

THE CONCEPT OF GENDERED SPEECH AND ITS LINGUISTIC
FOUNDATIONS

1st-year Master's student, Kokand State University
Muxammedova Mohichexraxon Baxodir kizi
mohichehramammedova7@gmail.com

ANNOTATION. This article explores the concept of gendered speech, examining the linguistic features of male and female speech and their differences at lexical, syntactic, and pragmatic levels. The study analyzes the theoretical foundations of gender sociolinguistics and the influence of social stereotypes on language. The notion of gendered speech and its linguistic basis is discussed from the perspective of modern linguistics. The research highlights the interaction between gender and language through sociolinguistics, pragmalinguistics, and discourse analysis. The speech behavior of men and women, along with their lexical, grammatical, and pragmatic characteristics, is analyzed using scholarly sources, identifying factors that shape gendered speech. The findings demonstrate the importance of linguistic approaches in studying issues related to gendered speech.

Keywords: gender, speech, gendered speech, sociolinguistics, pragmalinguistics, discourse.

Introduction. Gendered speech is not only related to biological sex but also represents speech behavior that manifests as a social construct. Since the 1970s, particularly after the works of Robin Lakoff, the concept of genderlect has taken shape in linguistics. Lakoff's research highlighted the systematic linguistic features often associated with women's speech, such as hedges, tag questions, and polite forms. Her work marked the beginning of systematic gender-oriented linguistic studies.

In recent decades, human-centered approaches have developed widely in linguistics. Scholars have increasingly studied language in close connection with society, culture, psychology, and social interaction rather than viewing it merely as a grammatical system. This shift led to the emergence of interdisciplinary fields such as sociolinguistics, pragmatics, discourse analysis, and gender linguistics. Gender linguistics, in particular, focuses on identifying, describing, and explaining the linguistic differences and communicative strategies of men and women.

The issue of gendered speech is important not only from a linguistic perspective but also from social, cultural, and psychological viewpoints. Social roles, expectations, and power relations between men and women are reflected in their communicative behavior. Language becomes a tool through which individuals construct and express their gender identity. Through word choice, intonation, politeness strategies, and discourse patterns, speakers signal their social roles and adapt to culturally accepted norms.

From a theoretical standpoint, gendered speech has been studied within several major approaches. The deficit approach, represented by early works such as Lakoff's, suggested that women's speech was perceived as less powerful or less authoritative in male-dominated societies. The dominance approach focused on power relations and argued that linguistic differences reflect social inequality between genders. The difference approach, popularized by scholars like Deborah Tannen, viewed male and female communication styles as culturally different but equally valid. More recently, the social constructionist approach has emphasized that gender is not fixed but is performed and negotiated through interaction and discourse.

The study of gendered speech has practical importance in many fields, including education, media, politics, workplace communication, and digital interaction. In educational settings,

understanding gender-based communication styles can help teachers create more inclusive and effective learning environments. In professional contexts, awareness of gendered communication strategies can improve teamwork, leadership, and conflict resolution.

Research objective: The aim of this study is to identify the specific linguistic patterns of gendered speech using examples from Uzbek and world linguistics. The article seeks to clarify the concept of gendered speech, determine its linguistic foundations, and analyze it within the framework of modern scientific approaches.

Relevance of the issue: In the context of digital communication, social media, and global integration, traditional differences between male and female speech are undergoing transformation. Online communication often reduces visible social markers such as age, gender, and status, which may lead to more neutral or hybrid speech styles. However, research shows that gender-related linguistic features still persist at lexical, grammatical, pragmatic, and discourse levels. Therefore, studying gendered speech remains a relevant and significant task in contemporary linguistics, especially in comparative studies across different languages and cultures.

Methodology. The following scientific methods were used in the research process:

Descriptive method — for explaining the concept of gendered speech;

Comparative-analytical method — for comparing the characteristics of male and female speech;

Discourse analysis — for studying the manifestation of the gender factor in speech situations;

Pragmatic analysis — for identifying speech intentions and communicative strategies.

