Analyzing the Gendered Power Dynamics in Addressing Practices: A Corpus-based Approach

Xin Luo
Dept of Chinese and Bilingual Studies
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University
`xin-tracy.luo@connect.polyu.hk`

Chu-Ren Huang
Dept of Chinese and Bilingual Studies
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University
`churen.huang@polyu.edu.hk`

Abstract

Talk show, a type of media discourse, blend casual conversation with institutional dialogue. This study investigates the addressing performance by the host towards male and female guests. Due to the widespread popularity and rapid dissemination of information, talk shows have been a significant form of media discourse. Addressing is particularly important in the talk show, particularly in the conversation where there are multi-party interactions to determine the next speaker. Previous studies have found asymmetrical addressing forms for different gender groups. Males tend to have wider selection of addressing forms while females have relatively limited choices, indicating the power difference in the society (Lakoff, 1975; Kramer, 1975). The phenomena seem be more obvious in Chinese society, where is deeply rooted in the patriarchal hierarchy (Pan, 1995; Blum, 1997).

By applying the T/V model proposed by Brown and Gilman (1960) in the Chinese contexts, it is observed that the addressing practice in the talk show in Chinese context reflects broader culture norms. The results indicate asymmetrical addressing practice towards male and female guests. Particularly, male guests tend to be addressed with titles while females are more often addressed by their first or full names. Although subtle gender bias is observed in the addressing practice, there is also a tendency towards gender equity, as indicated by the frequency of the 'T' form. The study underscores the importance of context in corpus-based research and highlights how language use can reflect gendered social structures, particularly in Mandarin Chinese, which lacks grammatical gender marking.

1 Introduction

Addressing is the product of communication that exist only in interaction. The study of addressing provides significant insights of power dynamics, intimacy relations and gender differences (Wolfson and Manes, 1979; Wierzbicka, 1991; McConnell-Ginet, 2020). Different from *referring*, which simply identities 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). In the study of addressing, researchers examine how males and females use different addressing forms in different contexts (e.g., Wolfson and Manes (1979); Tang (2015); 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, multi-party conversations in media discourse receive less attention, partially due to the complexity of identifying the next speakers as well as the the difficulty of obtaining data.

Language is a reflection of culture, and addressing terms mirror the deeply rooted patriarchal hierarchy in Chinese society. Despite the deeply ingrained traditional cultures being hard to eradicate immediately, the tendency towards gender equality is inevitable, as evident by the decreasing trend of gender-marking in occupation such as 女医生 nv3yi1sheng1 (female doctor), 女侦探 nv3zhen1tan4 (female detective) (Su et al., 2021).

2 Literature review

2.1 Addressing forms and gender

According to Gumperz (1972), the terms 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 (2020), 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 direct addressing - *vocatives* which 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, p108-109).

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), and academia (Zhou and Larina, 2024). Using corpus-based method, Baker (2010)'s corpus-based analysis observed a higher usage of male title (Mr.) than female titles but in a decreasing tendency across time. 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 contexts. 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.

2.2 Pronouns beyond power and solidarity

The T/V binary distinction model of pronoun system proposed by psychologists Roger Brown and Albert Gilman (1960) has provided profound im-

pact 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. 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, 2020) 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 corresponding T and V for second-person pronouns in Chinese are 你 ni3 (informal you) and 您 nin3 (formal you), the former is the informal form, while the later is the deferential form. Given that T and V are not gender marked in Mandarin Chinese, except for the third person singular forms, it would be applicable to consider the the usage in particular contexts. Previous study on e-commerce live streaming discourse found that males and female use pronouns differently (Yang and Wang, 2022). 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 highlights 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 emphasizes closeness rather than distance in Chinese, which is influenced by the familial connection in traditional Chinese culture.

2.3 Addressing in Chinese culture

Language has a significant impact on shaping our world. It is clear that 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 order culture such as Chinese, this potential has been realized. For Chinese men, names have a transformative power that binds them as individuals to a recognized 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 in a village in China, peasant women are neither fully individualised nor fully recognized as persons.

