

Talking dance, doing gender:

Gendered language use in
a podcast made by and
for the West Coast Swing
dance community

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Degendering

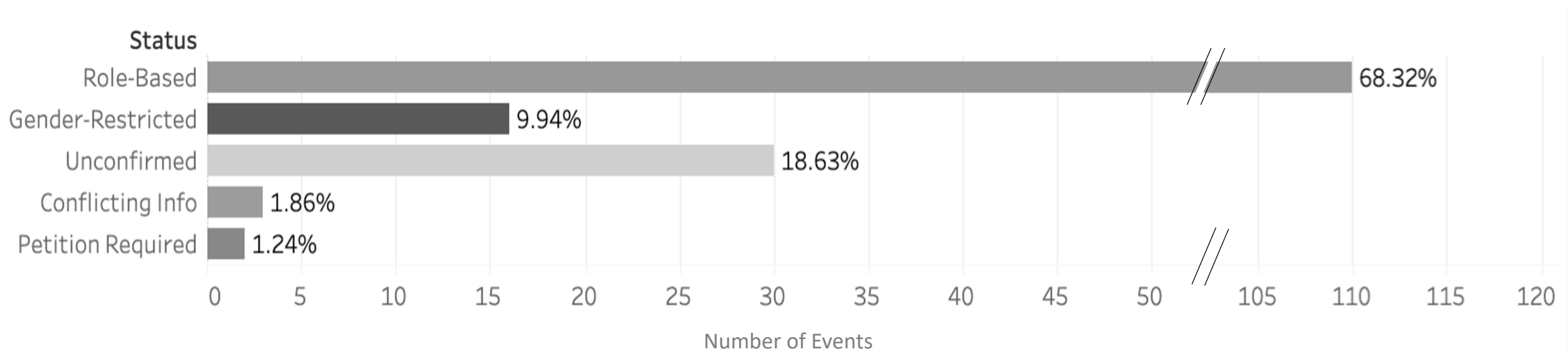
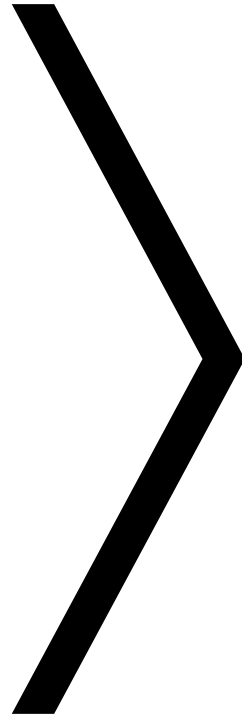


Figure 1. Percentage of All WSDC Jack n Jill Events Globally

Source: Stokes (2018)

women
ladies girls
gals she
he gentlemen
guys
boys
men



leader lead
follower switch
he/she
they follow

Case Study: The Naked Truth

A podcast made by and for West Coast Swing Dancers

| Deborah | Eric |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Champion level competitor• Traveling instructor/judge• Ambivalent about degendering | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allstar level competitor• Organizer/instructor/judge• For degendering |
| Episode under study: <i>Leading and Following</i> | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Duration: 1:32:11• Aired: Feb. 20, 2019 | |

Data Preparation

Transcription

- Rampton (1995)

Extraction of Tokens

- Noun phrases + pronouns referring to one and only one dance role
- Not referring to any known specific individual (i.e. generic)
- Excluded: quantifiers *who* and *someone*

Cleaning

- Repetitions

Coding

| All Tokens | Pronouns |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Speaker• Gender• Number• Role• Participant role (Goffman, 1981)• Interspeaker effects• Nearest partner token | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Antecedent Token & Type• Antecedent Speaker |
| | <p style="text-align: center;">Nouns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Definiteness• Initial v Subsequent mention• Replaceable by pronoun? |

