

# A Contrastive Analysis of Female Sexism in Chinese and English Address Systems: From the Perspective of Gender Linguistics

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<p>Received: 19 Oct 2025; Received in revised form: 17 Nov 2025; Accepted: 20 Nov 2025; Available online: 26 Nov 2025</p> <p>©2025 The Author(s). Published by International Journal of English Language, Education and Literature Studies (IJEEL). This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<a href="https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/">https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/</a>).</p> <p><b>Keywords – female sexism; Chinese and English address systems; gender linguistics</b></p>	<p><i>Sexism is a universal social phenomenon, especially female sexism, reflected not only in social life, but also in the language. Address is an integral part of social conversation irrespective of in Chinese culture or English culture. This paper employed comparative analysis and literature research to investigate female sexism in Chinese and English address systems from the perspective of gender linguistics. The findings revealed female sexism from two dimensions: kinship and non-kinship addresses, and analyze the relationship between gender and language. Female sexism in Chinese is mostly derived from feudal patriarch system, regulating Chinese female’s inferior status to male. English-speaking countries emphasizes liberty and equality, but this principle mainly benefits male, through rendering enormous female addresses created by male addresses correspondingly. In the Chinese and English address systems, some female addresses are in absence. However, this study found that female sexism is not emerged at the beginning, while it was gradually generated in the process of constructing society. Thus, based on the findings, this paper proposed some strategies to eliminate female sexism and appealed to eliminate female discrimination and accelerate the proceeding of gender equality. There’s still a long distance to achieve gender equality and more efforts should be put into it in the future.</i></p>

## I. INTRODUCTION

As women’s economic power has increased since 20<sup>th</sup> century, people gradually aware sexism of women and appeal to equality of women’s social place. According to Simone (2011), she proposed that

a woman is not so much born as formed, which reflects women are physically, psychologically and economically at a disadvantage place and are subordinate to men. Likewise, the sexism of female is not born with women, but chronically constructed by

social development. Language is sensitive to any changes of society and reflects the evolution of society. In ancient time of China, women have to follow the discipline of “the three obedience and the four virtues”, otherwise they would be humiliated and got penalty. In *Bible*, Eve was created by a rib from Adam. Whatever in Chinese culture or English culture, female sexism seriously maim female mentally and physically for a long time. As a significant cultural carrier, language faithfully performs various cultural elements, including belief, gender, race, etc. Sexism in language is an urgent problem, which erodes the efforts putting on eliminating sexism.

Each nation has a particular address system that shows its historical appearance and has profound cultural implication. In current researches, studies of gender sexism of different national address systems are abundant, but there is rare researches on sexism of Chinese and English address systems, which has certain limitations. In terms of practical aspect, this paper aims at investigate sexism in Chinese and English address systems from different dimensions to manifest the female sexism problem. From theoretical aspect, this paper attempts to provide a new analytical framework for Chinese and English address systems under gender linguistics and explore female sexism from perspective of gender linguistics.

Therefore, this paper will focus on two research objectives. The first is to make contrastive analysis between Chinese and English address systems and find out similarities and differences of two address systems. The second is to research how female sexism is achieved in addresses from perspective of gender linguistics.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section will introduce previous studies on female sexism primarily. Previous studies on Chinese and English address will be illustrated subsequently. At last, related researches of gender linguistics at home and abroad will be mapped out.

### 2.1 Previous Studies on Female Sexism

Female sexism has been a heated topic for academic research for a long time. Sexism originated from ancient times. In *Bible*, God made a man first, and removed a man’s rib before making a woman. Actually, after matriarchal clan society transferred into patrilineal descent, due to requirements of social productivity and the different physiological characteristics, women’s social place gradually declined. *Le Deuxième Sexe* published by Simone E-Beauvoir in 1949 was honored as the “Bible” of western women, known as the “female Bible”. She inspired the beginning of the women's cultural movement to the ancient sexism, awakening women in this patriarchal society. Kate Millett broke the previous norms of man-centered creation, reading and criticism, eliminating the traditional authority and credibility of traditional male writers to reproduce female images in literature, and constructing a feminist way of reading and criticism in *Sexual Politics* (1970). In 1791, Auramp Drguge published *the Declaration of the Rights of Woman and the Female Citizen*, and claimed that women have same natural human rights as men should, including freedom, industry, security, and especially resistance against oppression. *The Feminine Mystique* written by Betty Frieden in 1963 ignited the second feminist movement in America, and was seen as one of the most influential books of the 20th century, which exposed the ignored pain of American women shrouded in the illusion of “happy housewife” in the 1960s, and called on majority of women to bravely challenge the traditional gender role and actively strive for equal women's rights.