Traditionally, Chinese shows avoid pronouns partially because of the relative semantic emptiness (McConnell-Ginet, 2020) to categorize a person or group. Similar situations also observe 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 denote pragmatic functions. First of all, the notion of connection building is reflected on the use of pronoun 'we' (我们). 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 to construct the collective identities (Ren and Chen, 2019). The use of addressing is influenced by Chinese culture. Although Chinese is a language that lacks of gender agreement and linguistic gender markers, linguistic sexism can permeate a language through various forms in vocabulary such as gendered-marking occupation (Tso, 2014) and defining women in terms of their personal appearance or sexual attributes (Baker, 2010). 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.

3 Methodology and research questions

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, the vocatives used by host to address male guests and female guests in cross-gender conversations (n=115) are analyzed (Table 1). Text analysis software *Sketch Engine* (Kilgarriff et al., 2014) was used to descriptive analysis of the use of different types of vocatives in different gender groups as linguistic feature across transcript text files. Using the Corpus Query Language (CQL) search tool in *Sketch Engine*, the names of the speakers serve as keywords for the search. This allows for the rapid identification of utterances containing addressing terms, which are then manually categorized to determine whether they are directed towards males or females. If multiple vocatives are used in the same line of utterance, the first referential form will be considered.

Table 1: Statistics in cross-gender conversation for analysis

Role&Gender	Tokens	Words
Host	169,289	145,573
Female guests	154,406	132,775
Male guests	147,175	126,557
Total	470,870	404,905

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. The research questions in this study are as follows:

RQ1: Do TV talk show host address male guests 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 being biased against women?

4 Findings

4.1 Distribution of gendered addressing terms

Overall, there are six types of addressing forms occurring in the talk show in our data, namely 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). It is found that three types show statistically differences. Table 2 summarizes the frequency of addressing made by host for male guests and female guests. Overall, more addressing forms are used to address female guests than male guests. There are total 211 addressing forms observed in the cross-gender conversations in the talk show. 64.5% (n=136) are used to address female guests while only 35.5% (n=75) are used to address male guests. Following McConnell-Ginet (2020) taxonomy of addressing forms, we observed that both the addressing forms included on the list as well as additional ones off the list are used in the talk show. The hosts uses significantly more FL (first name + last name) and FN (first name) to address female guests (e.g., 幼婷you4ting2) while these two addressing forms are infrequent for male guests. In contrast, the host uses significantly more forms with titles, last name with title, to address male guests (e.g., 许老师xu3lao3shi1 *teacher Xu*) (χ^2=95.696, df=5, p value=.000). It is found that 51 (83.6%) instances of TLN (title with last name) are used to address male guests, compared to only 10 (16.4%) for female guests. These titles include both gender-marked terms such as 先生 xian1sheng1 (Mr.) and 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). In addition, there is far less usage of kinship terms (e.g., 哥 ge1 (older brother)) in the talk show and the result does not show significant difference.

Table 2: Addressing option * addresser gender crosstabulation

Addressing option	Female guests	Male guests	Total
FL	29	4	33
FN	88	13	101
Kinterm + N	3	4	7
TFLN	6	2	8
TLN	10	51	61
LN	0	1	1
Total	136	75	211

Example 1:

a.三人行必有我师，每次都跟王领导学到格言…
When three walk together, one can be my teacher, Every time, I learn a maxim from Leader Wang."
b.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 also formally recommended a female leader to us. Today, we welcomed the renowned female writer, Xu Kun.

4.2 Gendered addressing terms and their collocations

The results in Table 3 and Table 4 reveal some gender similarities and differences in the collocates that are associated with either group in addressing practice. 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, 2020), Liu (2009) notes that the co-occurrence of address nouns and the use of address pronouns reinforces and complements each other in the service encounter discourse for establishing close relationship. The co-occurrences of addressing terms and pronouns is also observed in the talk show which explicitly mark the addressee. It is observed that while '你' ni3 (informal second pronoun 'you') and 我们 wo3men2 (first person plural) are neutral, '你知道' ni3zhi1dao4 (you know), '你看' ni3kan4 (you see) and '咱们' zan2men2 (we/us) tend to be used more for female guests while the deferential second person pronoun 'you' (您) has more usage with male guests.

Example 2
a. informal 'you' to address female guest
李艾你是学什么的?
LI Ai, what is your major?

b. deferential 'you' to address female guest
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.

c. informal 'you' to address male guest
许老师你觉得最近日本这什么情况?
Teacher Xu, what do you think about the recent situation in Japan?