Table 1. Token Counts

| | Deborah | | Eric | | Total | |
|--|---------|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|
| | n | % | n | % | n | % |
| Total Tokens | 7423 | | 9627 | | 17050 | |
| Relevant Tokens (% of total tokens) | 233 | 3.14 | 403 | 4.19 | 636 | 3.73 |
| Non-gendered Tokens (% of relevant tokens) | 178 | 76.39 | 380 | 94.29 | 558 | 87.74 |
| Gendered Tokens | 55 | 23.61 | 23 | 5.71 | 78 | 12.26 |
| Plural Tokens | 79 | 33.91 | 130 | 32.26 | 209 | 32.86 |
| Pronouns (% of plural tokens) | 39 | 49.37 | 44 | 33.85 | 83 | 39.71 |
| Nouns (Non-gendered) | 38 | 48.10 | 86 | 66.15 | 124 | 59.33 |
| Nouns (Gendered) | 2 | 2.53 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 0.96 |
| Singular Tokens | 115 | 49.36 | 180 | 44.67 | 295 | 46.38 |
| Pronouns (Non-gendered) (% of singular tokens) | 14 | 12.17 | 20 | 11.11 | 34 | 11.53 |
| Pronouns (Gendered) | 49 | 42.61 | 23 | 12.78 | 72 | 24.41 |
| Nouns (Non-gendered) | 48 | 41.74 | 137 | 76.11 | 185 | 62.71 |
| Nouns (Gendered) | 4 | 3.48 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 1.36 |
| Second Person Pronouns | 39 | 16.74 | 93 | 23.08 | 132 | 20.75 |

Table 2. Singular Token Counts

| | Deborah | | Eric | | Total | |
|--|---------|-------|------|--------|-------|-------|
| | n | % | n | % | n | % |
| Total Singular Tokens (% of total tokens) | 115 | 49.36 | 180 | 44.67 | 295 | 46.38 |
| Pronouns (% of total singular tokens) | 63 | 54.78 | 43 | 23.89 | 106 | 35.93 |
| THEY (% of pronouns) | 14 | 22.22 | 18 | 41.86 | 32 | 30.19 |
| Split forms | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 4.65 | 2 | 1.89 |
| SHE | 18 | 28.57 | 13 | 30.23 | 31 | 29.25 |
| HE | 31 | 49.21 | 10 | 23.26 | 41 | 38.68 |
| Nouns | 52 | 45.22 | 137 | 76.11 | 185 | 62.71 |
| Non-gendered nouns (% of nouns) | 48 | 92.30 | 137 | 100.00 | 181 | 97.84 |
| Gendered nouns | 4 | 7.69 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 2.16 |
| Subsequent Nominal Reference (where a pronoun would be grammatical) | 9 | 7.83 | 39 | 21.67 | 48 | 16.27 |

Accommodation to Deborah

E: so for instance if I get **a follower** and we- we get onto the dance floor (.) and we're in closed position and **that follower** doesn't put weight in my hand?

D: you know she doesn't trust you

E: or I can't trust her to like fill space

D: or- or it just means that (.) **she** just doesn't really know how to connect well

E: right

...5 lines omitted...

E: sure but in terms of me trusting **my follower**?

D: [mhm]

D: right

E: um if **a follower** does connect and fill that space?

D: mhm

E: and is responsive to me like right off the bat? that helps build trust

D: sure (.) I [agree I-]

E: [li- like] the physical trust uh if I set **my follower** up for something and she follows through on it (.) like she lets me finish (.) that (.) sentence that thought

(Extract 1, In 0830-0849)

Generic Partner of a Known Individual

D: there's **an all star leader** I'm not gonna mention (.) um **his** name but uh (.) **he's** always ahead of the music (.) um (.) **he's** always uh (.) leading every single [thing]

E: [mhm]

D: I feel like **he's** constantly screaming uh at **the follower** and **he** makes the finals a lot

...[8 lines omitted]...