Feminists discovered that equality between men and women was not only presented in the social and political fields such as the right to vote, the right to employment and the right to education, but also was deeply imprinted in culture. In literary creation, especially in male literature considered mainstream literature, there are extensive sexism phenomenons. Domestic and foreign researches mostly focus on female sexism on employment and politics, such as “An Analysis of Female Employment Sex

Discrimination in 2019 in China" released by Wang Ting.

## 2.2 Previous Studies on Chinese and English Address Systems

Address is a mark that people uses it to distinguish complex social relationship and social roles. Most scholars at home and abroad partitioned addresses to the kinship and non-kinship addresses, such as Cao Wei (2005), Song Jiao (2010), Chunling GENG (2015), and Jin Zhijun (2021).

For the classification of kinship addresses, the researchers either divided them from the perspective of kinship and non-kinship relatives, or from the perspective of paternal and maternal descent. A. L. Kroeber (1909) has also indicated a theory of kinship analysis. He argued that every society used some guidelines based on social ideas to determine the classification of relatives and their addresses. Some guidelines are valued and adopted in one language, but they may be ignored or even completely abandoned in another language. Liu Chaoban (1991) proposed 363 modern Chinese standard kinship addresses. In micro classification, there are 245 paternal addresses, 65 marital addresses, 44 wife addresses and 9 husband addresses.

As for the classification of non-kinship addresses, researchers mostly believe that it covers the generalization of kinship addresses and social addresses. Zhang Bei (1993) proposed that in Chinese society, a person is primarily a family member, and the relationship with other members in society is often related to his family. Thus, when he associates with other members of society, he is often based on the family interests.

Therefore, it engendered the phenomenon of the generalizations of kinship addresses in Chinese non-kinship address system. English non-kinship addresses often plus Mr. or Mrs. before name or surname. The title of the English nobility must be shared with the name. In English address system, the generalizations of kinship addresses are still used by some people. For example, George. H. W. Bush and George. w. Bush are father-son relationship and both

the presidents in the US. The difference of their name is the reduction "H" in his son's name and we always distinguish them by using old Bush and young Bush, which shows the generalization of kinship addresses.

## 2.3 Previous Studies on Gender Linguistics

Gender linguistics emerged in 1664 and wasn't be admitted until the 1960s. Feminist movement boosts establishment of gender linguistics, such as R. Laboff, Labov, Trudgill, etc., have made lots of researches from aspects of pronunciation and the use of grammar between both genders. Sexism in society forms language sexism when reflected in language. As Edward Sapir (1921) said " language is historical product, the reason why these discrimination phenomena have long existed in language system is not only the language arbitrariness factor, but also subject to convention and social regulations." The study of language and gender can date back to 1665 in Robin Fort's *Histories Nature Morale Desiles Antilles*, which examined and recorded in detail that when Europeans first arrived in the Lesser Antilles, men and women of the native Caribbean Indian tribes used completely different languages (Sun Rujian, 1997:187), being regarded as the earliest reference to consciously record gender language. Danish linguist Otto Jespersen explained the characteristics of female language in his book *Language: Its Nature, Development and Origin* (1922).

In the 1960s, scholars discussed the characteristics of female speech with the sociolinguistics viewpoint and theory. In the 1990s and later, Mr. & Mrs. Milroy working as the pioneer, scholars began to use social network approach to study gender language phenomena at multiple levels, and to examine the relationship between language gender variants and the social classes and social networks, such as Bergvall (1999), Eckert and McConnell (1992), Ochs (1992), etc. They gradually recognized that gender was a thing that people constantly construct in different practices and language is the most important way to construct gender.