Table 3: Words located among the top20 collocates of female guests' addressing

	Collocate	Freq	Coll. freq.	logDice
1	你	49	393	11.5273
2	人行	14	29	11.3155
3	这个	18	145	10.9605
4	觉得	12	78	10.7458
5	我们	12	84	10.7085
6	看	14	132	10.6627
7	最近	8	25	10.5406
8	说	14	165	10.5036
9	知道	9	61	10.442
10	咱们	8	48	10.3634
11	是	23	424	10.3561
12	我	21	395	10.2996
13	但是	8	65	10.2451
14	对	8	66	10.2385
15	给	7	47	10.178
16	今天	7	54	10.1279
17	吗	7	55	10.1209
18	的	25	593	10.1047
19	跟	7	60	10.0863
20	可以	6	30	10.0851

Table 4: Words located among the top 20 collocates of male guests' addressing

	Collocate	Freq	Coll. freq.	logDice
1	先生	10	15	11.142
2	你	33	393	11.0137
3	但是	11	65	10.8521
4	我	28	395	10.7712
5	呢	8	37	10.6163
6	是	25	424	10.5301
7	跟	8	60	10.4301
8	了	14	204	10.4237
9	有	10	142	10.2345
10	请教	5	7	10.2239
11	对	7	66	10.1927
12	来	6	39	10.1841
13	这	13	242	10.1613
14	怎么	5	24	10.0551
15	您	5	24	10.0551
16	吗	6	55	10.0536
17	就	10	206	9.92961
18	博士	4	5	9.92318
19	觉得	6	78	9.88452
20	给	5	47	9.85432

d. deferential 'you' to address male guest
陶老师您见多识广。
Teacher Tao, you are well-informed.

Example 3
a. inclusive-we
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/us earth expert.

b. exlusive-we
这个幼婷可以给我们介绍一下。
Youting can introduce this for us.

Example 4
李艾真是越来越年轻了。
LI Ai is truly looking younger and younger.

Further qualitative analysis of the utterances with pronouns reveals notable gender differences. Females are 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 (你回答一下马老的问题 *please answer the question raised by teacher Ma.*). In contrast, males are 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 are more likely to receive compliments on their appearance, whereas men are more often to be mentioned by what they do. For instance, in Example 3b and Example 4, female guests are introduced at the beginning of the talk show with comments on her attractiveness. Conversely, male guest is introduced with a focus on his occupations and achievements of being an earth expert (地球专家) in Example 3a.

Example 5
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.

In the Example 5 above, the female guest is initially addressed with the social title 李兰妮女士 (Ms. LI Lanni). She is identified by her relationship with another guest and acknowledged by her professional achievement as the chairperson of the Writers Association in Shenzhen. Dion and Schuller (1990) found that women in managerial roles who used the title 'Ms.' were rated higher on traits like competence, leadership skills and overall masculinity, compared to their counterparts addressed as 'Miss' or 'Mrs.' in the late 1980s. However, she is also referred to by the illness she suffers from, which undermines her image as a competent chairperson. Additionally, she is mentioned again in relation to the male guest where she is teased not as a romantic partner, but as an old acquaintance and close friend.

From the use of vocatives with titles, it is observed that certain forms are already gender-marked such as 女士 nv3shi4 (Ms.), 先生 xian1sheng1 (Mr.), 爷 ye2 (sir). However, for some addressing forms that can be used for both genders, the prefix 女 nv3 (female) is added before occupational titles. For instance, 女领导 nv3ling3dao3(female leader) in Example 1b. These patterns underscore the subtle gendered bias present in addressing practice.

5 Discussion

5.1 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, the host differentiates vocatives using pronominal forms to subtly convey his stance and strategies towards male and female guests. According to T/V binary model proposed by Brown and Gilman (1960)'s, the pronominal forms of T/V languages highlight the roles of power and solidarity in address practices. However, the T/V forms are pol-

ysemous (Tannen, 1994; 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 while the more formal 'V' form is 您. As presented in Table 3 and Table 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, 2010). 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?) illustrates the use of the pronoun *you* co-occurs with addressing form of FL *YE Tan* to seek an opinion. 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.

