipf-Mandelbrot model, the parameters of Zipf-Mandelbrot type help to interpret the results in a linguistically meaningful way. When using tone motifs of all characters to represent texts, the parameter b for in ZM model indicate that there is role difference. The

difference is a reflection of the asymmetry of power dynamics within the conversations in the talk show. Given that the host is given the leading role, he has more opportunities to speak and take the leading role to invite the guests to speak. The comparison of parameter *b* values between roles indicates the host use statistically more motifs that are already highly frequently used. The most highly used tone motifs are T4, T3, T1, T2, T5, T44, and T33. While the ranking frequency is shared between two groups, the frequency shows difference. It is observed that monosyllabic motifs have more frequency than disyllabic motifs. Additionally, tones with low offset (i.e. T3 and T4) have more frequent usage than the tones with high offsets (i.e. T1 and T2). Moreover, the rime motif usage between female guests and male guests is significant, indicating there is gender difference in the rime usage. It is observed that female guests use more rime motifs than male guests, such as rime motif 'i-i', such as in 其实 qi2shi2 (*actually*). In this example, the motif is formed by two repeating /i/.

More evidence of the gender difference can be found in the length distribution of tone and rime motifs and the corresponding word length. According to G. K. Zipf's 'law of abbreviation', the more complex the motifs, the less frequent they are. It is observed that the monosyllabic tone and rime motifs are most common in speech of different gender groups. The synergetic analysis of phonemes in Standard Chinese show that it is quite stable that the more complex a phoneme is, the less frequently it is used, but the more frequently a word is used, the more it is composed of frequent phonemes (Deng 2016). The result is in line with Wu et al. (2023)'s result that monosyllabic words are more frequently used in casual speech than in journalistic speech. Therefore, the results of the length distribution confirmed Zipf's 'law of abbreviation' also work for tone and rime motifs, the most frequently occur motifs are simple and short units while the more complex ones have far less occurrences in the talk show.

Additionally, investigating the parameters in the Zipf-Mandelbrot model reveal gender difference in tone, rime motifs and vocabulary richness in tone and rime motifs. The results on the tone and rime motifs at the initial positions is consistent among three groups while female guests tend to relatively use more neutral tone at the the final position. Jing-Schmidt (2022a) and Chan (1998), along with Chapter 4 of this thesis, observed that females use more sentence-final particles than males. Moreover, the result of rank frequency of rime motifs confirm that the high front vowel /i/ is used more frequently by female guests in our analysis . When pronouncing the high front vowel /i/, it only requires a low degree of openness of the mandible and less mouth energy. This result could be attributed to the feminine form of articulation which avoid mouth wide open (Hu 1991). In addition, although female guests have more hapax legomena than male guests as indicated by parameter *a*, a further look at the ratio to the total word token found that female guests proportionally have less hapax legomena than male guests (Table 6.10). This finding aligns with previous studies, which have shown that women's vocabulary richness tends to be smaller than that of men (Haas 1979). Singh

(2001) also found that females use a lower number of words that only occur once and tend to repeat their vocabulary more often. However, it appears that the role of the male as a host restricts his performance of using a wide variety of vocabulary, resulting that the host having the fewest compared to the guests, regardless of gender, in cross-gender conversations.

	hapax word count	total word count	ratio
female guests	4960	132982	0.0373
male guests	4913	125506	0.0391
host	5262	144677	0.0364

Table 6.10: Descriptive statistic of hapax legomena and total word count in cross-gender conversations

The observation using linguistic motifs frequency also includes a variety of techniques, such as rhythmic sound, word, phrase and discourse-level patterns. These materials with rhythm and repetition read fluently. Psychologically, the rhythmic and repeated pattern lead to memorial inertia that are easier to remember than those materials without (Sereno and Lee 2015). There is different tone and rime motifs usage between males and females at the absolute positions. For gender difference, male guests use more tones with low offset (T3 and T4) than female guests. Previous acoustic analysis has provided some experimental evidence to explain the phenomenon. Xu (1994) observed that Tone 4 is less likely to be affected by the following tone and has the shortest duration compared to other tones. Both Tone 3 and Tone 4 share a low boundary offset value, which provides an assertive force. When there is a sequence of Tone 4 such as motif 44, the range of F0 falling in the ending Tone 4 will be deeper than in the previous Tone 4 due to its high onset value, making the ending sound more assertive. Xu (1997) further indicated that Tone 3 has the longest duration among all Mandarin tones. As discussed previously, Tone 4 is more influenced by the preceding tone than the following tone. In a motif 444 sequence, the first two Tone 4 do not fall as deeply as the final tone 4 because of the high onset value, resulting in the last Tone 4 falling deeper and creating an assertive force with a short duration.

The comparison of the tone motifs at the absolute final position observed role differences in which the host's speech tends to feature more stable and high-pitched ending while guests' speech often ends with a deeper and more assertive tones. Particularly, it is found that the host uses more SFPs which are typically associated with a more feminine style of speech (Jing-Schmidt 2022a). In the context of talk show, the frequent use of SFPs by the host play a key role in constructing his identity as a facilitator and moderator in guiding the conversation. Although there is a recognised asymmetrical power distribution of show host and guest speakers, show host's control of the flow of the conversations tended to be downplayed in the talk show context, with host adopting a relatively egalitarian and consensus-seeking approach in the interactions in the

discussion which is categorised as feminine style in conversation.

The motifs at teh word level is found to be associated with the word length, with monosyllabic and disyllabic words being used more frequently than multi-syllabic ones. Disyllabic words with the same tones may also be linked to sound-level alliteration (就是 都 能 说 非常 <u>流利</u> 的 中文 jiu4shi4 dou1 neng2 shuo1 fei1chang2 liu2li4 de5 zhong1wen2 '*All can speak very <u>fluent</u> Chinese*') and word- or character-level assonance (给 你 讲 一些 <u>自己</u> 的 事情 gei3 ni3 jiang3 yi4xie1 zi4ji3 de5 shi4qing2 '*Tell you something about <u>myself</u>*'). The former, known as 'twin sounds', refers to the repetition of the initial consonants in disyllabic word, while the latter involves the repetition of the same or similar vowel sounds in two-syllabic words. The use of diezi (reduplication of the same character or characters) (就是说 <u>恰恰</u> 是 因为 媒体 jiu4shi4shuo1 qia4qia4 shi4yin1wei4 mei2ti3 '*It is <u>exactly</u> because of the media*') which is common in traditional Chinese poetry to create rhythm is also observed in conversations. The repeated 行 (hang2 'line') forms the tone motifs (T2-T2) at the final position in 三百六十行, 领导也是一行 (suo3yi3 san1bai3liu4shi2hang2 ling3dao3 ye3 shi4 yi4hang2 '*In the 360 professions, leadership is also one of them*') and the rime motifs (i-i-i) formed by final characters of each word in 君子 以 自强不息 (jun1zi5 yi3 zi4qiang2bu4xi1 '*A gentleman strives constantly for self-improvement.*') unconsciously create melodic and rhythmic effect in conversation.

The dynamic effect created by tone and rime motifs are vivid, pleasant read and easy to attract attentions. In fact, because of the asymmetrical power distribution of show host and guest speakers, host has more opportunities to speak and thus use more tone and rime motifs than guest speakers, such as 懒懒散散 lan3lan3san3san3 '*lazy and sluggish*', 背信弃义 bei4xin4qi4yi4 '*to betray trust and abandon righteousness*'. The AABB pattern (e.g.: 懒懒散散) expressed an intensified meaning compared to AB pattern (懒散). In addition, the tone motifs forms word or sound reduplication such as 唱唱反调 chang4chang4fan3diao4 '*to sing a different tune*', 打打闹闹 da3da3nao4nao4 '*playfully fighting and making a commotion*', 聊聊聊 liao2liao2liao2 '*chatting and chatting*'. On discourse level, similar to the written materials such as poem in traditional Chinese, repetitions are commonly found in conversations. Especially when the concept of motifs is applied, more rhyming patterns emerge than those based solely on absolute position. Repetition in conversations can be found to word, phrase or turn level. It can be either repetition of their own turns or repeat the wording, rhythms or turns of their interlocutors. it is observed that there is same-speaker repetition as well as second-speaker repetition. Norrick (1987) observed that repetitions make discourse more coherent as well as realised particular conversational strategies.