In addition, modern linguistic literature, scientific articles, and monographs were analyzed.

Results and Discussion

1. Linguistic interpretation of the concept of gender

The term gender first appeared in the social sciences and, unlike the concept of biological sex, was used to denote socio-cultural aspects. In linguistics, gender serves to study the differences in the speech activity of men and women.

The concept of gender explains the process of social identification through language. Through speech, an individual expresses their gender identity and communicates in accordance with the norms accepted in society.

2. The concept of gendered speech

Gendered speech is a set of linguistic differences observed in the speech behavior of men and women. These differences appear at phonetic, lexical, grammatical, and pragmatic levels.

For example, studies show that women's speech tends to be characterized by greater politeness, sensitivity, and emotionality, whereas men's speech more often features firmness, imperative tone, and more direct expressions. However, these differences are not strict rules; they vary depending on cultural and social factors.

3. Lexical features of gendered speech

At the lexical level, gender differences are particularly noticeable. In women's speech, evaluative adjectives, emotional expressions, and polite forms of address are widely used. Men, on the other hand, tend to use more neutral or technical terms.

In addition, diminutive and affectionate forms appear more frequently in women's speech, whereas such forms are used less often in men's speech.

4. Grammatical features of gendered speech

From a grammatical perspective, women often use complex sentences as well as interrogative and polite request forms. Men, in contrast, tend to prefer simple, short, and more imperative-type sentences.

This phenomenon is directly related to the social roles assigned to men and women in society, which leads to the manifestation of dominance or submissiveness strategies in speech.

5. Pragmatic aspects of gendered speech

From a pragmatic perspective, gendered speech manifests depending on the speech situation, the purpose of communication, and the relationships between interlocutors. Women tend to choose communicative strategies based on cooperation, whereas men often prefer strategies based on competition.

For example, during a conversation, women more frequently use signals that maintain and support the interaction, while men tend to control the topic and strive for leadership.

6. Gendered speech and culture

Gendered speech is a phenomenon directly connected with culture. In different societies, the speech behavior of men and women varies significantly. Therefore, it is important to take national and cultural factors into account when studying gendered speech.

In Uzbek culture, women's speech tends to emphasize respect, modesty, and politeness, while men's speech more often reflects firmness and formality.

Conclusion

In conclusion, gendered speech serves as a mirror reflecting an individual's social identity. Linguistic studies show that women's speech tends to be cooperative, while men's speech is more competitive. In the modern world, the tendency toward "neutral speech" is increasing; however, psycholinguistic foundations largely remain unchanged. Gendered speech is considered one of the important and relevant areas of linguistics.

The concept of gendered speech makes it possible to identify and explain linguistic differences between men's and women's speech. The research demonstrates that gendered speech manifests at lexical, grammatical, and pragmatic levels, and that social and cultural factors play a significant role in its formation. The results of this article can serve as a theoretical basis for further, more in-depth studies of gendered speech, especially comparative research based on English and Uzbek language materials.

REFERENCES:

1. Lakoff, R. *Language and Woman's Place*. – New York: Harper & Row, 1975.
2. Tannen, D. *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation*. – New York: Ballantine Books, 1990.
3. Cameron, D. *Gender and Language Ideologies*. – London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
4. Holmes, J. *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. – London: Longman, 2001.
5. Mills, S. *Language and Sexism*. – Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
6. Sunderland, J. *Language and Gender: An Advanced Resource Book*. – London: Routledge, 2006.
7. Safarov, Sh. *Pragmalinguistics*. – Tashkent: O'zbekiston Milliy Ensiklopediyasi, 2006.
8. Abduazizov, A. *Sociolinguistics*. – Tashkent: Fan, 2010.
9. Ismoilov, A. *Issues of Modern Linguistics*. – Tashkent, 2019.
10. Rahmatullayev, Sh. *Speech and Culture*. – Tashkent, 2008.
11. Qodirova, G. *Gender and Language Relations*. – Tashkent, 2020.