Since 21<sup>st</sup> century, gender linguistics research

extended to the world, Wikipedia's *Japanese and female* (1978) was the representative works of Japanese gender language research. As a large research category, gender linguistics has also gradually developed professional journal, *Gender & Language Journal*. International Gender and Language Association, an exclusive professional association for gender linguistics established in 1999, has significantly extended research scope into the pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, semantic, conversation mode, language ability, language acquisition, etc., and increasingly associated gender linguistics with anthropology, sociology, psychology, history, learning, culture, religion, geography, etc., whose research vision increasingly enlarged, and underlay the followed research basis.

#### 2.4 Summary

The researches about gender, language and sexism are affluent, while comparative analysis between different address systems are infrequent. The change of addresses can reflect the influence of social culture on men and women and different social expectations for them, and the semantic meanings of addresses suggest the tendentious attitude of social and cultural consciousness towards both sexes. Because gender linguistics is still a burgeoning branch subject of sociolinguistics, some weaknesses still exist: less systematic, insufficient breadth and depth, and excessive stress on differences but neglect the same factors. There are rare researches connect gender linguistics with sexism on a specific language scope. Scholars tend to research gender linguistics from speech sounds, intonation and semanteme aspects.

Thus, this paper will focus on gender linguistics and try to systematically explore sexism in Chinese and English address systems, by analyzing and comparing similarities and differences to deepen the understanding of language discrimination, eliminate the negative effect of stereotype cognitive mode, so that it can help to promote language harmony and create a more harmonious and equal society.

### III. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

This paper is based on the gender linguistics to make a systemic analysis on sexism in Chinese and English address systems. The study of gender linguistics focus on the relationship between gender language and gender culture. Gender linguistics is actually based on two theories: one is feminist trends, the other is sociolinguistics. The theory of feminism originated from Renaissance feminism to the three movements of feminism, making new requirements and exploration for equality between men and women in all aspects. The basic theory of sociolinguistics came from the critical inheritance and development of structural linguistics. Saussure has proposed the division of external factors and internal factors in *Course in General Linguistics*. The relevant contents that his external linguistics needs to be studied is what sociolinguistics research. Sociolinguistics studies language and social systems, the dynamic evolution of language, and multidimensional methods. Michael Halliday regarded the language symbol system as one of the main parts of social symbol system. The problems of society and language are interrelated. As a system, language does not discriminate any group or member of society.

#### 3.1 The Content of Gender Linguistics

From the available researches, the study of gender linguistics generally comprehends two dimensions: analyze language of women from perspective of structuralism, and investigate sexism in language.

##### 3.1.1 Gender Language from Perspective of Structuralism

Among them, the analysis and description of female language characteristics are the most sufficient and abundant in researches, involving different language structure levels such as speech sound, vocabulary, syntax and semantic respects.

Firstly, from respect of speech sound, it mostly expounded the differences in sound quality, sound range, intonation, pronunciation form, etc. Through the study of gender speech difference, gender

became key point that would no longer be neglected in phonetic analysis, which improves the scientific nature of gender language research. Edelsky (1979) has stated that if we try to identify the differences in the production of speech, a feasible area of research is to examine the issues of gender differences in language. Lots of linguists have contributed significant research results on gender differences in sound speech. Thorne & Henley (1972) found that vast majority of speech gender differences studies have generally hold that women have a higher sensitivity to speech, and they tend to use standard speech patterns more often than men. Loveday (1981) put forward that gender differences in the audio range between British men and women have been determined and found the perception of the universal vocal range can lead to fluctuations in pitch when the intensity changes at the same frequency.

Secondly, as for vocabulary, the purpose of summarizing and describing the vocabularies with gender differences was mostly to explore qualitative gender difference and quantitative gender difference expressed by the language through the different language in the vocabulary use. Chaika (1982) investigated the gender differences in the choice of strong and weak words caused by the different oral use of exclamations; Spender (1980) studied the gender differences in typical English slang and draw the conclusion that women tend to use euphemistic oral expressions and men use vulgar slang more.

Thirdly, in respect of syntax, the study of the relationship between gender and syntax in language began in the early 1970s, and it gradually showed a diversified tendency until the 1980s. In terms of syntax, the gender language mainly examined the frequency of using different types of sentence patterns and the habit of using words and sentences in syntax. Robin Leacock (1973) summarized the characteristics of women's language and found that their language sounded more graceful and polite than men, which meant women are better at using euphemistic expressions, while men's words are more direct than women; Brooke (1970) researched that the typical feature of women's language was that

women prefer to use omitted and exclamation sentences.