E: so in that moment they may be like he was actively leading putting her in a position they hit the music well done without looking at the bigger picture of like oh **he's** actually actively leading the whole time being controlling or he's not responsive to **his follower** so I could see that being one

(Extract 2, In 0385-0398)

E: I also use **Tatiana** because I think a lot of followers (.) or a [lot of more novice]

D: [try to emulate **her** and]

D: [they're not **her**]

E: [yeah]

E: yeah

D: yeah

E: and they think what **she's** doing is just throwing everything and everything out there [and they don't realize] no **she's**

D: [but **she's** not]

E: totally communicating all of that inten[tion to her leader] and

D: [yes agreed]

E: working off what **she** gives- or [what] he gives her and-

D: [yes]

(Extract 3, In 0300-0303)

Sexual Humour

E: By the way I think it's so funny that you look at people and you're like that's the way they talk because let's face it Deborah that's not what [we] think (.) we think that's the way they are in bed ((laughing))

D: [wah-] ((laughing))

D: yes that too

E: ((laughing))

D: it's that too ah ha [no totally] [right]

E: [the fortune] cookie effect just add [in bed] to the end of that

D: yeah yeah totally

E: he leads really rough (.) in bed

D: oh boy

E: she only follows (.) in bed

D: right right right oh my goodness

(Extract 4, In 0367-0379)

Animating Students and Responses to Students

E: I always get the question but like don't I ever look at **him** isn't it cold if I never look at **his** face? And I'm like there are plenty of times where I look at **the leader** to communicate

D: right

E: so I'll look at **the leader** like you said to acknowledge and affirm

D: right

E: I will look at **the leader** to get **his** attention if I wanna take a moment or I have an idea [and] if we are- if we are

D: [mhm]

E: actively participating in the dance [where] you are acknowledging your

D: [mhm]

E: partner or you are contributing ideas then there's gonna be plenty of time where you are making eye contact

D: [sure]

E: [but it's] with intent

(Extract 5, In 0464-0472)

E: um not to go into the judging conversation but I do get the question of- especially from followers when they're like if **the leader** is leading me off time am I gonna be penalized cuz you're only looking at followers? and I look at **the follower** and I see (.) **her** off time I will watch for like another five seconds to see- (.) to [assess] whether

D: [right]

E: it's **her** or **him** and if [**she** tri-] if **she**

D: [absolutely]

E: gets back on time

(Extract 6, In 0404-0407)

Animating Rebuke of Dancer

E: and that goes for leaders too (.) y'know [some] leaders are like hey the song

D: [yeah]

E: started I'm gonna lead you in a (.) double outside turn to a triple axle lutz to a drop [and] you're like what are [you]

D: [yeah] [what]

E: doing

D: exact[ly]

E: [how] are you building trust with your partner how is **your [partner]**

D: [right]

E: supposed to trust that you're gonna take care of **her** and- and set **her** up for musical (.) moments in a way that- (.) that isn't gonna (.) cause panic?

(Extract 7, In 0904-0911)

E: so I lead as **a leader** I set something up in a way [some]times as an invitation where it's a question

D: [mhmm]

E: mark? Sometimes in a way where it's just an open ended statement and other times where it's an affirmative statement but in all those cases I'm hoping to provoke a response from **my follower** (.)

E: [um] that then I feed off so then **they** say something (.) **they** put forth a statement and then I work

D: [mhm]

E: with that (.) uh even if it's just like- if I do an active lead and I set **them** up for something if I get the like (.) y'know you look at me and smile and I'm like ok cool

D: right

E: that was right on (.) then [I take] that feedback and I'll feed it into what I'm [doing] (.)

D: [right] [something else]

E: [even if you don't] like do something if that makes sense

D: [righ- right- right]

D: yeah [totally]

E: [other] times I'll do an invitation and you'll like do something you'll do a shoulder shrug and I'll be like cool I'm gonna wrap that in somehow [um] or **she's** dancing to the lyric so then I try

D: [mhmm]

E: to work with it uhhm we have that back and forth that give and take

(Extract 8, In 0540-0551)

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Thank you!

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