Example 6.1.

MG   一见钟情，白头偕老。

   yi1jian4zhong1qing2, bai2tou2xie2lao3 '*Love at first sight, together until old age.*'

H: 执子之手，<u>与子偕老</u>。

   zhi2zi5zhi1shou3, yu3zi5xie2lao3 '*Hold your hand, and grow old together with you.*'

MG: <u>与子偕老</u>，这 当然 我 很 羡慕

   yu3zi5xie2lao3, zhe4 dang1ran2 wo3 hen3 xian4mu4 '*Growing old together with you—of course, I really envy that.*'

In the example above, the male guest's repetition occurs in unconnected turns to facilitate production, and increase coherence as well. It is also observed that wordplay can serve as the basis for humour, as illustrated in the following example.

Example 6.2.

H 那 不 说 你 吗，你 不 叫 叶檀 嘛，<u>天方</u>夜谭。

   na4 bu4 shuo1 ni3 ma5, ni3 bu4 jiao4 ye4tan2 ma5, tian1fang1ye4tan2 '*Aren't they talking about you? Your name is Ye Tan, after all—what a fantasy!*'

MG: 这 是 <u>天方</u>。

   zhe4 shi4 tian1fang1. '*This is pure fantasy.*'

H: <u>天方</u>，叶檀 说 一 说。

   tian1fang1, ye4tan2 shuo1 yi1 shuo1 '*Ye Tan, tell us about this fantasy.*'

FG: 对，待会 <u>天方</u> 补充。

   dui4, dai4hui4 tian1fang1 bu3chong1. '*Correct, Tianfang will add more later.*'

The repetition of 与子偕老 and 天方 in the above example is what is calls 'allo-repetition' which repeats interlocutor's words to express acknowledgement and acceptance of the interlocutor's phrase (Tannen 2007a; Ilie 2006). The repetitive expressions also bring musical effect and draw audience attention in the talk show.

Example 6.3.

H： 30 <u>亿</u>。

   30 yi4 '*3 <u>billion</u>*'

MG: 是 合法 弄 <u>的 吧</u>。

   shi4 he2fa3 nong4 de5 ba5 '*I think it must have been done legally*'.

H: 前 30 个 <u>亿</u> 是 <u>的 吧</u>。

   qian2 30 ge4 yi4 shi4 de5 ba5 '*I think the first three <u>billion</u> is done legally.*'

The conversation between host and male guest above, the repeated uses of the word 亿 yi4 (billion) and the disyllabic SFP 的吧de5ba5, creates repeating and identical tones. The final rhyme sounds resemble the repetition of the same character units (亿yi4，的

吧de5ba5). This repetition serves as a typical example of echoing previous utterances for further confirmation, as the host question whether the 3 billion is legally contained. Additionally, the reduplication of SFP 的吧de5ba5 makes the utterances of male guest less assertive. Thus, there is a remarkable similarity between poetry and conversation in the sound, word or character units, where phonic repetition can create rhyming pattern or tonal pattern.

From psycholinguistics and conversational analysis perspectives, dialogue is a joint activity between interlocutors (Schegloff and Sacks 1973; Sacks et al. 1974; Clark 1996). If interlocutors sufficiently understand the meaning of the dialogue as a whole, both 'win' in the game of cooperation, in Lewis (1969)'s term. It is observed that the tone and rime motif patterns are quite similar among different groups in our study. Prosodic entrainment can increase communication efficiency and shorten social distance. In the talk show, the prosodic similarity make the conversation between host and guests smooth and successful. According to Pickering and Garrod (2004)'s interactive alignment account, the linguistic representations employed in the dialogue become alignment in many levels including syntactic, lexical, articulation, accent, intonation etc. Therefore, many repetitions are found in the conversations which create the similar/same tone/rime motif patterns. Repetition is a kind of conversational strategies in the talk show, as observed in the above examples. Although tone is also affected by various factors in conversation, such as talking speed and gender, type of sentence, the modification of each character does not lose its own tone. This echos the idea that the tonality of a word in tonal language in Chinese is semantic rather than grammatical (Sun 2011). Apart from the repetition form within motifs, repetition between motifs are also observed. For instance:

Example 6.4.
MG： 他 一旦 坚持 不 下去 了 他 就 离婚 了，离婚 不 代表 他 这个 合约 不 存在。
　　　 ta1 yi2da4n jia1nchi2 bu4 xia4qu4 le5 ta1 jiu4 li2hu1n le5, li2hu1n bu4 da4ibia3o ta1 zhe4ge4 he2yue1 bu4 cu2nza4i. '*Once he couldn't hold on any longer, he got divorced. Divorce doesn't mean that this contract no longer exists.*'
FG: 此 一时 彼 一时。
　　　 ci3 yi1shi2 bi3 yi1shi2 '*That was then. This is now.*'

In the above example, the repetition is occurred in repeating tone motifs (3)(1)(2) and repeating rime motifs of /i-i-i/ as in 此一时 and 彼一时 . A tune maintains its identity and tend to be consistent, the tone and rime motifs results show that melodic tunes are more significant in female speech than that in male speech.

6.8 Conclusion

The present study investigated gender classification using tone and rime motifs. The results demonstrate that tone and rime motifs fit the Zip-Mandelbrot distribution well, indicating that these motifs represent a systematically self-organised within the texts. Given that tone and rime motifs are robust indicators for authorship classification (Hou and Huang 2020), the results of the current study effectively extend to gender classification. Different types motifs were analyzed, including tone and rime motifs of all characters, tone and rime motifs of all initial/final characters, tone and rime motifs at the absolute positions (i.e., the beginning and ending of the utterance). The comparison of the parameters of Zipf-Mandelbrot models revealed linguistically meaningful gender and role differences. Specifically, our analysis elicited that the frequency distribution of tone and rime motifs are significantly different among gender groups. For instance, female guests use more neutral tone (T5) than male guests. In addition, tone and rime motifs highlighted asymmetrical power difference between host and guests in the context of talk show. The host tended to use more high-level tone (T1), while guests used more tones with low offsets (T3 and T4). Since the ending lexical tone correlates with intonation in Mandarin Chinese, tones with low pitch registers make the utterance more assertive. Thus, the host's speech feature more stable and high-pitched endings, whereas guests' speech often ends with a deeper and more assertive tones.

In terms of length of tone and rime motifs, the distribution patterns support the hypothesis that these tone and rime motifs resemble the distribution of basic units (i.e. words). The results indicate that the most common types of motifs are monosyllabic and disyllabic, aligning with Wu et al. (2023)'s results that monosyllabic words are most frequently used in casual speech. This confirms Zipf's 'law of abbreviation', which posits that shorter units are more frequently used in language. Although female guests produce more words than male guests, they tend to use more monosyllabic words and have shorter mean tone motif length than that in male guests, indicating notable gender differences in the cross-gender conversations. In addition, the host, due to the asymmetrical power distribution, produces a higher number of monosyllabic words, suggesting a dominant role in the conversations. Male guests, on the other hand, tend to use slightly longer words compared to female guests and the host. While the mean tone length is distributed similarly across all groups, the host demonstrates the longest mean rime length. This longer rime length may indicate a slightly different speech pattern from that of the guests. Additionally, there is a noticeable trend where groups with a higher mean word length also have higher mean tone length. Similarly, group with a larger total word count is accompanied by a higher mean rime motif length.