Fourthly, in terms of semantic, it's known that there are genus distinction of positive, negative and neutral words in some languages, so that it's easy to associate it with gender and endowed them with different biological characteristics corresponding to both genders, for instance, positive or neutral words are always defined as optimistic, vigorous and active features that people often considered as men's characters, while the negative words will be defined as the contrast meaning. Although this linguistic interpretation of Biological Gender-determined Grammatical Properties is flawed in etymology and logic, it has also dominated the development of western linguistics theory, and has influenced some eminent linguists, such as J. Grimm and Humboldt.

### 3.1.2 Linguistic Sexism

Linguistic sexism refers to the specific language expressions in the use of language. Usually, the language use and language habits of men show many prejudices and negative attitudes towards women. Linguistic sexism arises in the course of language use and language practice, and isn't inherent in the language itself.

Sociolinguistics believes that linguistic sexism is manifested in specific cultural symbols in different cultures, which is a reflection of cultural stereotypes, social attitude, power ideology, and cognitive pattern in the language system. The study of linguistic sexism is also the main content and important position of gender language research, which runs through its birth and development.

As early as the 1920s, Jespersen (1924) pointed out that many nouns in English only refer to men and women, especially the nouns indicating occupation have significant gender distribution asymmetry due to the different social division of labor between men and women. A book of Mary Ritchie Key *Male / Female Language* (1996, 2nd ed.), gives a more detailed description and analysis from the form and scope of the language differences and the social and cultural factors causing linguistic

sexism.

The development of language sexism researches a broader horizon up to now, the theoretical system gradually become reasonable, and the dimension and depth of interpretation has matured. It overcomes the disadvantages of the one-way thinking and excavates the potential or invisible linguistic sexism bias in the cultural and social structure.

#### IV. DUAL-DIMENSIONAL ANALYSIS AND ELIMINATION OF FEMALE SEXISM IN CHINESE AND ENGLISH ADDRESSES

According to the most common division of addresses by current researches, addresses are generally divided into the kinship and non-kinship addresses. Accordingly, analysis on female sexism in Chinese and English address systems will be expounded from dimensions of kinship and non-kinship addresses, on the basis of gender linguistics. At last, the paper will propose some strategies to eliminate female sexism in Chinese and English address systems respectively.

##### 4.1 Kinship Address

Address is an essential part of lexical system and naturally represents relationship of language and gender. According to the definition of *Modern Chinese Dictionary (the 7<sup>th</sup> Edition)*, address is used to distinguish the mutual relationship between relatives and gender, as well as identity, occupation, such as master, father, etc. The main function of kinship

addresses is to mark the seniority and gender in a family.

Han nationality in China has established a traditional patriarch system over thousands of years of feudal society, which centered on man or paternal kinship, so that in Chinese traditional society, people tended to consider paternal line as superiority. Chinese kinship address system follows the formality of man first and woman followed, so as the old and youth. Thus, the principle of man first and woman followed in the process of kinship addresses socialization.

Socialists classified family modes into nuclear family, stem family and extended family. Since 20<sup>th</sup> century, nuclear families have been in majority in China. According to research in 1982, it showed that stem families accounted for 24.29 percent of the total, second only to nuclear families. It's obvious to notice that stem families depending on the paternal line still occupied in large numbers, leading to the situations that a large patrilineal family with several generations is under one roof. Therefore, Chinese address system is extremely huge and complicated. According to Liu (2014), he proposed "Dichotomy of Chinese kinship addresses" as following figure 1, which divided Chinese kinship address into two parts: consanguinity and affinity, and then extended successively. Compared with Chinese kinship addresses performed by quartering put forwarded by Sun (2014) in figure 2, figure 1 seems more legible to recognize the complex kinship in China.

