



## Chapter 4

# Gender and identity

In this chapter you will:

- Explore ideas about gender and identity
- Understand that gender can be socially constructed
- Examine and investigate masculine and feminine identities

### 4.1 Introduction

Much of the way that we can both think about ourselves and describe ourselves is through **binary oppositions**. Are we old or young, black or white, rich or poor? Do we live in the east or west, north or south? In gender terms, are we a man or a woman? Our answers to these all combine to give us our sense of personal identity. Perhaps using the plural 'identities' is more accurate, because there is no one single identity that completely defines us. Likewise we can shift between identities as we move through our daily lives. Think about how you change your identity as you interact with different people, in different situations and for different purposes.

This suggests that our identity is not 'fixed'; the experiences that we gather through our lives can change our identity. Becoming a parent, having a specific job role and aging can all alter our sense of who we are. However, one key factor that influences our identity is our gender. We may see this identity in a fixed sense or as a shifting one in our modern world, which is more aware of complex gender and sexuality issues and where binary distinctions are less evident.

#### KEY TERM

**binary oppositions:** a pair of related terms that are opposite in meaning

#### ACTIVITY 4.1

##### Exploring identities

A good place to start with thinking about identity is to look at yourself and reflect on the kind of identities you present to your family, friends and the other people that you are networked with.

Survey your online accounts: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and any blogs or forums you contribute to. Look at the following questions and ask yourself how each of these creates or presents aspects of you.

- What do your Facebook 'likes' or the people or organisations on Twitter that you follow say about you?
- What kinds of things do you post about or comment upon?
- What about the visual images you post?

## 4.2 Identity in discourse: socially constructed selves in private talk

One of the current approaches to the study of gender and language is social constructivism. What's important in this approach is the ways that the language we use constructs (or creates) gender. This contrasts to the previous theoretical approaches that concentrated on language as reflecting gender and the differences between men and women's language choices, and suggested that we speak in a certain way because we are female or male. Central to social constructivism is the focus on what is communicated by, to and about women and men.

### 4.2.1 Exploring identity and the socially constructed self

Look at Text 4A, an interaction between a mother and her son Charlie, aged 16. This took place at home at the dining table, a place commonly used to interact as a family. It was not a spontaneous interaction but was set up by the mother who wanted to record her son for a project on regional accents. Her task was to get her son to talk for about ten minutes. Although the talk is not about gender, it raises some issues of identity and gender in the content of the talk. In this talk, they discuss Charlie's enjoyment of football, both playing it for a local team and casually with friends as a leisure activity.

As you read, reflect on the ways the talk, its content and the style link to ideas of gender as being constructed:

- 1 in an active way (by the speakers)
- 2 interactively (through communicating with others)
- 3 in a negotiated manner (as speakers come to an understanding between them).

Text 4A

Mum: you can talk about football

Charlie: yeah cos I've spent about six hours just watching it today when I should have been revising I spent six hours watching it I couldn't couldn't get away from it (.) I've got to watch it to see if Leicester win the league (.) I'm literally just such a generic little teenager aren't I [Mum laughs] just your typical teenager I enjoy it (.) it's good isn't it like (.) seeing everyone especially playin' for Signal cos I see all my Maple lads then

Mum: well you like playing it more than watching it (.) because you haven't really got a team you've given up Chelsea now

Charlie: yeah [laughs] I'm not gonna lie I just I don't I don't see the point in supporting them anymore I'd rather just (.) you know watch it and just enjoy (.) it all (.) but it is more what I'm in to because sometimes (.) sometimes I get such an urge to play football it's really weird so I can't wait to have my car and drive to Wardley and go and play football it'll be so good (2) but it's a bit (.) of effort like getting up this morning was the worst thing (.) it's effort now cos it's different going from playing (.) under 11 and stuff (.) and now going to under 16s no one cares like today (.) you know how we won it was like our first win of the season and it was against nine men that's why we won (.) because we were playin' a team with nine men [laughs] it's the only reason we won [Mum laughs] an' when I tell Oscar about it I exclude that information

Mum: you do

Charlie: when I'm going to school I texted Oscar before sayin' we won 4-2 (.) but I'm not going to mention that they only had nine players and we had eleven [Mum laughs] but it's a bit sad to be honest but then it's also nice at the same time it's (.) quite a cheap hobby I think cos you just pay for some boots you literally pay a hundred quid a year and I just go and do it all the time

You might have noticed that it is Charlie's mum who introduces the topic of football, almost instructing him to talk about it, using it as a means to encourage her son to begin talking. This conversation demonstrates what social constructivists would call an interactive and negotiated construction of the son's gender. From the start the mother positions her son within the masculine stereotype of being interested in football by saying at the start, 'you can talk about football'.

