

THE INTERPLAY OF SEX, POLITENESS, AND STEREOTYPES IN LINGUISTIC COMMUNICATION IN ENOLA HOLMES

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politeness, and stereotypes in Enola Holmes (2020) and Enola Holmes 2 (2022), focusing on Enola's interactions with Sherlock and Mycroft Holmes. Using Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory and Butler's (1990) gender performativity framework, the research analyzes how Enola employs politeness and directness to navigate social expectations. The findings reveal that Enola challenges traditional gender stereotypes by using assertive language with Sherlock, countering the idea that women are inherently indirect and deferential. Her polite exchanges with Mycroft, meanwhile, demonstrate that politeness can function as resistance, not just submission. This analysis highlights the adaptability of gendered communication, where politeness and assertiveness are used contextually rather than being tied to sex. Ultimately, the research shows how media like Enola Holmes both reflects and challenges societal expectations about gendered communication, offering a more nuanced view of language, gender, and power.

This study examines the interplay between sex,

Introduction

In sociolinguistics, gendered communication has long been a focal point of investigation, particularly regarding how politeness strategies differ between men and women. Politeness theory, as formulated by Brown and Levinson (1987), offers a framework for understanding how individuals navigate social hierarchies and relationships through linguistic choices. The ways in which gender influences these choices have been debated extensively, with scholars such as Holmes (1995) and Tannen (1990) contributing significant insight into how women's and men's language use diverges, particularly in politeness, directness, and emotional expression.

Set in the late 19th century, the Enola Holmes films provide an intriguing case study for examining gendered communication within a historical context. The film series centers on Enola Holmes, a young woman in a male-dominated society, whose unconventional linguistic strategies reflect both the societal constraints of her era and a resistance to gender norms. By focusing on the language used by Enola and other central characters, this study seeks to analyze how gender influences politeness strategies and how these strategies either challenge or reinforce gender stereotypes within the film.