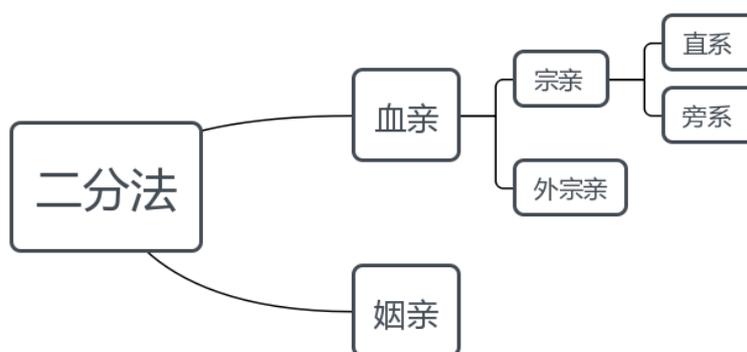


Fig.1 Dichotomy of Chinese Kinship Addresses (Liu, 2014)

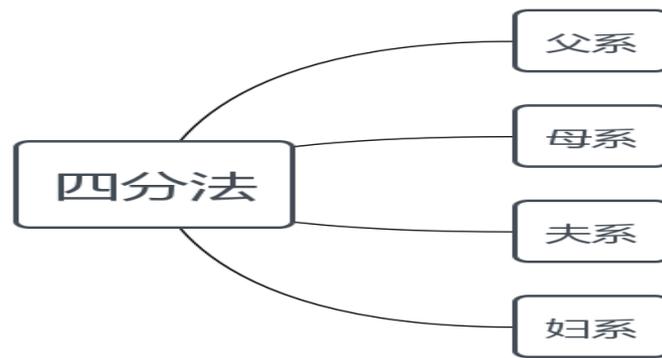


Fig.2 Quartering of Chinese Kinship Addresses (Sun, 2014)

In contrast, due to farming was not the main mode of production for English nationalities and they mostly engaged in industry and trade, people always went out for work and seldom got in touch with relations. In comparison with China, kinship addresses in English culture are limited. After processing into industrial society, extended families in English-speaking countries were gradually vanishing. Most of the English families consist of parents and daughter or son that is the mode of nuclear family having been mentioned before. In accordance with conception of nuclear and non-nuclear families, the paper assorts English kinship addresses into two respects, i.e. nuclear and non-nuclear kinship addresses. Nuclear kinship addresses specify directly-related member of one's family including parents, children, spouse, brother and sister. On the other side, non-nuclear kinship addresses refer to the addresses excluding nuclear kinship addresses.

#### 4.1.1 Gender Difference and Female Sexism in Chinese and English Kinship Addresses

As a significant part of language, kinship addresses associate closely with people, society and culture. Gender linguistics is an important branch of sociolinguistics, which focuses on exploring the relationship of gender and language based on the original research of sociolinguistics. The pragmatic function of kinship addresses will help to investigate the relationship between gender and language and

deepen understanding.

Brown and Ford (1961) have weighed in with three semantic patterns for the address system in American English that were the mutual ex-change of first name, the mutual exchange of title plus last name and the nonreciprocal pattern. They regarded that the semantic selection of address system in American English was under the constraint of power and solidarity. The use of address is not only restricted from national tradition, social structure and group awareness, but also related with age, status, gender and blood relationship of communicators. In English-speaking countries, families in different seniority can call each other directly by name, embodying the conception of solidarity that means simplification and equality in English address system.

Nonetheless, the characteristics on gender of Chinese address system expressed through adaptation principle, address inequality principle and patriarchal principle, which is completely reverse from English address system and represents complication and inequality of address conception.

Chinese kinship addresses' gender difference is more noticeable and mainly presents on female sexism. Different traditional social systems are the point resulting the basic difference between two address systems that China is traditional patriarch system, whereas the other promotes people was born equal since Renaissance.

Though English address system emphasizes the equality principle. Based on the principles proposed by Kroeber. A. L (1909), he indicated that English addresses strictly differentiated genders such as father, mother, brother, sister, uncle and aunt and so

on and so forth, which means both Chinese and English address system highlight the gender difference. What in follow is table 1 to compare Chinese and English nuclear addresses.