By extracting the tone pitch using the 5-point scale by Chao (1968), pitch variations have been observed, revealing differences related to gender and role. When analyzing pitch variation based on turns, male guests exhibit more variability compared to the

host. In addition, when using utterance as the basic units, female guests show greater pitch variation than their male counterparts, echoing the results in acoustic analysis in the past, such as Van Dommelen and Moxness (1995). The greater pitch variations is a reflection of the dynamism which is a feature of feminine speech. Additionally, tone and rime motifs unconsciously create melodic and rhythmic effect that enhance the pleasantness of speech, demonstrating prosodic entrainment at both the word and discourse levels. This entrainment facilitates smoother communication. Considering wider implications, the quantitative methods of tone and rime motifs used in this study contribute to understanding gendered language as a self-organizing system. The results of the present study affirm the value of quantitative methods for analyzing gender difference. However, we acknowledge that frequency distribution alone does not fully capture gender differences. These methods should be seen as one of the indicators of author gender classification. In particular, we plan to investigate and compare comprehensively whether males and females speak differently in a wider variety of texts and languages.
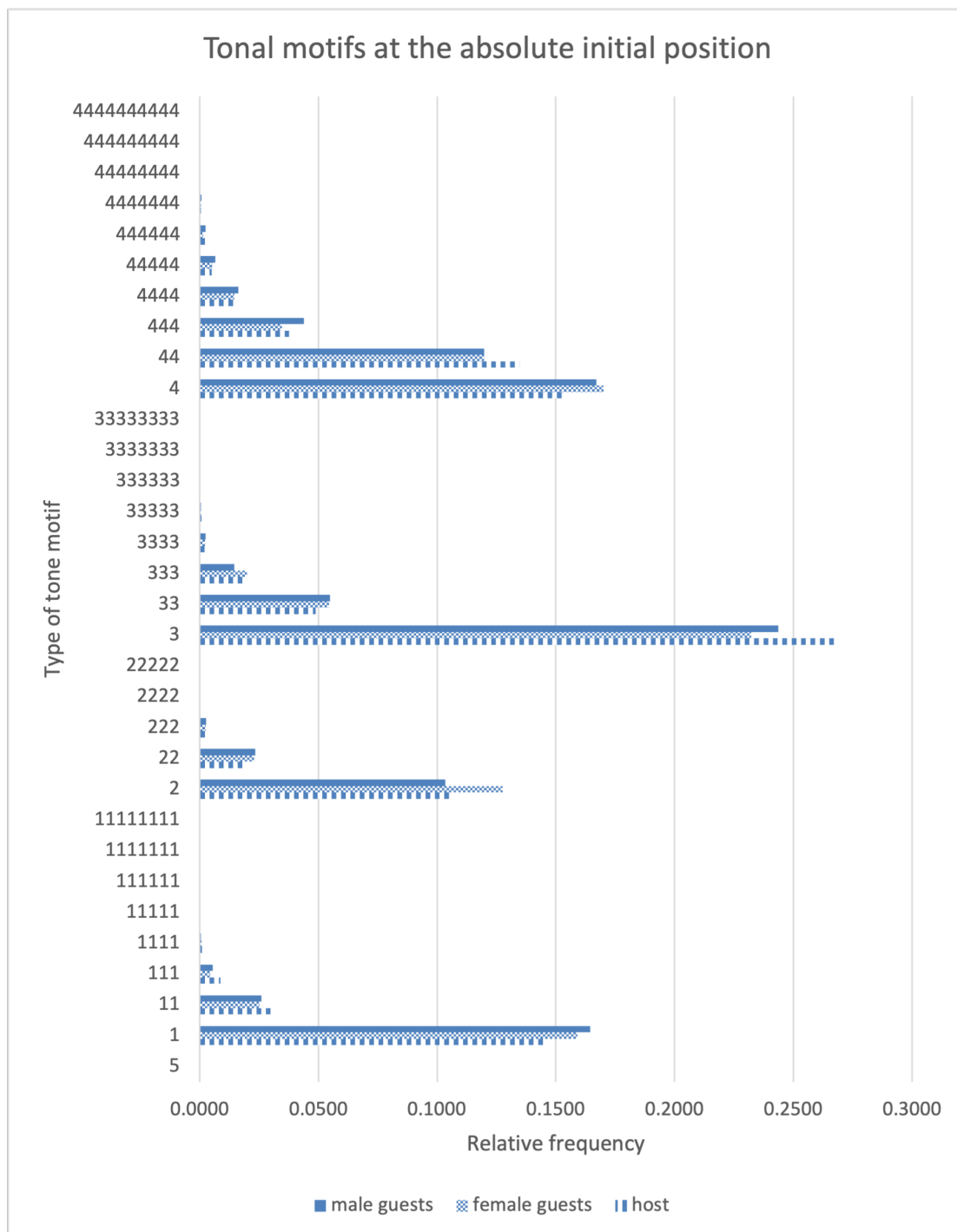
Figure 6.9: Tonal motifs at the absolute initial position across groups
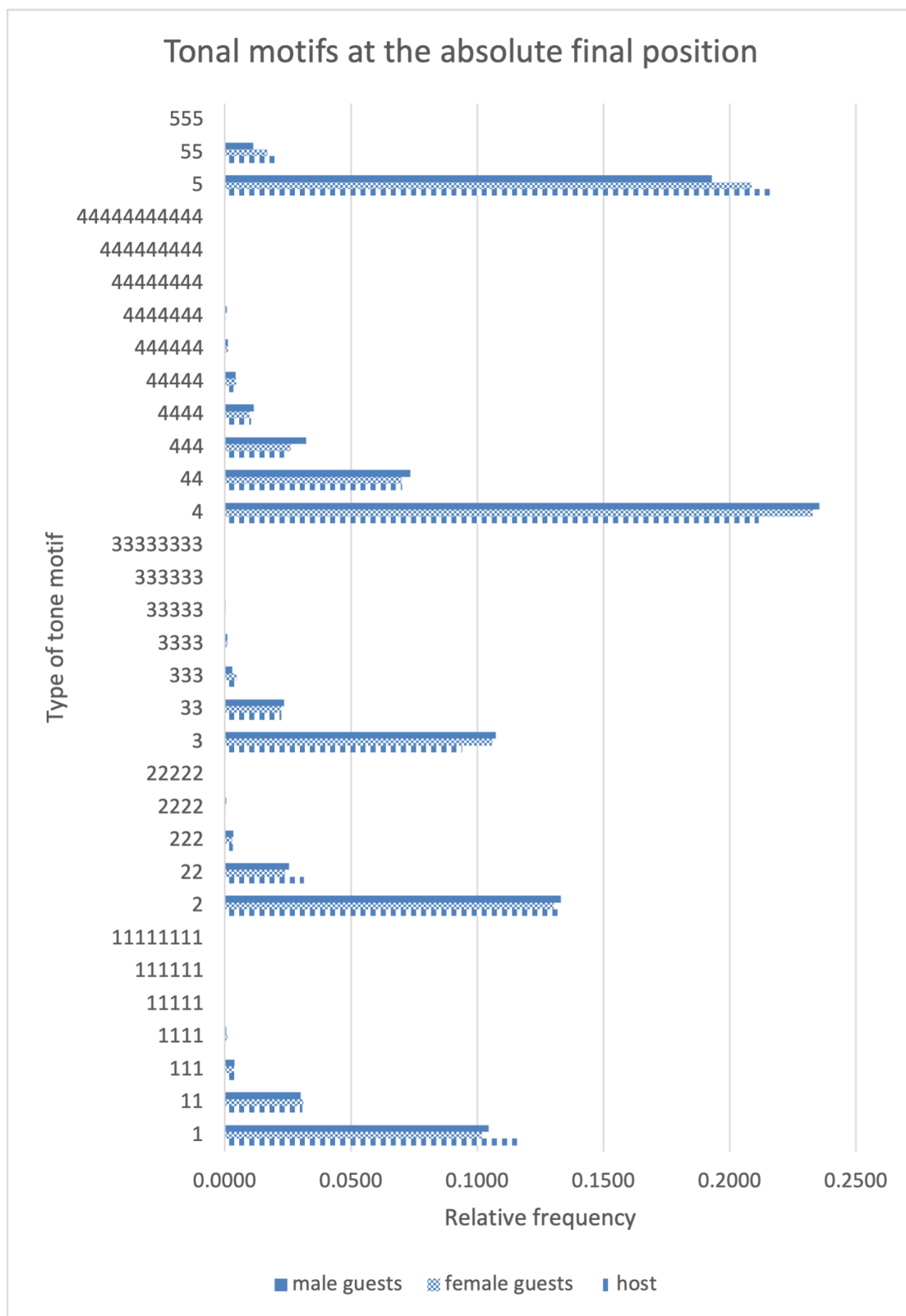
Figure 6.10: Tonal motifs at the absolute final position across groups