In this section of the talk, the son is aware of his teenage identity and explicitly references this in the noun phrases 'generic little teenager' and 'typical teenager'. This self-positioning as a teenager first is also evident in his language use. His age (and perhaps gender) identity is also encoded into his speech style with the *clipping* of words like 'playin' and 'an', reflecting a non-standard use that suggests the boy gets some *covert prestige* with using such forms despite talking to his mother! This construction of himself as a teenager is evident too in his repetition of 'effort', a current clichéd term used by teenagers to show their annoyance at being asked to do anything.

## KEY TERMS

**Clipping:** the process of shortening words by not articulating some of the sounds, usually at the beginning or ends of words

**Covert prestige:** the status and prestige gained from using a non-standard variety of English

## 4.3 Exploring identity and masculinities

When talking about football, Charlie presents his feelings about watching football but, more importantly to him, the playing of the game. In this, he seems to be aware of how he might be perceived by his male friends, disclosing to his mother in this private context how he tells his friend about winning but not the reason – playing a side with fewer players. He chooses to deliberately *exclude* this information as this would not construct an identity to his friend of him as a successful male.

His language choices construct gender, with references to *men* and *lads*, along with the plural pronoun *we* to refer to his team. This is what Raewyn Connell (1987) calls *hegemonic masculinity* as sports and competition are stereotypically connected with a representation of men as powerful and dominant. Here he may be calling upon his own knowledge that the language of football is dominated by these kinds of address terms and so he is calling upon a way of talking that is typical from being part of the community of practice (a concept we explored briefly in Chapter 1) seen in both amateur and professional football teams.

## KEY TERM

**Hegemonic masculinity:** behaviours and language associated with the idealised male group that is seen as having the most power and status in society

When he expresses his 'urge' to play the game as a preference to watching football he is positioning himself to this version of masculinity in his talk. However, maybe as he is talking to his mother and not his friend he also uses adjectives like 'sad' and 'nice' to talk about his feelings about playing football, describing it as his 'hobby', constructing for her a softer version of the masculinity that he performs for his friends.

Let's explore another section of the talk between Charlie and his mother in Text 4B. This looks at how he presents himself in a different way as the topic shifts to his upcoming prom, a dance held for students to celebrate the end of school after their GCSE exams.

## Text 4B

Charlie: no we've still got quite a bit to get I think it's worth it though cos I love that suit it looks like so dapper [Mum laughs] that's

how I like to put it to Paige it is it just looks so good

Mum: have you had a look yet at shirts and things

Charlie:

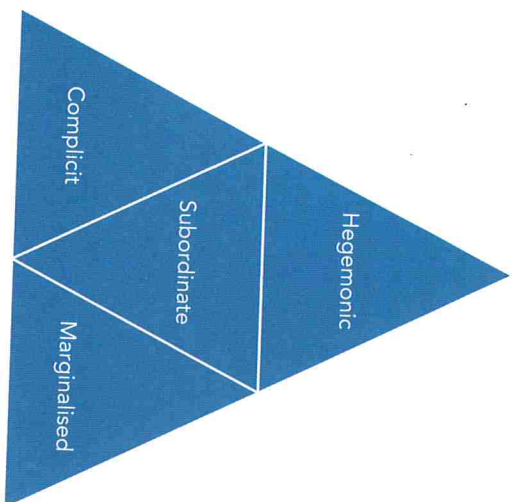
er no not really (.) I need t' sort it out (.) but I need to see how long the sale (.) carries on for for at House Of Frazer (.) everyone's so buzzin' for it though everyone's just talking about it right now tryin' to sort everything out cos obviously there's after prom we got to sort that out an' I've not even sorted out getting there (.) don't know what we're going to do (2.0) do you know what I was um I was speaking to Oscar cos he cos his mum got him a watch for prom an I said he can have my fäke Armani one [laughing] it was free wasn't it (.) so he can just have it and I thought it was better but then we'll be turning up in our suits already look similar and we'll have the same watches and me and Oscar just on photos it'll look just so bad it'll be cute [mum laughs] he's my prom date