*Table 1 Comparison of Chinese and English Nuclear Addresses*

Chinese Nuclear Addresses		English Nuclear Addresses	
Paternal	Maternal	Paternal	Maternal
父亲	母亲	father	mother
儿子		son	
女儿		daughter	
祖父	外祖父	grandfather	grandfather
祖母	外祖母	grandmother	grandmother
丈夫		husband	
妻子		wife	
伯父	(大)舅	uncle	uncle
伯母	(大)舅母	aunt	aunt
叔父	(二)舅	uncle	uncle
叔母	(二)舅母	aunt	aunt
姑母	姨母	aunt	aunt
姑父	姨父	uncle	uncle
孙子		grandson	grandson
孙女		granddaughter	granddaughter

From table one, Chinese and English nuclear addresses detach in half. Female addresses always follow the generation of male addresses. Besides, it's conspicuous to find that paternal addresses on the left column of Chinese nuclear addresses are more intricate and multiple than maternal line. For example, in paternal line, father's younger brother is called "叔父" and older brother is called "伯父" by the child in China, while in maternal line, mother's brothers are only called "舅" distinguishing younger or older through adding "大" or "小" before it, which because in comparison with paternal relatives, maternal relatives didn't have blood relation with them. Moreover, the spouse of "叔父" and "伯父" are called by substituting last word with "母".

Overlooking the whole addresses in table 1, most of the addresses for female are reciprocal to male that producing by adding "母" to the original address mode. What the only exception is father's sisters "姑姑" without distinguishing signs for younger or older have peculiar addresses in paternal line, but they are regarded as outsiders for a family and their names won't be added pedigree of clan due to they will marry the person outside this family. A root cause for this situation is that female are not been valued and still in humble and junior status under the dominance of rooted paternal system. Thus, Chinese kinship addresses have obvious gender difference and female sexism.

In terms of English kinship addresses, in nuclear

families, central relation is husband and wife that incarnates in nuclear kinship addresses. There's no distinction between paternal line and maternal line owing to most of the families are nuclear families, and they just have a single address "aunt" for father's or mother's sisters. Besides, they also don't emphasize respect of seniority, so in table 1, they doesn't have mark for younger aunt or older aunt

and use the unified address called aunt. Nevertheless, the factor of gender is important for kinship addresses. Excluding a special address "cousin", all addresses are in distinct difference in gender and correspondent on by one, such as the five pairs of main kinship addresses and a special address in followed table 2.

Table 2 English Main Kinship Addresses for Nuclear Family

Male Addresses	Female Addresses
father	mother
son	daughter
brother	sister
uncle	aunt
nephew	niece
cousin	

#### 4.1.2 Female Sexism in Chinese and English Kinship Addresses between Husband and Wife

Confucianism has been the mainstream thought over a long period in Chinese history. To support the reign of feudal emperor, Confucianism promoted feudal extended families and highlighted patriarchal clan system. In Chinese traditional relationship, female status was junior to male and had to severely observe feudal ethics and "the three obedience and the four virtues" that wife have to respect husband and absolutely comply with the instructions of husband. In ancient time, wife should be honored to

address her husband, i.e., "老爷", "夫君", "官人" and etc., while husband would be contemptuous to address such as "贱内", "内人", "堂客" and etc, which has massive sexism tinge for female. As the followed table 3, there are some common reciprocal addresses between husband and wife in ancient and modern society. With the civilized process of society, sexism in addresses are profoundly promoted and people scarcely used those addresses in public, except in some dialogues that are still used by people.

Table 3 Common Reciprocal Addresses between Husband and Wife

	Ancient Chinese (indirect, direct or dialogue addresses)	Modern Chinese (indirect, direct or dialogue addresses)
Husband Addresses	公、相公、郎君、良人、官、官人、老爷、外子(人)、夫君、官人、当家的、君、大人、先生、袁公等	老公、丈夫、爱人、孩他爸、老头子、我家那口子、老伴儿等
Wife Addresses	小君、细君、娘子、婆娘、婆姨、衰婆、妻、媳妇、贱内、糟糠、臣妾、内子、荆人、荆室、荆妇、拙荆、山荆、贱荆、内助、屋里人、执帚、浑家等	老太婆、老婆、太太、爱人、夫人、孩他妈、我家那口子、媳妇、煮饭的等

Comparatively, English nationality promotes equality and freedom and the addresses between husband and wife reflecting the cultural value of freedom and individuality. They will call each other directly by full name or omitting family name to express geniality, like “Tom”, “Jane”, “Terry”, “Helen”, etc. Moreover, they always used “Honey”, “Baby”, “Sweetheart”, “Darling” and so on and so forth to incarnate intimacy. However, that not means there’s no female sexism in English nationalities. For example, women getting married will be called “Mr. Tom’s wife” or be introduced by their husband as “My wife”, replacing their original name.