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 of membership categorization and signify closeness, Camiciottoli (2014) observe that the referent of the first-person plural pronoun *we* may include or exclude the addressees. Levinson (1983, p69) refers to this as 'we-inclusive-of-addressee' (Example 3a) and 'we-exclusive-of-addressee' (Example 3b). These inclusive and exclusive use of pronoun *we* have been observed to be associated with politeness, solidarity and persuasion. 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. Both inclusive and exclusive meaning are observed. For instance, 咱们 zan2men2, another form of 'we', has an inclusive meaning that demonstrates solidarity or serves as a performative utterance to introduce the male guest in Example 3a. However, Example 3b excludes the addressee, Youting, to invite and persuade her politely to share opinion, while '我们' wo3men2 (we) refers to the listeners.

5.2 Women's place in the talk show

Although females are given more power in the talk show as they have equal opportunities and have the same roles for opinion sharing as male guests, the cross-gender conversations in the talk show in our analysis does not seem to put females at an advantage place. Female guest's disadvantage is observed in the asymmetrical distribution of vocatives used by the host. According to Brown and Ford (1961), there are three possible patterns if we only considered FN and TLN: 1) the reciprocal change of FN, 2) the reciprocal exchange of TLN, and 3) the non-reciprocal pattern in which one person uses FN and the other TLN. Because of the discursive constraints of the conventionalized beginning of the talk show, the introduction of the guest speakers are always conducted by the show host and may or may not follow by the reciprocal addressing by the guests. For instance, after the host 窦文涛 introduces the guests, they usually start discussion immediately. This is partially due to the situational constraints such as time restrictions and agenda restrictions. When host conducts performative utterances at the beginning of the episode to introduce both guests, it is evident that host address guests in mutual FN or TLN forms. In terms of the non-reciprocal form of TLN and FN. Females are always addressed in FN.

Although female guests can be addressed by title in Example 5, additional information about the health issue of the female guest is brought up by the physically weakness of '身残志坚' (physically disabled but strong willed) compared to male guest. In addition, 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 is particularly observable symmetrical conversations where involve equal number of participants (Berrier, 1997), not mentioning the cross-gender conversations in the talk show of our current analysis consisting 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.

The complexity of talk show 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 gen-

der 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 are 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; Manes and Wolfson, 1981). The frequency of the FN particularly for female guests may had potential for communicating sexism. In the talk show, the 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.

6 Conclusion

In this study, we investigated the addressing performance employed by the host in a Mandarin Chinese talk show. Unlike news interviews, which are typically characterized by a structured, institutional dialogue, talk shows function as public fora that allow for a blend of formal and casual conversations. This unique setting provides a rich context for analysing spontaneous language use, especially in question-answer sequences. While most existing studies focus on dyadic conversations involving only two participants, our research addresses the complexities of multi-party interactions. The talk show format, with its three participants (the host and two guests), offers a valuable source for understanding how addressing terms are used in more dynamic and fluid conversation settings. The host, who assumes a controlling role in the talk show, predominantly uses addressing terms to manage the flow of conversations. To illustrate the host's addressing performance more effectively, we selected cross-gender conversations featuring an equal number of male and female guests. This choice allows us to observe potential gender differences in the use of addressing terms within a balanced and controlled setting. Although there are many different types of addressing terms, their selection of is not random (Ervin-Tripp, 1969). Our analysis found no overtly negative views about women in the lan-

guage used by the host. However, nire subtle evidence of gender bias emerged through both qualitative and quantitative analysis. The choices of address forms serve as indicators of how language use can reflect sexist attitudes (Weatherall, 1996). Specifically, the host tended to use more full names (FL) and first name (FN) when addressing female guests, while male guests were more frequently addressed with titlesm such as title plus last name (TLN) and title plus full name (TFLN). These findings suggest that addressing practices in the current data set are affected by traditional Chinese culture. Chinese cultural naming influence how we perceive and perform addressing practice (Hagström, 2012). The study of address terms gives us considerable insight into the ways in which gender and person are constructed in Chinese society, which is greatly influenced by two philosophical systems of Taoism and Confucianism. As a result, it is unsurprising that more formal address terms with titles are predominantly used for men, reflecting their relatively higher status in the societal hierarchy. Conversely, the frequent use of first names and full names for women signals their comparatively lower status and power in the social order.

The present study reinforces the importance of context in a corpus-based approach when examining addressing practices. Analyzing address forms within their specific social and cultural contexts provides valuable insights into the construction of gender and personhood in Chinese society. This is particularly significant in a language like Mandarin Chinese, which lacks grammatical gender marking. Our findings underscore how a corpus-based analysis can reveal subtle, yet pervasive, patterns of gendered language use that might otherwise go unnoticed.

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