In many ways here, Charlie calls upon some of the language choices that Robin Lakoff (one of the main gender researchers in the 'dominance' approach that you read about in Chapter 1) found associated with women. He uses qualifiers like 'I think' and intensifiers like 'so dapper' and 'so good'. However, he could be calling upon these subconsciously to position himself in relation to the women he interacts with, calling upon this softened masculinity to appeal to them. His mother's laughter at him calling himself 'dapper' (meaning a man dressed fashionably) seems to show her approval and he has clearly already practised this phrase too on his female friend Paige. This feminine language is seen later in his selection of the (what Lakoff would term) empty adjective 'cute', another supposed example of female language to mock himself and his friend, who he jokingly refers to as his 'prom date'. He is actively presenting an identity that differs from his earlier positioning of himself as part of a hegemonic masculinity in his football talk, using a feminine language repertoire to almost present a gay identity, seemingly showing within one brief conversation how the representation of a 'gender' is complicated by other factors, for example his view of himself as a teenage male and the ways that he wants to be seen by others.

### 4.3.1 Constructing different masculinities and femininities

Throughout the book we have been challenging the notion that there is a feminine and masculine binary. We have just seen how Charlie, a teenage boy, has performed and constructed different versions of his masculine identity, so it seems relevant to discuss how femininity and masculinity might be constructed in more than one way as well as being associated with being powerful and powerless. Kate Bornstein (1998) views gender as a pyramid of power with some gendered identities at the top and others at the bottom. If we relate this to Connell's categories of masculinities, which we will look at shortly, it could look something like the Pyramid of power in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1: Pyramid of power



Applying this to Connell's models of masculinities, the most stereotypical version of masculinity, *hegemonic masculinity*, would be at the top of the pyramid. This would be because it's the masculinity associated with success in the workplace and in important public roles in society. It is also connected to the types of success that show men's physical and competitive power such as being an outstanding sportsman. Connell's three further types of masculinities are viewed as lesser forms to the all-powerful hegemonic one:

- **Subordinate masculinity:** showing qualities opposite to hegemonic and therefore viewed as weaker/inferior. This can often be seen in the negative labelling of men seen as subordinate as 'gay' or in the 'geek' or 'nerd' male; in other words those men who do not live up to the heterosexual stereotype of being assertive, strong and manly. We saw this in Chapter 3 where we

investigated the media's negative representation of stay-at-home fathers as weak and not fulfilling masculine roles as successful professional men.

- **Complicit masculinity:** not fitting the masculinity criteria for hegemonic masculinity but a man who does not challenge it because they admire the qualities of men who have physical or social power.
- **Marginalised masculinity:** having masculinity that fits the characteristics of hegemonic masculinity but is excluded on the basis of other factors. These could be race or because they have some kind of physical disability.

In contrast, the hegemonic femininity associated with women is not about social power but instead depends on women's appearance and physical attractiveness. In fact, Connell does not use an equal term for masculinity, calling it **emphasised femininity**, immediately placing female identity as less powerful to men. You have only to think of the clichéd American school films featuring jocks (the successful football players and sportsmen of the school) and their equivalents (the cheerleaders) to recognise the power imbalance between these stereotyped masculine and feminine identities.

#### KEY TERM

**Emphasised femininity:** a complement to the hegemonic masculinity of men by accommodating the interests of men through feminine behaviours and attributes such as physical appearance

## 4.4 Identity and constructing selves through phonological choices

In a similar way to the continuing debate over Robin Lakoff's identification of tag questions as a female speech trait, debates over the differences in women's speech styles still seem to revert to the argument about whether women's language is powerless rather than powerful. It's not just words that can create a sense of power but the sounds of speech and there are two phonological areas of current interest to linguistic researchers: **uptalk** and the **vocal fry**.