Chapter 7

Conclusion

7.1 Summary of the findings

This chapter provides conclusions of the previous findings, implementation, and suggestions for future research. This thesis offers a corpus-based comparative study of gendered talk in Mandarin Chinese, using the talk show *Behind the Headline with Wentao* as corpus for analysis. This show, featuring male and female guests speakers engaging in discussions on a variety of topics, all guided by the host, Mr. Dou, provides a rich context of gendered discourse within Chinese culture. In contrast to other talk show programmes which may focus on combative debates or discussions with specific purposes - such as political discourse of CNN presidential debate or personal anecdote sharing in The Oprah Winfrey Show, Chinese talk show like *Behind the Headline with Wentao* serve as a reflection of Chinese cultural values. The selected talk show in this thesis covers a wide range of topics, incorporating both intense debates and softer, more personal exchanges, thereby offering a comprehensive view of gendered communication in a Chinese context.

While language and gender is a cross-disciplinary field, it is crucial to carefully select unresolved issues as the primary focus, particularly those that highlight typical features within Chinese contexts. Therefore, three studies were chosen to investigate gendered talk from different perspectives in Chinese settings. Given that Chinese lacks grammatical gender markers, the use of sentence-final particles (SPFs) emerges as a clear indicator of gender differences. SPFs are a distinctive linguistic feature in tonal languages and appear more frequently in spoken discourse than in written forms, making them an ideal subject for investigation in the context of talk show. It is evident that SFPs are used differently between gender groups, with female guests employing them more frequently than their male counterparts. For instance, in the study presented in Chapter 4, the results regarding the SFP *le* confirmed that females tend to favor its use in their speech. Beyond the gender differences, the structure of the talk show establishes distinct power dynamics between the host and the guests, with the host assuming the leading role. It

was observed that the host employs SFP *le* more frequently than the guests, using it to construct his identity as a facilitator in the conversation. The function of SFP *le* denotes pragmatic function, signaling an invitation for guests to participate at the end of a turn, indicating a high level of intersubjectivity as described by Lu and Su (2023). Furthermore, the sentence containing SFP *le* exhibits significant differences in usage. While previous analyses on SFPs have primarily focused on their pragmatic functions and frequency of usage, this study takes a more nuanced approach by examining not only the frequency but also the length of turns, measured by the total number of words uttered by speakers. When analysing turns, a clear role difference between the host and guests emerges, indicating that the host exerts control over the conversation flow, deciding both the duration of speech and the next speaker. In contrast, gender differences become apparent within turns when utterances are used as the basic unit of measurement. Notably, male guests do not dominate talking time. However, female guests tend to adapt their speaking style to align with masculine style, producing longer sentences and speaking more than male guests in cross-gender conversations. In terms of tonal patterns associated with SFP *le*, it is observed that the host uses more weakened tones than guests in cross-gender conversations. This suggests that while guests are more assertive in expressing their opinions, the host adopts a more moderate and neutral tone to facilitate the discussion. These findings indicate that the conversations in this talk show are more complex than simple dyadic exchanges, involving only two speakers, but less intricate than multi-party conversations where no clear leader exists, making it difficult to determine the next speaker. Therefore, in addition to gender differences, role differences are evident, highlighting the varying power relations at play.

Gender differences were further strengthened in the second study in Chapter 5, which investigated how language is used differently towards males and females, specifically focusing on addressing practices. In the multi-party conversations in the talk show, my previous pilot study observed that the majority of addressing terms are performed by the host. Consequently, this chapter concentrated on how the host addresses male and female guests differently, particularly in the use of direct addressing forms (i.e., vocatives). By adopting the model developed by Brown and Ford (1961), it becomes evident that there is an asymmetry in the addressing terms used for males and females. Although male and female guests are invited to participate as equals in the talk show, they are nonetheless positioned in asymmetrical relationships. This asymmetry may be interpreted as a reflection of varying levels of intimacy or respect towards male and female guests or as a deliberate strategy to create engaging content for the audience, as differences and conflicts are more likely to arise when individuals occupy different positions. Particularly, female guests are more frequently addressed by their first name (FN), which primarily reflects intimacy and friendliness from the host. In addition, when females are addressed by title, it is often accompanied by the gender-marking prefix 女nv3 'female', such as 女侦探 nv3zhen1tan4 'female detective', a practice not observed

with the occupational terms for male guests. This differential use of addressing terms places male and female speakers in asymmetrical relation. According to Brown and Ford (1961), the use of FN indicates friendliness while the use of FN indicate respect. The choice of address forms, therefore, not only reflects the dynamics of the conversation but also highlights how language can perpetuate sexism (Weatherall 1996).

Politeness, as an integral part of traditional Chinese culture, is employed differently and carries distinct meanings in Chinese contexts. In chapter 4, the investigation of the SFP *le* at the end of a turn as a device for requesting coordination revealed that male guests exhibit more politeness in same-gender conversations than in cross-gender interactions. The investigation of addressing terms in Chapter 5 found that the politeness theory proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) does not fully apply in the talk show in Chinese context examined (Gu 1990; Pan 1995). The use of addressing terms is a reflection of deep-rooted male dominance in Chinese society, highlighting the cultural specificity of politeness strategies in the semi-institutional discourse of talk shows. The host's placement of male and female guests in asymmetrical relations influences the politeness strategies employed. Different from the workplace context, where negative politeness typically flows in one direction from subordinate to superior, the talk show environment demonstrates a more fluid application of both positive and negative politeness strategies towards guests of both genders. These strategies serve not only to show respect and friendliness but also to achieve certain commercial effect by using wordplay, joking etc.

While Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 provided focused, in-depth investigations of content-dependent linguistic features, Chapter 6 offered a broader perspective on the tone and rime characteristics of Mandarin Chinese and their role in differentiating gender. The methodology presented in Chapter 6 is, to the best of our knowledge, the first to systematically explore linguistic motifs through the lens of gendered talk within the context of talk show in Mandarin Chinese. Among the various linguistic features that can be represented by motifs, such as words and word length, tone and rime motifs were chosen for their distinctive relevance to Chinese language. Different from atonal languages, the tones in Mandarin Chinese are crucial in distinguishing different words, while rimes play a key role in conveying rhythm in the language. Notably, this study is the first to apply tone and rime motifs using spoken conversational data. The results in Chapter 6 found that when conversational data are represented using tone and rime motifs, the data exhibit self-organizing properties that fits well in Zip-Mandelbrot model. Alongside these similarities, differences are observed in the usage of tones at various positions, as well as in the length of tone and rime motifs. The host's more frequent use of tone motifs with high offsets tends to make their utterances sound more tentative, whereas male guests prefer tone motifs with low offset, suggesting a more assertive tone. Furthermore, by employing the 5-point scale of tone pitch proposed by Chao (1968), the analysis of tone pitch variation measured by the difference of neighboring tone pitches provides an

alternative methodology to investigate the gender difference of pitch variation. This approach leverages provide further support of the dynamicity of females' pitch variation which have previously studied in acoustic analysis (e.g., (Wu 2008)).

