

## Abstract

Drawing from existing scholarship, the study categorizes sexist language into five domains: word order, gender markedness, the female radical in Chinese characters, addressing terms, and gender-biased slang. Additionally, it examines how personal background factors shape perceptions of different types of gender-biased expressions. A large-scale online survey was administered via Wenjuanxing, yielding responses from 2,069 Chinese speakers. Participants rated the perceived level of sexism in examples from each category on a 0–5 Likert scale. An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted to evaluate whether the proposed categories correspond to underlying perceptual structures, while a MANOVA examined the influence of gender, age, and education level on sensitivity to sexist language. The EFA results revealed that addressing terms (e.g., 先生, 姑姑) did not align with the existing factor structure, suggesting they may not constitute a coherent perceptual category. Terms such as 女司机 (“female driver”) and 女博士 (“female PhD”) clustered with explicitly discriminatory slang, indicating that these gender-marked professions are perceived as strongly gender-biased. Words containing the female radical (女) formed two distinct subgroups based on their positive or negative connotations. The MANOVA results further showed that women were generally more sensitive to sexist language than men, and younger participants were more likely to perceive these expressions as sexist. The results of this investigation show that significant gender differences in perceptions of linguistic sexism and reveal divergent interpretations of positively connoted gender stereotypes.

Key words: sexist language; gender difference; gender stereotype; gender linguistics