#### KEY TERMS

**Uptalk:** also known as high rising terminal, it refers to where declarative statements end with rising intonation

**Vocal fry:** a vocal effect produced by the very slow vibration of the vocal cords and characterised by a creaking sound and low pitch

### 4.4.1 Uptalk

One of the most recent social phenomena noticed in American English has been in young women's speech styles. Firstly this can be seen in what sociolinguistic researchers define as 'uptalk'. This is where a declarative sentence is produced with a rising intonation, making it sound more like a question. For example, 'I'm having a great day' would be produced in the way that it seems like a question: 'I'm having a great day?' It used to be called **Valley Girl speak**, taking its name from a popular song of the 1980s in America that made fun of young white Californian women's speech style of the time. Popular films of the time also parodied this stereotype of young women as unintelligent and slightly empty-headed. However, more recently linguists have found that this use of the rising inflection can actually have a variety of meanings<sup>1</sup> in different situations and may not just be used by women.

Researchers from the University of California conducted an experiment with 23 young adult Southern Californians from contrasting backgrounds, including 11 men. Renaming uptalk 'SoCal English' (an abbreviation for the accent and dialect of Southern California) they found that both women and men use uptalk, although they still found some gender-based differences. Women used uptalk almost twice as often as men and women's rising intonation began later in a sentence and hit higher pitches. Yet, one key similarity was that when speakers were making a simple, declarative statement, men and women used rises with similar frequency. So, what did the researchers conclude from this? They saw the rising intonation as acting as a confirming statement, checking that the listener understood them. Adopting the uptalk strategy also allowed the speaker to **hold the conversational floor** as the rising intonation signalled to the listener that their conversational turn had not finished. In this study, women spoke with the floor-holding rise nearly 60 per cent of the time compared to men, who used it only 28 per cent of the time. One striking conclusion was that women may use uptalk as a defence mechanism against being interrupted.

#### KEY TERMS

**Valley Girl speak:** the colloquial dialect associated with Californian English and the associated stereotype of girls who use this

**Hold the conversational floor:** speak until you have finished what you wish to say or until someone interrupts you

### 4.4.2 Vocal fry

Vocal fry is where a speaker adopts a creaky low-pitch speech style and features a vibration that elongates some words. For example, with vocal fry a word like 'whatever' would be pronounced more like 'whatevrrrrrr'. Some commentators have noticed that American women particularly use vocal fry. Like uptalk, there are both positive and negative interpretations associated with it. Because of its lower pitch, some people suggest that women are assuming it as a means of being taken more seriously in the workplace (perhaps because they sound more like a man) and part of their professional identity. In a contrary view, others believe that it gives young women a kind of stereotyped identity as slightly immature and lacking in intelligence.

For further reading, a 2012 article from the Science section of *The New York Times* titled 'They're, Like, Way Ahead of the Linguistic Curve' offers a comprehensive account of the rise of vocal fry and the linguistic research surrounding it. In this article, the authors cite the study that brought vocal fry to the attention of the public. In a small-scale study, researchers at Long Island University let participants listen to the same person (with both male and female speakers featured) say 'thank you for considering me for this opportunity', firstly in their normal speaking voice and then with a vocal fry. Participants were then asked to judge who was the most competent, educated, trustworthy, attractive and ultimately the most hireable for a job. Their conclusion was interesting too from a gender perspective as participants viewed female vocal fry speakers more negatively than men.

## 4.5 Occupational talk: conveying a gendered identity in the workplace

The workplace is now an important place to explore gender and so researchers have been keen to see if there are differences (or similarities) between men's and women's interactions and in their linguistic behaviours in a variety of workplace activities. These have ranged from studies into the language used by female and male employees in large call centres to the types of language used by women in more senior leadership roles in more formal settings like business meetings.

Judith Baxter's (2014) concept of **double-voicing** (drawn from the work of the Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin) is interesting to apply to an exploration of gender identity in the workplace. She believes that as women are more aware than men that the people they are interacting with may have other agendas, they adjust their own language to reflect this knowledge. Here are some real examples from her research that she gives to illustrate how women double-voice:

- 'I realise I am being over-simplistic as usual but...'
- 'You have probably thought about this point already but...'

- 'I have probably got my wires crossed but should we consider...?'
- 'I am no expert like the rest of you but...'

Baxter offers a number of categories to describe the various forms that double-voicing might take but significant here are two: **anticipatory** and **mitigating**.

- With **anticipatory** double-voicing a speaker demonstrates in their language that they have anticipated the response of others and attempts to dilute or deflect the criticism they expect.
- With **mitigating** double-voicing a speaker attempts to build solidarity and might also appear tentative and defensive. You can see how some of the ways that speakers double-voice may be marked by many of Lakoff's features of women's language.