The studies in this thesis reveal that the position of women in society has evolved significantly since Lakoff (1975) first proposed her ideas decades ago. With the rise of media platforms, women have gained more opportunities to voice their perspectives. Although this thesis primarily focuses on gender difference in conversation, it is crucial to recognize that the roles assigned within the talk show also influence these differences. In Chapter 4, the first study found that female guests more likely to use SFP *le*, suggesting their maintenance of feminine identity. However, it was also observed that female guests accommodated their language styles toward a more masculine style, characterised by longer sentence production and dominance of talking time. This phenomenon shows the female guests' willingness to engage in conversations and improvement of social status. On the other hand, the male host was also observed to use more SFP *le* than male guests both in cross-gender and same-gender conversations. This usage was not regarded as a sign of powerlessness; rather, it is attributed to the host's controlling role in the talk show, which gives more speaking chances and, consequently, more opportunities to use SFP *le*. Additionally, as a facilitator, the host uses SFP *le* as a communicative tool to encourage guest participation and facilitate the conversation. Although Chapter 4 focused specifically on SFP *le*, previous pilot study on SFP *ma* yielded similar findings. Future research will involve a broader comparison of various SFPs. While Chapter 4 highlighted some improvement in women's representation in the talk show, Chapter 5 revealed persistent issues that reflect the deep-rooted patriarchal nature of society. Although female guests are invited to participate alongside male guests, the addressing terms used towards them differ, placing them in asymmetrical positions within the talk show. Media, as a powerful medium for shaping and transmitting cultural norms and stereotypes, plays a significant role in reinforcing and perpetuating gender biases. In the context of addressing guests, there is a notable trend: female guests are addressed more compared to male guests, a shift from the underrepresentation of women observed in the 1990s, such as in Basow (1992, p. 159). Despite this, female guests are more often addressed by their first names, while male guests are typically addressed by their last names with a title. This suggests the persistence of male stereotypes. According to Brown and Gilman (1960), the use of title signifies respect and deference. Even when females are addressed with occupational titles, these terms are often preceded by the gender-marking prefix, as discussed in the Chapter 5, which can lead to objectification based on appearance and relation to males. This phenomenon reflects that, despite being given a platform, female guests do not occupy an advantaged position in the talk show context.

What about the position of men in the talk show? In this thesis, men assume two roles: as guests and as the host. Therefore, men's place in the talk show is closely

tied to their assigned role. As indicated in Chapter 4, the use of SFP *le* indicated that females tend to produce longer sentences than males, suggesting males do not seem to dominant the talking time. However, male guests are observed to use SFP *le* more frequently in same-gender conversations. This usage of SFP *le* at the end of turns signals politeness by inviting other speakers to participate, showing that men are more polite in same-gender conversations than in cross-gender ones. Furthermore, as shown in Chapter 5, male guests received more respect from the host, as they are more often addressed by titles and deferential pronoun such as 博士 'doctor', 您 'formal pronoun you', which emphasise their career achievements and knowledge. While Chapter 4 and 5 focus on specific content words, Chapter 6 shift attention to a more content-independent feature of tone and rime motifs. Here, all texts are converted to tone and rime motifs for gender classification, revealing consistent patterns across different aspects of gender talk. Since the host occupies a leading role in the conversations, he employs different tone and rime patterns compared to guests, as indicated by the length of tone and rime motifs. Specifically, the host tends to produce shorter tone and rime motifs and use more monosyllabic words. This pattern aligns with the short utterances ending in SFP *le* observed in Chapter 4, as well as the frequent use of monosyllabic words and short tone and rime motifs in Chapter 6. Despite the host's dominant role and the large amount of speech he produces, his utterances are concise, reflecting his facilitative role in encouraging guests to contribute more to the conversation.

7.2 Implementations

This dissertation concerns how gender - constructions of both male and female - manifests in different ways in different conversation types, as well as how gender is treated in the contexts within Chinese culture. It makes contributions to theory, methodology, and application.

Originating from psychology, the CAT theory has been effectively applied to discourse analysis and pragmatic studies. It serves as a robust framework for examining the interaction between males and females, as evident in studies such as Mulac et al. (1988), Giles et al. (1991) and Thomson et al (2001). While participants appear as individuals, they also represent various social groups (Ylanne, 2008). Tannen (1993)'s proposition that males and females belong to distinct cultural groups is particularly relevant here. This thesis provides evidence that the theory is effective in understanding gendered conversations in Mandarin Chinese. Specifically, by analyzing turn-taking and utterances marked by the particle *le*, we can observe how males, including both the host and guests, adapt their communication strategies to enhance effectiveness. Notably, divergence in the use of SFP *le* is evident between male guests and the male host, reflecting their different roles within the talk show, despite sharing the same gender. Male guests tend to use fewer SFP *le* in cross-gender conversation, which may indicate a reluc-

tance to be perceived as feminine, as SFPs are often associated with a feminine speech style. Another possible explanation for this lack of convergence using the CAT is that male guests may be unfamiliar with the host's language styles, which requires particular training and practices, promting them to maintan their own communicative approaches. This accommodation is asymmetrical in cross-gender conversations regarding SFP *le* usage, but it is also asymmetrical between male guests and the host in same-gender conversations, highlighting the complexity of gendered communication dynamics.

Additionally, this thesis affirms that by combining stance-marking function of SFPs and attitudinal marking function of prosody through intersubjectivity, gender difference in conversations can be observed according to the tonal patterns they used. It also enhances understanding of different behaviors of using SFP *le* measuring by turns and by utterances. Moreover, by applying the T/V binary distinction model proposed by Brown and Ford (1961), the asymmetrical addressing terms used by the hosts strengthened the imbalanced power relation and reflected the impact of traditional Chinese culture on the addressing practice. Through the use of different addressing terms, different politeness strategies are applied, which further strengthen the 'face' theory and politeness strategies proposed by Gumperz (1972) and Brown and Levinson (1987) have different applications in Chinese contexts using the data from talk show.

Methodologically, a corpus-based approach was employed in the current study. The data fills in the gap among the existing data of talk show which mainly focused on dyadic conversation (i.e., conversation involves only two people). Rather, the data in the current thesis provides the possibility to investigate multi-party conversations to investigate gender differences in a large scale of data. Since different gender groups are also pre-assigned with different roles in the talk show, different power relations are also investigated with satisfactory results. By viewing gender from the social constructionist perspective, we observed that males who employed different roles in the talk show have different performances in the talk show. While Ylanne (2008) highlights the difficulties in obtaining global quantitative measures of 'accommodation', our approach of measuring *le*-utterances and *le*-turns based on syllable counts offers a standardized metric for comparing accommodation across different groups. Since uttrance length can serve as a key feature in identifying convergence or divergence between speakers, this method allows us to quantify relevant aspects of communicative behavior. By doing so, we gain a clearer understading of how speakers adapt or maintian their communication styles in interaction. Meanwhile, by employing the 5-point scale proposed by Chao (1968), the tone pitch is used measure the pitch variations embedded in the lexical tones. The results echo the acoustic analysis which observes that females have higher pitch variations than male speakers. The methodology using the tone pitch provides an alternative to study the pitch variations as well as offers the possibility to provide evidence using large scale of data. The extension of tone and rime motifs also provides methodological support to investigate gender differences using linguistic motifs.

Practically, the studies conducted in this thesis explore language and gender issues in Chinese contexts from different prospectives, employing both quantitative and qualitative analysis. These studies strengthen the understanding of how gender manifests language use as well as how gendered interactions are treated in Chinese contexts, providing a foundation for further analysis. In particular, the first study examines convergence and divergence patterns in gendered communication by measuring syllables, a method that can be extended to investigate gender-related conversations in other languages. In the second study, the analysis of addressing terms reveals a power imbalance in the talk show context, where the host has greater flexibility in choosing how to address guests. The choices of diffferent addressing terms are likely applicable to other Madarin contexts where similar power dynamics exist, as supported by existing research. The third study demonstrates that tone and rime motifs can be systematically organized, much like other linguistic motifs in Mandarin Chinese as well as English and other languages. This approach offers a new method for analyzing Chinese data and can be applied to other contexts within the language.