Thus, female sexism both exists in Chinese and English address systems between husband and wife, while Chinese modern addresses have changed immensely and female sexism in addresses are gradually vanishing.

#### 4.2 Non-kinship Address

Many scholars often regarded non-kinship addresses as social addresses. Social addresses are the addresses excluding kinship addresses that apply in social contact and be used with people except kinsfolk. Non-kinship addresses embody more complicated dimensions of relationship like status, identity, gender, attitude and preference of the people addressed. Non-kinship addresses incarnate more serious female sexism than the former kinship addresses in Chinese and English address systems. The current researches of gender linguistics focus on speech sound, vocabulary, syntax and semantic respects. In this part, the paper will investigate female sexism in non-kinship address system from word formation and semantic meaning on the basis

of gender linguistics.

##### 4.2.1 Female Sexism in Word Formation of Chinese and English Non-kinship Addresses

Chinese is a group of typical isolating language that each word contains a single morpheme, without morphological changes. The word formation of Chinese is mainly in complex type. On the basis of feudal paternal system, non-kinship addresses for male were produced primarily and female non-kinship addresses confronted with absence perennially.

Under this circumstance, female non-kinship addresses were usually created by adding a morpheme “女” to the original address mode and was affiliated to masculine addresses. In *Shuowen Jiezi*, it recorded “女弟” that means younger sister; “女兄” means older sister; “女公子” means other people’s daughter. Besides, lots of professional addresses will deliberately emphasize female in media like female college students, female enterprise and female scientist, which implies the competence and intelligence of female are junior to male.

English belongs to inflectional language. Female English addresses are mainly formed by adding bound morpheme and compounding. The addresses representing men and women usually appear in pairs, and the words representing men are unmarked in most cases that female addresses will be acquired through adding affixes based on the words representing male, such as the common affixes in table 4. Besides, three female general addresses: she, woman, female is respectively derived from he, man, male that are male addresses.

Table 4 Common Forms of Female Non-kinship Addresses

Prefix		Suffix	
gynec-	gynecologist	-ess	countess, poetess, mayoress, manageress, stewardess, authoress, heiress etc.
matr(i)-	matriarch, matron, etc.	-ress	actress, waitress, electress, interpretress, etc.

fem-	feminist, female, femme, etc.	-rix	testatrix, administratrix, executrix, etc.
		-ina	Ballerina, Czarina, etc.
		-ine	Concubine, heroine, landgravine, etc.
		-ette	Usherette, suffragette, majorette, undergraduaette, etc.

Furthermore, the method of compounding for most English occupation addresses is similar to Chinese through attaching female or women to male addresses. Due to the stereotype pattern of female roles in English is wife and mother, decent occupations are generally attributed to male. Actually, some words for occupation are originally neutral words, but people habitually associate them only with men because of the stereotype cognition. When it comes to women in such occupations, adding words like woman, lady, female, etc. is routine, for example, doctor-woman or female doctor, professor-woman or female professor, militia woman, policewoman, businesswoman, etc., which indicates that female is affiliated to male.

#### 4.2.2 Female Sexism in Semantic Meaning of Chinese and English Non-kinship Addresses

Enormous Chinese characters with radical “女” are pejorative and most of them are pedagogues for female. In Chinese dictionary, “女” refers to soft, fragile, puny ones. For example, “奴”, “婢”, “婊”, “妾”, “娼”, “妓”, “妖妇”, etc., are representative

disparaging addresses for ancient female. Besides, some male non-kinship addresses also have radical “女”, such as “奸夫”, “贪官”. etc. What deserves to pay attention is that in most of the Chinese dictionaries, they inclined to use “他” as a general personal pronoun, which originally signifies male, to indicate a certain person when gender is ignored or blurred.

Female sexism in English non-kinship addresses is more obvious than that in Chinese ones. There are many reciprocal feminine and masculine addresses in English. Masculine words always have positive and noble meaning, while feminine words have negative and belittling meaning. For example, bachelor and spinster that is a pair of reciprocal addresses, the former means a man who is unwilling to marry and live happily, whereas the latter one means a woman can't get married because of deformed appearance and old age. In the followed table 5, this paper concludes several common reciprocal feminine and masculine addresses .