Baxter's workplace research shows that women double-voice more than men and she concludes that women use this as a method of gaining approval.

### KEY TERMS

**Double-voicing:** where speakers adjust their own language to reflect the agendas of the people with whom they are interacting

**Anticipatory double-voicing:** where the double-voicing anticipates and dilutes the criticism of others

**Mitigating double-voicing:** where the double-voicing offsets the distance, reduces authority and builds solidarity with a team

### ACTIVITY 4.2

#### Investigating women's language in the workplace

In Text 4C a female teacher is speaking in her weekly department meeting about her new training role supporting teachers across the school. As you read the transcript, have in mind Robin Lakoff's list of the features of women's language:

- Hedging (with phrases like *sort of* and *it seems like*)
- Politeness strategies and apologies
- Tag questions
- Empty adjectives

- Hypercorrect grammar and pronunciation
  - Direct quotation
  - Turning declarative statements into questions
  - Using qualifiers (for example, 'I think that...')
  - Modal constructions
  - Indirect commands and requests and intensifiers (like 'so' and 'very').
- 1 Which ones can you identify the female speaker using in this single speaker discourse?
  - 2 What do these suggest about women's language and the speaker's presentation of her identity?

### Text 4C

Teacher: um (.) right well I'm supposed to introduce myself but I think you know who I am (.) um I've just come to let you know what's involved if you wanted to sign up (.) um how to do it (.) there are ten champions (.) you saw some of them in the advert last week (.) erm there's myself and Lesley [she lists all the champions by name and subject] (.) who you'd be working with would depend on what you were interested in and when you were willing to meet as well (.) so it wouldn't necessarily be just cos I've come to explain it today (.) wouldn't necessarily mean you're working with me or Lesley (.) um the idea is that we lead small (.) I'm leading small collaborative groups of volunteers and none of us is trying to claim to be experts in anything (.) we're just championing the cause of teaching and learning more that you know we're not kinda going in with all the ideas um you know (.) [reading from the script] ask them what he does is to stress that teaching staff here are very good most lessons are two (.) erm so we're not trying to (.) it's just rather than paying outside experts to come in it's about sharing good ideas within college (.) um so it's an opportunity to work with people from other departments and maybe get a fresh perspective and share ideas and good practice (.) um we're available to watch part of lessons if you want us to er (.) if you want to try something new and you want an outsider you want someone to come and watch a bit and give you feedback although that's not compulsory (.) you don't have to do that

## 4.6 Social constructing self: performing gender in public and written contexts

We have already looked at a social constructivist approach to gender identity. However, an up-to-date view of gender is to combine this approach with a recognition that ‘differences’ might also exist. This is not a return to the 1970s difference approach but includes some of the ideas that we considered at the beginning of the chapter – that other aspects of identity might be important alongside gender. In a **post-structuralist** view of gender, diversity is seen as important as it pays attention to the interaction between factors such as class, ethnicity and gender. It also takes account of the fact that there are multiple presentations of masculinities and femininities, as well as individual differences among men and individual differences among women.

Part of this post-structuralist approach is Judith Butler’s notion of gender continuously being performed (explored in Chapter 1), suggesting that people are aware of the language behaviours associated with masculine and feminine identities and make deliberate choices to reflect these. Associated with performativity is the idea that people have **agency** and can position themselves. We will explore this idea of women and men as having agency in the following activity that focuses on the performance of gender and as agents seeking romance.

### KEY TERMS

**Post-structuralist:** a theory that rejects the notion of binary oppositions and sees that many perspectives exist rather than one fixed meaning

**Agency:** a semantic concept where the agent (the doer of the action) is connected to the action expressed through the verb

### ACTIVITY 4.3

#### Investigating dating language and gender identity

Look at the examples of personal advertisements shown in Table 4.1. These would appear in British broadsheet newspapers like *The Guardian*. Ordinary people write these advertisements to try to find a partner for romance.

These short advertisements are constrained by word limits and the writer has to choose their words carefully to both position and present

themselves and to state their ideals in a partner in order to construct the identity of their perfect match. Thus the construction of identity is also in many ways interactive and negotiated as the personal advertisements are intended to be interpreted by a text receiver for a match and potential date.