7.3 Limitation and future direction

This thesis employs a corpus-based analysis, which brings certain limitations. One of the limitations is the data. As discussed in the methodological section, the corpus has been utilized to its fullest potential to mitigate these limitations. The current corpus contains year-long episodes from the selected talk show. Ideally, a more robust dataset would include episodes from another talk show featuring a female host alongside two guest speakers in the conversation. However, finding a talk show that meets all these criteria is quite challenging. For future research, one potential direction is to expand the existing dataset by incorporating additional episodes from the current talk show. This would allow for a more comprehensive analysis and potentially more nuanced findings.

In investigating the tonal patterns of SFPs, aside from the most frequently used SFP *le*, there are 11 additional SFPs in the corpus (啊a5, 吧ba5, 呗bei5, 的de5, 啦la5, 吗ma5, 嘛ma5, 呐na5, 呢ne5, 哦o1, 呀ya1). By combining the stance-marking function of Mandarin Chinese SFPs with the attitudinal marking function of prosody, it is possible to compare the tonal patterns of all SFPs appearing in the corpus between gender groups with comparisons made across different sentence types. Another potential direction for future research, building on the addressing practice in Chapter 5, is to explore the acceptance or refusal to the addressing terms. For instance:

In Example 7.1, the host introduced the guests with a title of 'earth experts'. The male guest responded with a modest refusal, declining to accept this title. This interaction reflects the concept of face - 'mianzi' in Chinese. Drawing on Leech (1983)'s politeness maxims in Western societies, Gu (1990) proposed similar maxims that are applicable in Chinese society. Taking a dynamic view, scholars have observed that the

traditional concepts of 'face' maintain in the changing society, and these concepts are helpful to understand the acceptance and refusal phenomenon in the conversations (Si 2008; Li and Wongwaropakorn 2024). According to Gu (1990)' address maxim, addressing terms for the interlocutor should be appropriate. In the above example, the host first introduced the guest as his close friend, followed by the full name of the guests and the title of 'earth expert'. This introduction and choice of the addressing terms not only show the closeness of their relationship but also elevate the guest's social status. However, the male guest's polite refusal of the title exemplifies the subcategory of *denigrate self* in the self-denigration maxim.

Example 7.1.

H: 除了查老师，要给大家介绍我的老朋友，中国国家地理杂志的李拴科，咱们的地球专家。

Besides Teacher Zha, I would like to introduce my old friend, LI Shuanke from National Geographic Magazine of China, our earth expert.

MG: 没有没有，专家谈不上。

No, no, I wouldn't call myself an expert.

Example 7.2.

H: 今天咱们又隆重推出白发红颜组合，白发是马先生，这么隆重是欢迎咱们的这个玉女掌门人采妮。

Today, we are once again proudly presenting the 'Silver Hair and Fair Beauty' duo. The 'Silver Hair' is Mr. Ma, and this grand welcome is for our 'leader of the fair lady', Cai Ni.

FG: 没有，没有，谢谢。

No, no, thank you.

In Example 7.2, the host elevated the female guest by praising her outstanding youth and beauty compared to normal people, to which the female guest responded with a humble refusal while also expressing thanks. Comparing the two instances of addressing - the first directed at the male guest and the second at the female guest. The one for male guest was elevated based on his career achievements, while the female was praised for her appearance and youth. These differences are significant and warrant further investigation.

Appendix

				Groups		Total
			MGC	HC		
Preceding tone	T1	Count	179^a	275^b	454	
		Expected Count	199.3	254.7	454	
		% within group	16.70%	20.10%	18.60%	
		% of Total	7.30%	11.30%	18.60%	
	T2	Count	227^a	320^a	547	
		Expected Count	240.1	306.9	547	
		% within group	21.20%	23.40%	22.40%	
		% of Total	9.30%	13.10%	22.40%	
	T3	Count	190^a	245^a	435	
		Expected Count	191	244	435	
		% within group	17.70%	17.90%	17.80%	
		% of Total	7.80%	10.00%	17.80%	
	T4	Count	453^a	489^b	942	
		Expected Count	413.5	528.5	942	
		% within group	42.30%	35.70%	38.60%	
		% of Total	18.60%	20.00%	38.60%	
	T5	Count	23^a	41^a	64	
		Expected Count	28.1	35.9	64	
		% within group	2.10%	3.00%	2.60%	
		% of Total	0.90%	1.70%	2.60%	
Total		Count	1072	1370	2442	
		Expected Count	1072	1370	2442	
		% within group	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	
		% of Total	43.90%	56.10%	100.00%	

(a)Crosstabulation of the preceding tone of SFP *le* and groups between male guests and host in cross-gender conversations

	Value	df	Asymptotic Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	13.337^a	4	0.01
Likelihood Ratio	13.367	4	0.01
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.99	1	0.005
N of Valid Cases	2442		

(b) Chi-Square Tests

		Value	Approximate Sig
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	0.074	0.01
	Cramer's V	0.074	0.01
N of Valid Cases		2442	

(c) Symmetric Measures

Table 7.1: Chi-square test for tonal patterns of monosyllabic tone + SFP *le* between male guests and host in cross-gender conversations (utterances as basic units)

			Groups		Total
			MGC	MGS	
Preceding tone	T1	Count	179[a]	449[a]	628
		Expected Count	199.1	428.9	628
		% within group	16.70%	19.40%	18.60%
		% of Total	5.30%	13.30%	18.60%
	T2	Count	227[a]	526[a]	753
		Expected Count	238.8	514.2	753
		% within group	21.20%	22.80%	22.30%
		% of Total	6.70%	15.60%	22.30%
	T3	Count	190[a]	431[a]	621
		Expected Count	196.9	424.1	621
		% within group	17.70%	18.70%	18.40%
		% of Total	5.60%	12.70%	18.40%
	T4	Count	453[a]	849[b]	1302
		Expected Count	412.8	889.2	1302
		% within group	42.30%	36.80%	38.50%
		% of Total	13.40%	25.10%	38.50%
	T5	Count	23[a]	54[a]	77
		Expected Count	24.4	52.6	77
		% within group	2.10%	2.30%	2.30%
		% of Total	0.70%	1.60%	2.30%
Total		Count	1072	2309	3381
		Expected Count	1072	2309	3381
		% within group	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
		% of Total	31.70%	68.30%	100.00%

(a) Crosstabulation of the preceding tone of SFP le and groups between male guests and host in cross-gender conversations

	Value	df	Asymptotic Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	10.023a	4	0.04
Likelihood Ratio	9.999	4	0.04
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.701	1	0.006
N of Valid Cases	3381		

(b) Chi-Square Tests

		Value	Approximate Sig
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	0.054	0.04
	Cramer's V	0.054	0.04
N of Valid Cases		3381	

(c) Symmetric Measures

Table 7.2: Chi-square test for tonal patterns of monosyllabic tone + SFP *le* between male guests in cross-gender and same-gender conversations (utterances as basic units)

			Groups		Total
			MGC	HC	
strengthmono	W	Count	410^a	598^b	1008
		Expected Count	442.4	565.6	1008
		% within group	38.00%	43.30%	41.00%
		% of Total	16.70%	24.30%	41.00%
	S	Count	647^a	742^b	1389
		Expected Count	609.6	779.4	1389
		% within group	59.90%	53.70%	56.40%
		% of Total	26.30%	30.20%	56.40%
	N	Count	23^a	41^a	64
		Expected Count	28.1	35.9	64
		% within group	2.10%	3.00%	2.60%
		% of Total	0.90%	1.70%	2.60%
Total		Count	1080	1381	2461
		Expected Count	1080	1381	2461
		% within group	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
		% of Total	43.90%	56.10%	100.00%

