

Study shows women lower their voice when competing for a man

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A team of researchers with members from the U.K., Poland and Germany has found that women tend to lower their voices when competing sexually for a man. In their paper published in *Proceedings of*

the Royal Society B, the group describes their study involving participants in a speed-dating event and what they found.

To learn more about the many facets of human courtship, the researchers received permission to record [participants](#) in two speed-[dating](#) events. In all, there were 30 participants, all heterosexual and all between the ages of 20 and 40. The researchers note also that the events transpired as usual—the [women](#) remained seated at their positions as the men traveled to each woman one by one. As the events unfolded, each participant made known their receptiveness to each potential mate by marking "Yes" or "No" on a questionnaire. Each participant was then able to see how many other people had marked "Yes" or "No" for each new "date" they spoke with.

In listening to the [recordings](#) and comparing them to the scores the participants had received, the researchers spotted some patterns. First, men tended to lower their voices when speaking with someone that they would wind up giving a "Yes." That was expected; prior research has shown that men tend to lower their voices when speaking with someone they find sexually attractive. But the researchers were surprised to find that the women did the same thing. Instead of making their voices higher when sexually attracted to a man, as prior research had suggested, the women participants tended to lower them—going husky, as it were. But there was also a caveat—the women only lowered their voices when speaking with a man they found sexually attractive if other women at the event had also judged him so by giving him a "Yes."

The researchers report that they found the women at the event to be choosier, also—they gave a "Yes" to just a third of the men they spoke with. Men, on the other hand, were less choosy, giving a "Yes" to half of all the women they met.

More information: Katarzyna Pisanski et al. Voice pitch modulation

in human mate choice, *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences* (2018). [DOI: 10.1098/rspb.2018.1634](https://doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2018.1634)

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