# Module 10: Language and Gender

## Introduction

In this module, we will learn about the **social construction** **of gender** and its connection with both actual linguistic behaviors and social stereotypes and misconceptions about these behaviors. Have you ever heard people say things like “women are more talkative than men”? This is an extremely prevalent stereotype about the differences in male and female speech in the United States. This chapter centers around the question, “do men and women speak differently?” The answer is actually quite complex: male and female speech patterns **are** quite different from one another in **some contexts**. Moreover **how** these patterns differ varies from place to place and culture to culture. In other words, although men and women can have different speech patterns, these differences are **socially constructed** because **gender** is itself **socially constructed**.

This week is another reading-intensive week. Don’t feel overwhelmed though –two of these readings, the book chapter from Deborah Cameron’s book *The Myth of Mars and Venus*and Maltz & Borker’s “cultural approaches to male-female miscommunication” are written for broad audiences and should make for quick reads. I strongly suggest you read the assigned readings in **the order in which they are listed**, however, as Kulick’s peer-reviewed book chapter, “Anger, gender, language shift and the politics of revelation in a Papua New Guinean village” will be **an important component of this week’s f2f class**. Please note that some of the language in Kulick’s article may be offensive to some. Bear in mind that this language is not gratuitous but central to the linguistic analysis.

## Objectives

At the end of this module, you will be able to:

* Define sex and gender**.**
* Explain the difference between sex and genderfrom the perspective of anthropology.
* List some of the stereotypes regarding male and female speech patterns in the United States.
* Explain the relationship between language ideologies and how these might affect the social construction of gender.
* Analyze the relevance of Kulick’s example of female speech patterns in Papua New Guinea to the study of language and gender.

## Time Management

This course is designed to maximize benefits gained from our weekly f2f meeting. In order for our class meeting to enhance and further deepen your understanding of course materials and help you achieve our module objectives, I suggest you manage your time wisely. An efficient example of how you can best utilize your time for this course is as follows:

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| **Day** | **Suggested Action** |
| Monday | Read assigned reading and module content |
| Tuesday | Finish assigned reading and module content |
| Wednesday | Original post due in the weekly graded discussion |
| Thursday | F2F Meeting |
| Friday | Response to another’s original post due by midnight tonight |

## Assigned Reading

This week, you will complete the following readings. Please do the reading as you complete the module content. You must have the required reading done prior to our f2f class meeting on Thursday. This week, the assigned readings are available for download directly from Module 10.

* Ahearn, Laura. 2012. Living Language. Chapter 9.
* Kulick, Don. “Anger, gender, language shift and the politics of revelation in a Papua New Guinean village.”
* Cameron, Deborah. “The Myth of Mars and Venus”
* Maltz, Daniel and Ruth Borker. “A cultural approach to male-female miscommunication.”