(a) Crosstabulation of the strength of the preceding tone of SFP *le* and groups between male guests and host in cross-gender conversations

	Value	df	Asymptotic Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	9.958a	2	0.007
Likelihood Ratio	9.997	2	0.007
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.252	1	0.039
N of Valid Cases	2461		

(b) Chi-Square Tests

		Value	Approximate Sig
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	0.064	0.007
	Cramer's V	0.064	0.007
N of Valid Cases		2461	

(c) Symmetric Measures

Table 7.3: Chi-square test for strength of tonal patterns of monosyllabic tone + SFP *le* between male guests and host in cross-gender conversations (utterances as basic units)

motif		female guests	male guests	total
2	Count	2504[a]	2002[b]	4506
	Expected Count	2269	2237	4506
	% within gender	12.80%	10.30%	11.60%
3	Count	4558[a]	4717[b]	9275
	Expected Count	4670.4	4604.6	9275
	% within gender	23.20%	24.40%	23.80%
333	Count	394[a]	283[b]	677
	Expected Count	340.9	336.1	677
	% within gender	2.00%	1.50%	1.70%
444	Count	681[a]	850[b]	1531
	Expected Count	770.9	760.1	1531
	% within gender	3.50%	4.40%	3.90%
444444	Count	30[a]	50[b]	80
	Expected Count	40.3	39.7	80
	% within gender	0.20%	0.30%	0.20%
Total	Count	19633	19356	38989
	Expected Count	19633	19356	38989
	% within gender	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Chi-Square Tests			
Value	df	Asymptotic Sig (2-sided)	
Pearson Chi-Square	122.426[a]	29	.000
Likelihood Ratio	125.996	29	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.635	1	.201
N of Valid Cases	38989		
a 19 cells (31.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .50.			

Table 7.4: Tonal motifs at the absolute initial position by gender (columns proportion differ significantly from each other at the .05 level are shown)

motif		male guests	host	total
1	Count	3184[a]	3290[b]	6474
	Expected Count	2986.3	3487.7	6474
	% within role	16.40%	14.60%	15.40%
3	Count	4717[a]	6077[b]	10794
	Expected Count	4979	5815	10794
	% within role	24.40%	26.90%	25.70%
4	Count	3233[a]	3456[b]	6689
	Expected Count	3085.5	3603.5	6689
	% within role	16.70%	15.30%	15.90%
5	Count	3[a]	12[b]	15
	Expected Count	6.9	8.1	15
	% within role	0.00%	0.10%	0.00%
11	Count	502[a]	674[b]	1176
	Expected Count	542.5	633.5	1176
	% within role	2.60%	3.00%	2.80%
22	Count	452[a]	434[b]	886
	Expected Count	408.7	477.3	886
	% within role	2.30%	1.90%	2.10%
33	Count	1064[a]	1103[b]	2167
	Expected Count	999.6	1167.4	2167
	% within role	5.50%	4.90%	5.20%
44	Count	2319[a]	3045[b]	5364
	Expected Count	2474.3	2889.7	5364
	% within role	12.00%	13.50%	12.80%
111	Count	105[a]	196[b]	301
	Expected Count	138.8	162.2	301
	% within role	0.50%	0.90%	0.70%
333	Count	283[a]	406[b]	689
	Expected Count	317.8	371.2	689
	% within role	1.50%	1.80%	1.60%
444	Count	850[a]	849[b]	1699
	Expected Count	783.7	915.3	1699
	% within role	4.40%	3.80%	4.00%
44444	Count	126[a]	113[b]	239
	Expected Count	110.2	128.8	239
	% within role	0.70%	0.50%	0.60%
Total	Count	19356	22606	41962
	Expected Count	19356	22606	41962
	% within role	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Chi-Square Tests			
Value	df	Asymptotic Sig (2-sided)	
Pearson Chi-Square	162.518[a]	29	.000
Likelihood Ratio	166.452	29	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.828	1	.176
N of Valid Cases	41962		

a 18 cells (30.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .46.

Table 7.5: Tonal motifs at the absolute initial position by role (male guests vs host) (columns proportion differ significantly from each other at the .05 level are shown)

motif		female guests	host	Total
1	Count	3123[a]	3290[b]	6413
	Expected Count	2980.8	3432.2	6413
	% within role	15.90%	14.60%	15.20%
2	Count	2504[a]	2401[b]	4905
	Expected Count	2279.9	2625.1	4905
	% within role	12.80%	10.60%	11.60%
3	Count	4558[a]	6077[b]	10635
	Expected Count	4943.2	5691.8	10635
	% within role	23.20%	26.90%	25.20%
4	Count	3338[a]	3456[b]	6794
	Expected Count	3157.9	3636.1	6794
	% within role	17.00%	15.30%	16.10%
11	Count	492[a]	674[b]	1166
	Expected Count	542	624	1166
	% within role	2.50%	3.00%	2.80%
22	Count	451[a]	434[b]	885
	Expected Count	411.4	473.6	885
	% within role	2.30%	1.90%	2.10%
33	Count	1070[a]	1103[b]	2173
	Expected Count	1010	1163	2173
	% within role	5.50%	4.90%	5.10%
44	Count	2352[a]	3045[b]	5397
	Expected Count	2508.6	2888.4	5397
	% within role	12.00%	13.50%	12.80%
111	Count	86[a]	196[b]	282
	Expected Count	131.1	150.9	282
	% within role	0.40%	0.90%	0.70%
Total	Count	19633	22606	42239
	Expected Count	19633	22606	42239
	% within role	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	214.345[a]	30	.000
Likelihood Ratio	217.445	30	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.388	1	.239
N of Valid Cases	42239		

a 20 cells (32.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .46.

Table 7.6: Tonal motifs at the absolute initial position by role (female guests vs host) (columns proportion differ significantly from each other at the .05 level are shown)

motif		female guests	male guests	total
5	Count	4097[a]	3732[b]	7829
	Expected Count	3942.3	3886.7	7829
	% within gender	20.90%	19.30%	20.10%
55	Count	333[a]	219[b]	552
	Expected Count	278	274	552
	% within gender	1.70%	1.10%	1.40%
333	Count	90[a]	56[b]	146
	Expected Count	73.5	72.5	146
	% within gender	0.50%	0.30%	0.40%
444	Count	512[a]	625[b]	1137
	Expected Count	572.5	564.5	1137
	% within gender	2.60%	3.20%	2.90%
Total	Count	19633	19356	38989
	Expected Count	19633	19356	38989
	% within gender	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	78.824[a]	29	.000
Likelihood Ratio	81.926	29	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.963	1	.326
N of Valid Cases	38989		

a 16 cells (26.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .50.

Table 7.7: Tonal motifs at the final position by gender (columns proportion differ significantly from each other at the .05 level are shown)

motif		male guests	male host	total
1	Count	2022[a]	2638[b]	4660
	Expected Count	2149.5	2510.5	4660
	% within role	10.40%	11.70%	11.10%
3	Count	2078[a]	2125[b]	4203
	Expected Count	1938.7	2264.3	4203
	% within role	10.70%	9.40%	10.00%
4	Count	4559[a]	4781[b]	9340
	Expected Count	4308.3	5031.7	9340
	% within role	23.60%	21.10%	22.30%
5	Count	3732[a]	4887[b]	8619
	Expected Count	3975.7	4643.3	8619
	% within role	19.30%	21.60%	20.50%
22	Count	492[a]	706[b]	1198
	Expected Count	552.6	645.4	1198
	% within role	2.50%	3.10%	2.90%
55	Count	219[a]	462[b]	681
	Expected Count	314.1	366.9	681
	% within role	1.10%	2.00%	1.60%
444	Count	625[a]	530[b]	1155
	Expected Count	532.8	622.2	1155
	% within role	3.20%	2.30%	2.80%
33333	Count	7[a]	1[b]	8
	Expected Count	3.7	4.3	8
	% within role	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Total	Count	19356	22606	41962
	Expected Count	19356	22606	41962
	% within role	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

<div align="center">Chi-Square Tests</div>

	Value	df	Asymptotic Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	211.182[a]	29	.000
Likelihood Ratio	215.725	29	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.989	1	.084
N of Valid Cases	41962		

a 18 cells (30.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .46.