- How do other identities interact with gender in these adverts?
- Create a list of the adjectives used by the women and men about themselves and the adjectives they use to describe the attributes they seek in a new partner. How do these construct masculine and feminine identities? In what ways are the writers ‘performing’ gender?
- Is there a difference between the language used by men and women to present themselves and to present the ‘opposite’ gender? What agency do the writers show? How do they use noun phrases to describe themselves and describe what they ‘seek’ from a partner?

To help you understand the initialisms commonly used in these types of advertisements, GSOH stands for *good sense of humour*, LTR means *long-term relationship*, WLTM indicates *would like to meet* and n/s refers to *no smoking*.

Table 4.1: Personal advertisements

Personal advertisements written by women	Personal advertisements written by men
<p><b>Beautiful Blonde Saxophonist:</b> Slovakian F, 40s, fit, intelligent, elegant, many interests. Seeks tall, professional, successful, M, 55–60, n/s with GSOH</p>	<p><b>Almost Too Good To Be True.</b> Tall, charming, considerate &amp; unassuming M, 47, various creative and active interests. Seeks a friendly, feminine lady for something serious.</p>
<p><b>Attractive, Professional Brunette</b> F, early 40s. Seeks handsome, sincere M for friendship.</p>	<p><b>Sheffield Bloke, 44,</b> only looks 43. Can appear interesting on a date. Think John Lennon with a touch of Elvis thrown in and that’s me.</p>
<p><b>Tall, Good-looking</b> F, 62, loves cooking, ballroom dancing &amp; spoiling people. Seeks good-looking, kind, sweet-natured M with a social conscience.</p>	<p><b>Pink Floyd Fan &amp; History and Politics</b> Loving Lecturer. Slim M, 71, in good state of health seeks r/ship with slim F. Together to make life fun.</p>

Personal advertisements written by women	Personal advertisements written by men
<b>Brave Female Traveller.</b> 61. Seeks anchor man who's warm, witty, loyal & open to new ideas.	<b>No Egos Here Please.</b> M, 55, medium build likes 70s music, the Costa Blanca & Barcelona. WILTM a slim, petite, happy-go-lucky, smiley F for straightforward, ego-free LTR.
<b>Sincere, Slim, Attractive, stylish</b> F, 46, charming, cultured & caring, of Asian origin with forward-thinking European outlook & SOH. Is there a warm, considerate, n/s M out there to warm the winter days?	<b>Grumpy Old Toad!</b> Ex Prince Charming, now dressed up as a warty old toad. Needs princess to kiss and release.

## 4.7 Performing and constructing gender identity in a modern world

Clearly in a world governed by social media and computer-mediated communication, identity can be presented in many ways and in a wide variety of genres: blogs, posts, direct messages, forums, tweets, and so on. At the beginning of the chapter you were asked to reflect on these in relation to yourself and your own constructed identity in these genres and text types. In these hybrid online modes, we communicate with a wide range of different communities and groups: family, friends, colleagues, people we share interests with, and so on. In all these, we use language and other features that either express or construct the identities that we want to present. Another consideration that we might make as we communicate in a computer-mediated context is whether these are public or private.

Text 4D shows an exchange from a family WhatsApp group – a private group limited to close family members. As you read, note the gender identities that are being presented in this family exchange between a father and his 21-year-old daughter. Think about how they are 'doing' gender and making it an explicit part of their interaction, in addition to the more subtle presentations of feminine and masculine behaviours.

Text 4D



What you might have picked up on is the function of the exchanges and how this links to gender identity. With the topic of the internet not working (Virgin is the name of a British internet provider), Izzy addresses her father but shifts topic when this is sorted to granny's phone call and directly addresses her mother. The stereotype of men as more technical and women as more interested in interactional and social relationships seems confirmed here by the daughter's directing of her communication within the family group chat by requesting her father's assistance. Gendered address terms, such as 'mr father' and 'miss daughter' are used, although perhaps in a humorous mocking way as Izzy's 'mr' may just be a typo of 'my' and her dad responds to this by playing on the female term. Yet Izzy's later address to her father as 'boss' reaffirms her view of him as in control of the technology. The father's response to Izzy's interrogative is also imperative, instructing Izzy with the verbs 'switch' and 'start', and is elliptical in style.



**RESEARCH QUESTION****Identity in the workplace**

You could take any of the central ideas discussed in this chapter and conduct more research. For example, there has been much recent research into gendered identity in the workplace and you could explore further studies and their findings through wider reading (such as the texts listed at the end of this chapter) and reflect on your own experiences in a workplace.

