

**Dante V. Ferraro**

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**From:** Dante V. Ferraro [dvf@sai2000.org]  
**Sent:** Friday, July 19, 2013 10:57 AM  
**To:** 'AllFacultyAndStaff@sai2000.org'  
**Cc:** 'Tamara Kirson <tamara.kirson@gmail.com>'; 'caryn.davis@sai2000.org'  
**Subject:** A Note And Reading Request From Our July 27th Faculty Meeting Speaker  
**Attachments:** SAI Reading.pdf

> Dear Colleagues at the Spanish-American Institute,  
 >  
 > I'm so pleased that we will be together on Saturday morning,  
 July 27,  
 from 10:15AM - 12:15PM. As you know, we will study a visual and  
 holistic approach to grammar called "X-Word Grammar." This  
 approach is taught through reading and writing. It is also  
 applied to listening and speaking.  
 >  
 > For our Saturday together, we will use a reading, "Different  
 Ways of  
 Talking," from the North Star Intermediate Reading and Writing  
 book.  
 The reading is attached for your convenience. It is a  
 fascinating piece about the language differences between men and  
 women. May I, please, ask you to read it once or twice before we  
 meet. This reading will provide the content for discovering a  
 new way to teach our students to write and ask questions  
 correctly.  
 >  
 > I look so forward to meeting and working with each of you as we  
 > explore  
 this grammar approach which builds the confidence and competence  
 of our students.  
 >  
 > Until then,  
 > Here's to the joys of teaching English!  
 >  
 > ~Tamara

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 Dante V. Ferraro, President  
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[www.facebook.com/SpanishAmericanInstitute](http://www.facebook.com/SpanishAmericanInstitute)

You will also find very useful Student Orientation Info @  
<http://www.sai2000.org/Handbooks/OrientationTOC.html>

For International Student Medical Insurance Information:

<http://www.internationalstudentinsurance.com/student-health-insurance/>

<http://www.FaceBook.com/AcademicDean.SpanishAmericanInstitute>

[www.FaceBook.com/SpanishAmericanInstitute](http://www.FaceBook.com/SpanishAmericanInstitute) [www.YouTube.com/StudentClub](http://www.YouTube.com/StudentClub)

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# Different Ways of Talking

- 1 A few hours after Joy Fisher's birth, her parents took pictures of her. Joy's mother put a pink hairband around Joy's head, so that everyone who saw the pictures would know that the new baby was a girl. Even before she was born, Joy's parents knew that she was going to be female. Joy's mother had a sonogram when she was six months pregnant. When the doctor said, "I'm sure you have a little lady in there," Joy's parents told all their relatives and friends that their baby was a girl. Gifts soon arrived, including pink dresses and dolls. Joy's parents decorated her room in pink and white.
- 2 A few years later, Joy's brother, Tommy, was born. His room was painted blue, and he received books and a football as gifts. Joy enjoyed helping her mother take care of the new baby. She also enjoyed playing with other girls at school. Now, Tommy has also entered school, where he plays with other boys. The games Joy and Tommy play are quite different. Joy loves jumping rope with her two best friends. Tommy likes to play ball with a large group of boys. Sometimes when they play a game, he is the captain. He enjoys telling the other boys what to do. Joy, on the other hand, doesn't like it when new girls join her friends and try to change the way they jump rope. She thinks that some of these girls are too bossy.
- 3 Both Joy and Tommy are growing up in the culture of the United States. They are learning what it means to be a girl and a boy in this culture. Their sex at birth, female and male, is now becoming a gender—a way of thinking, speaking, and acting that is considered feminine or masculine. Each culture has its own way of defining gender, and very early in life gender becomes a basic part of a person's identity. According to Deborah

Tannen, a professor at Georgetown University, gender differences are even reflected in the ways that men and women use language. Tannen and others who study communication believe that these differences begin early in life.

- 4 For example, in the United States, boys and girls usually play in same-sex groups. Boys might play in large groups in which every boy knows his place. Some are leaders; others are followers. Boys compete with one another for leadership. Many boys like to get attention by boasting, or talking about how well they can do things. The games that they play often have complicated rules, and each boy tries hard to win.
- 5 Girls, in contrast, usually play in smaller groups. Sometimes they play with only one or two "best friends." Most girls want other girls to like them, and this is more important to them than winning. Girls may be interested in playing fairly and taking turns. For example, when girls jump rope together, two girls hold the rope while others jump. Then the rope-holders take their turn jumping.
- 6 Tannen has found that these differences are reflected in the ways that children use language while they play. Boys often use commands when they talk to each other. For instance, when Tommy is captain he might say, "You go first. Don't wait for me." As the leader of the other boys, he tells them exactly what to do. But when Joy wants to influence her friends, she uses different forms of language. Instead of using commands, she will say, "Let's try it this way. Let's do this." This is how she tries to direct the other girls without sounding bossy. By using the form "let's," she also emphasizes the fact that the girls all belong to the same group.

- 7 As Joy and Tommy grow up, they will continue to speak differently. In junior high school, Joy's status will depend on her circle of friends. If her friends are popular, then Joy may enjoy high status at school. For this reason, Joy and many other girls are interested in gossip. If Joy has some information to share about a popular girl at school, this proves that she has a friendship with this girl. In this way Joy can use gossip to gain more status in her school.
- 8 Tommy, on the other hand, may be less interested in gossip. His status does not depend on who his friends are at school. Tommy gains status through his own ability to play sports well or earn high grades. Later in life, Joy may continue to be interested in talking about other people and their lives. Tommy will be less interested in personal talk and more concerned with discussions of sports and news. These give him a chance to gain status by showing others his knowledge.
- 9 Different ways of speaking are part of gender. As adults, men and women sometimes face difficulties in their communication with each other. Studies of communication show that if a woman tells her husband about a problem, she will expect him to listen and offer sympathy. She may be annoyed when he simply tells her how to solve the problem. Similarly, a husband may be annoyed when his wife wants to stop and ask a stranger for directions to a park or restaurant. Unlike his wife, he would rather use a map and find his way by himself.
- 10 Language is also part of the different ways that men and women think about friendship. Most American men believe that friendship means doing things together such as camping or playing tennis. Talking is not an important part of friendship for most of them. American women, on the other hand, usually identify their best friend as someone with whom they talk frequently. Tannen believes that for women, talking with friends and agreeing with them is very important. Tannen has found that women, in contrast to men, often use tag questions. For example, a woman might say, "This is a great restaurant, isn't it?" By adding a tag question to her speech ("isn't it?"), she is giving other people a chance to agree with her. Unlike most women, men often speak more directly, giving direct commands such as "Close the door." Many women, however, use more polite forms such as "Could you please close the door?"
- 11 These differences seem to be part of growing up in the United States' culture and following its rules of gender. If men and women can understand that many of their differences are cultural, not personal, they may be able to improve their relationships. They may begin to understand that because of gender differences in language, there is more than one way to communicate.

*Did the reading include the information you expected? Look back at your list of ideas on page 91.*