Table 7.8: Tonal motifs at the final position by role (male guests vs. host) (columns proportion differ significantly from each other at the .05 level are shown)

motif		female guests	host	total
1	Count	2001[a]	2638[b]	4639
	Expected Count	2156.2	2482.8	4639
	% within role	10.20%	11.70%	11.00%
3	Count	2080[a]	2125[b]	4205
	Expected Count	1954.5	2250.5	4205
	% within role	10.60%	9.40%	10.00%
4	Count	4570[a]	4781[b]	9351
	Expected Count	4346.4	5004.6	9351
	% within role	23.30%	21.10%	22.10%
22	Count	470[a]	706[b]	1176
	Expected Count	546.6	629.4	1176
	% within role	2.40%	3.10%	2.80%
55	Count	333[a]	462[b]	795
	Expected Count	369.5	425.5	795
	% within role	1.70%	2.00%	1.90%
Total	Count	19633	22606	42239
	Expected Count	19633	22606	42239
	% within role	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	113.476[a]	30	.000
Likelihood Ratio	117.413	30	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.178	1	.278
N of Valid Cases	42239		

a 20 cells (32.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .46.

Table 7.9: Tonal motifs at the final position by role (female guests vs. host) (columns proportion differ significantly from each other at the .05 level are shown)

	motif	final	initial	total
1	Count	2001[a]	3123[b]	5124
	Expected Count	2562	2562	5124
	% within position	10.20%	15.90%	13.00%
3	Count	2080[a]	4558[b]	6638
	Expected Count	3319	3319	6638
	% within position	10.60%	23.20%	16.90%
4	Count	4570[a]	3338[b]	7908
	Expected Count	3954	3954	7908
	% within position	23.30%	17.00%	20.10%
5	Count	4097[a]	7[b]	4104
	Expected Count	2052	2052	4104
	% within position	20.90%	0.00%	10.50%
11	Count	610[a]	492[b]	1102
	Expected Count	551	551	1102
	% within position	3.10%	2.50%	2.80%
33	Count	440[a]	1070[b]	1510
	Expected Count	755	755	1510
	% within position	2.20%	5.50%	3.80%
44	Count	1372a	2352[b]	3724
	Expected Count	1862	1862	3724
	% within position	7.00%	12.00%	9.50%
55	Count	333[a]	0[b]	333
	Expected Count	166.5	166.5	333
	% within position	1.70%	0.00%	0.80%
333	Count	90[a]	394[b]	484
	Expected Count	242	242	484
	% within position	0.50%	2.00%	1.20%
444	Count	512[a]	681[b]	1193
	Expected Count	596.5	596.5	1193
	% within position	2.60%	3.50%	3.00%
3333	Count	18[a]	45[b]	63
	Expected Count	31.5	31.5	63
	% within position	0.10%	0.20%	0.20%
4444	Count	192[a]	287[b]	479
	Expected Count	239.5	239.5	479
	% within position	1.00%	1.50%	1.20%
Total	Count	19633	19633	39266
	Expected Count	19633	19633	39266
	% within position	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6571.157[a]	31	.000
Likelihood Ratio	8266.099	31	.000
N of Valid Cases	39266		

a 20 cells (31.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .50.

Table 7.10: Tonal motifs at the initial and final position in female guests' utterances (columns proportion differ significantly from each other at the .05 level are shown)

motif		final	initial	total
1	Count	2022[a]	3184[b]	5206
	% within position	10.40%	16.40%	13.40%
2	Count	2576[a]	2002[b]	4578
	% within position	13.30%	10.30%	11.80%
3	Count	2078[a]	4717[b]	6795
	Expected Count	3397.5	3397.5	6795
	% within position	10.70%	24.40%	17.60%
4	Count	4559[a]	3233[b]	7792
	% within position	23.60%	16.70%	20.10%
5	Count	3732[a]	3[b]	3735
	% within position	19.30%	0.00%	9.60%
11	Count	581[a]	502[b]	1083
	% within position	3.00%	2.60%	2.80%
33	Count	455[a]	1064[b]	1519
	% within position	2.40%	5.50%	3.90%
44	Count	1421[a]	2319[b]	3740
	% within position	7.30%	12.00%	9.70%
55	Count	219[a]	0[b]	219
	% within position	1.10%	0.00%	0.60%
111	Count	75[a]	105[b]	180
	% within position	0.40%	0.50%	0.50%
333	Count	56[a]	283[b]	339
	% within position	0.30%	1.50%	0.90%
444	Count	625[a]	850[b]	1475
	% within position	3.20%	4.40%	3.80%
555	Count	4[a]	0[b]	4
	% within position	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
3333	Count	18[a]	48[b]	66
	% within position	0.10%	0.20%	0.20%
4444	Count	222[a]	317[b]	539
	% within position	1.10%	1.60%	1.40%
44444	Count	80[a]	126[b]	206
	% within position	0.40%	0.70%	0.50%
444444	Count	21[a]	50[b]	71
	% within position	0.10%	0.30%	0.20%
Total	Count	19356	19356	38712
	% within position	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6246.618[a]	28	.000
Likelihood Ratio	7795.39	28	.000
N of Valid Cases	38712		

a 14 cells (24.1%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .50.

Table 7.11: Tonal motifs at the initial and final position in male guests' utterances (columns proportion differ significantly from each other at the .05 level are shown)

motif		final	initial	total
1	Count	2638[a]	3290[b]	5928
	% within position	11.70%	14.60%	13.10%
2	Count	3005[a]	2401[b]	5406
	% within position	13.30%	10.60%	12.00%
3	Count	2125[a]	6077[b]	8202
	% within position	9.40%	26.90%	18.10%
4	Count	4781[a]	3456[b]	8237
	% within position	21.10%	15.30%	18.20%
5	Count	4887[a]	12[b]	4899
	% within position	21.60%	0.10%	10.80%
22	Count	706[a]	434[b]	1140
	% within position	3.10%	1.90%	2.50%
33	Count	507[a]	1103[b]	1610
	% within position	2.20%	4.90%	3.60%
44	Count	1587[a]	3045[b]	4632
	% within position	7.00%	13.50%	10.20%
55	Count	462[a]	0[b]	462
	% within position	2.00%	0.00%	1.00%
111	Count	102[a]	196[b]	298
	% within position	0.50%	0.90%	0.70%
333	Count	91[a]	406[b]	497
	% within position	0.40%	1.80%	1.10%
444	Count	530[a]	849[b]	1379
	% within position	2.30%	3.80%	3.10%
555	Count	4[a]	0[b]	4
	% within position	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
3333	Count	28[a]	48[b]	76
	% within position	0.10%	0.20%	0.20%
4444	Count	232[a]	321[b]	553
	% within position	1.00%	1.40%	1.20%
33333	Count	1[a]	16[b]	17
	% within position	0.00%	0.10%	0.00%
44444	Count	77[a]	113[b]	190
	% within position	0.30%	0.50%	0.40%
444444	Count	23[a]	51[b]	74
	% within position	0.10%	0.20%	0.20%
Total	Count	22606	22606	45212
	Expected Count	22606	22606	45212
	% within position	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8681.297[a]	30	.000
Likelihood Ratio	10752.842	30	.000
N of Valid Cases	45212		

a 18 cells (29.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.00.

Table 7.12: Tonal motifs at the initial and final position in host's utterances (columns proportion differ significantly from each other at the .05 level are shown)

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