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Gender Differences **In the Usage Social Language**

In early elementary school, the language of boys and girls begins to reflect the gender differences of older children and adults. Genderlect, the stylistic conversational differences in vocabulary use, conversational style, etc. is well established by mid-adolescence; however, it is important to note that other factors such as context, topic and culture also influence conversational style. Below are a few interesting conversational differences between the sexes.

1. As early as 2 years of age, daughters are imitated more by their mothers and talked to longer than are sons.
2. In contrast to boys, young girls usually play in pairs, sharing the play, talking and telling “secrets.” Boys frequently refer to their playmates as *let’s* and *we*.
3. Women tend to use more expressions such as *oh dear*, *goodness*, *gracious me* while men use more expletives like *damn it*.
4. Men talk more in public and less at home.
5. Women are more indirect, seek consensus and listen carefully while men may be more likely to lecture and seem inattentive.
6. Women see conversations as a means to create intimacy. The topics discussed are not as important as the closeness and sharing of feelings.

As the language of conversation can vary between women and men, the competence of communication comes with expressing and understanding what is said, regardless of the *how*.