Using a search engine like Google Books or Google Scholar, you can use key words to find information on research by people such as Janet Holmes, Marie Stubbe, Judith Baxter and Sara Mills.

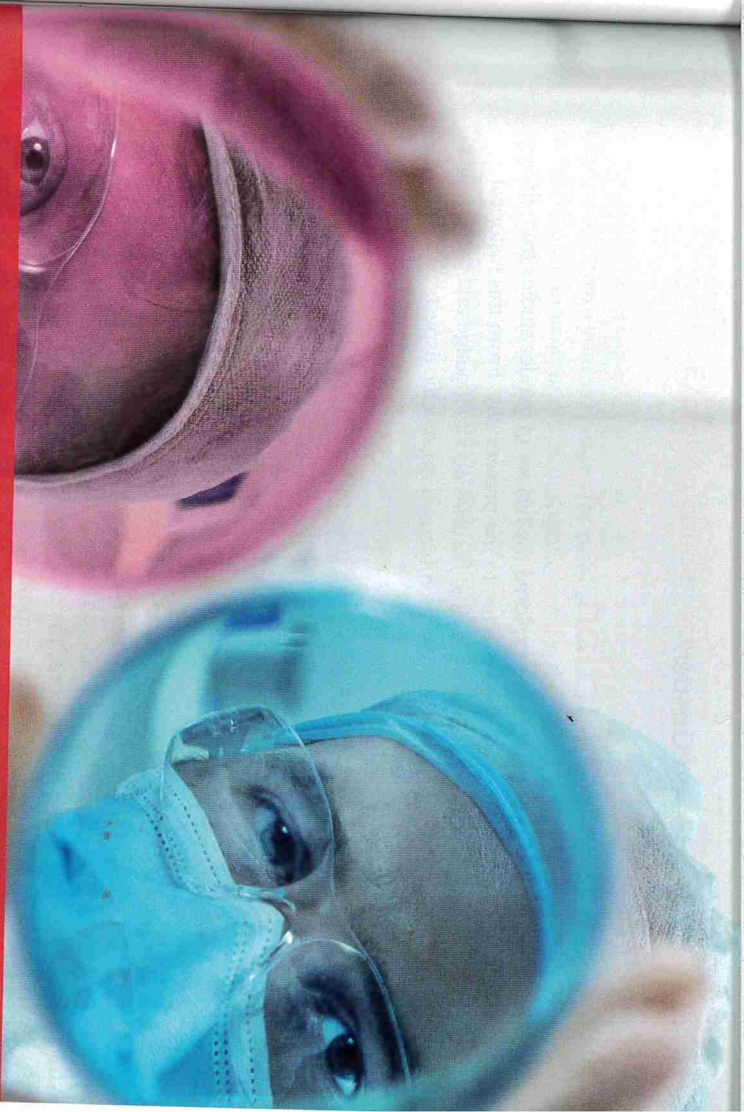
## 4.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, you have explored a variety of interactional situations where gender can be performed, constructed or expressed. These demonstrate the flexible nature of our identities as we move in and out of different interactional settings. With today's communication methods, we can perhaps even manage these identities simultaneously – interacting with others in the 'real' world at the same time as in the 'virtual' world so often now contained on our smartphones or via computer-mediated communication. What we haven't focused on so much is the larger picture of male and female identity within very high-profile and public contexts; for example, in areas such as politics and high-level leadership roles in corporations. In these settings ideas about what is masculine and feminine behaviour might impact both the ways that women and men present themselves and how other people make judgements about them based on expectations based around their gender. This is something that you may want to return to once you have explored some key research methods in the next chapter.

## Wider reading

You can find out more about the concepts and ideas in this chapter by reading these books:

- Connell, R.W. (2005) *Masculinities* (Second edition). Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Eckert, P. and McConnell-Ginet, S. (2013) *Language and Gender* (Second edition). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Holmes, J. (2006) *Gendered Talk at Work: Constructing Gender Identity Through Workplace Discourse*. Oxford: Blackwell.



# Chapter 5

## Exploring gender: applying research methods to data

In this chapter you will:

- Learn about different research methods
- Explore how theories about gender can be applied to data
- Develop your own research skills