Table 5 Pairs of Reciprocal Feminine and Masculine Addresses

Feminine Form	Masculine Form
governess	governor
mother	father
witch	wizard
mistress	master
lady	lord
walking man	walking woman
public woman	public man
all bitch	call boy
old bitch	old dog
a loose woman	a loose man

The right column of the over table 5 is feminine addresses that represent disdainful meaning, such as mistress signifies not only host for a family, but also refers to a woman has certain sexy or intimate relationship with a man. Nevertheless, the corresponding address “master” on the left column indicates a person or a man has professional ability.

### 4.3 Strategies to Eliminate Female Sexism in Chinese and English Address Systems

Simone (2011) has proposed that a woman in society that it's not born in nature, but is formed that under men and affiliated to men. In Chinese culture, dominating by Confucianism, the deeply rooted patriarchal system has constructed superiority of male. Because different aspects of factors, female sexism represented on kinship addresses and non-kinship addresses is gradually taking root in Chinese and English-speaking countries.

Since 21<sup>st</sup> century, as women's status and feminism movement is rising, gender discrimination in language has been widely concerned. Chen Muhua, as chair person of All-China Women's Federation, firstly substituted chair person for chairman on World Women's Congress in Beijing in 1996. Some reforms and improvements have been made on linguistic discrimination by different countries shortly thereafter.

In an effort to eliminate female sexism in Chinese and English address systems, the paper has concluded some strategies what followed according to the findings.

#### 4.3.1 Strategies to Eliminate Female Sexism in Chinese Address System

First, legislate safeguard and ban from using expressions implying insult of female, such as “娘炮” “寡妇”, “荡妇”, “娼妓”, “老处女”, “情妇”, “狐狸精”, “婊子”, etc. The dialogue and slang, for example “女子无才便是德”, “惟女子与小人难养也”, etc. indicating female sexism should be limited to use, either.

Second, revise expressions hinting female discrimination or gender stereotypes into neutral ones. The following examples will show the

underlined revisions of some common expressions.

- |             |              |
|-------------|--------------|
| (1) 女汉子     | <u>铿锵玫瑰</u>  |
| (2) 女强人     | <u>成功女性</u>  |
| (3) 妇孺皆知    | <u>众所周知</u>  |
| (4) 男生帮忙做家务 | <u>男生做家务</u> |
| (5) 寡妇      | <u>丧偶妇女</u>  |

Third, use “他或她” to replace “他” when the gender of referent person is

ambiguous. Besides, if it is necessary, collective nouns to substitute “他” or “他们” are also a good choice. For example, we could use “你指的他或她是谁?” to replace “你指的他是谁?”, or “他们在教室自习” to substitute “学生们在教室自习”.

Fourth, consideration should be given to reform those contumelious characters with the radical “女” to other neutral radicals by Committee for Language Reform of China.

#### 4.3.2 Strategies to Eliminate Female Sexism in English Address System

First, use some neutral words to replace words with female sexism. For example, the suffixes as “-female”, “-ess”, “-ette”, etc., which have marked female feminine should be shunned. Neutral words should be created to protect female's equal rights on addresses.

Second, employ “he or she” including its possessive form, or plural forms instead of “he” when it refers to ambiguous gender. For example, “Everyone should take his responsibility” could be revised to “Everyone should take his or her responsibility” or “Everyone should take their responsibilities.”

Third, female addresses with “Ms” and don't use Mrs or Miss that imply marital status. Besides, addresses such as Mr. Green's wife, which symbolizes subordinate role of female, should be avoided.

Though great development has been made on the field of academic in recent years by feminists and excellent scholars at home and abroad, who revised sexism addresses into neutral addresses, there's still

a long distance to completely eliminate female sexism.

## V. CONCLUSION

This paper explores female sexism in Chinese and English address systems through the lens of gender linguistics, based on the analysis on kinship and non-kinship dimensions. The key finding is that the gender bias has different manifestation across the two languages: Chinese kinship addresses carry more prominent sexism due to a patriarchal and complex paternal system, while English non-kinship addresses exhibit more obvious bias through word formation and semantic connotations. In order to achieve true gender equality in language, it requires not only addressing female sexism but also acknowledges male-related biases and fosters a linguistically inclusive environment with mutual respect and equality.

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