



“THE ROLE OF GENDER STUDIES IN CONTEMPORARY LINGUISTICS: APPROACHES, DIFFERENCES, AND APPLICATIONS.”

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Abstract: This article explores the development and significance of gender studies in contemporary linguistics, emphasizing its socio-linguistic essence and interdisciplinary nature. The term *gender*, derived from Latin *genus* and popularized in the mid-20th century, refers to the social and cultural constructs of roles and behaviors associated with biological sex. The paper discusses key methodological approaches, including sociolinguistic, psycholinguistic, and cognitive perspectives, to analyze the interplay between gender and language. It highlights notable differences in male and female communication styles, linguistic mechanisms, and cultural perceptions, drawing on global and Uzbek-specific studies.

Key Words: gender studies, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, cognitive linguistics, gendered communication, speech analysis, language asymmetry, androcentrism

Introduction

In modern linguistics, gender studies have become one of the most significant areas of socio-psychological research. As the concept of gender is actively used in our language, it is essential to clarify its sociolinguistic meaning. Today, increasing attention is being paid to gender studies in the humanities. The methodology and conceptual framework for this research direction are being developed, providing a foundation for more comprehensive exploration in various humanities fields, including linguistics.

The term "gender" originates from the Latin word *genus* (and the English *gender*), meaning "sex" in Uzbek. Gender studies began to be examined as a field of linguistics in the mid-20th century. The term was first introduced in 1952 by New Zealand



psychologist John Money. Later, in 1963, American scholar Robert Stoller presented the concept at an international conference of psychologists in Stockholm, proposing a distinction between biological sex (*sex*) and cultural gender (*gender*). He suggested studying biological sex through biology and physiology, while cultural gender should be explored in psychology and sociology. English sociologist Ann Oakley further elaborated on this term in her 1972 work *Sex, Gender, and Society*.

Sex refers to anatomical and physiological characteristics that define biological differences between individuals. Gender, in contrast, is shaped by psychological, cultural, and social means. The introduction of the term "gender" into science highlighted that roles attributed to men and women in society are socially constructed and defined.

The rapid development of gender studies has led to ambiguities and diverse interpretations of the concept of "gender." Researchers note that gender became a subject of linguistic investigation after other humanities fields. The development of gender linguistics corresponds to shifts in modern philosophy and the humanities, particularly in the late 20th century.

Gender linguistics explores two primary areas:

- **Manifestation of Gender in Language:** This includes studying differences in lexical usage, semantic distinctions between male and female language, and the existence of linguistic mechanisms specific to gender.
- **Manifestation of Gender in Speech:** This involves analyzing gender-related linguistic tools and contexts, considering the influence of social and communicative factors on speech.

Western scholars approach gender linguistics through three primary frameworks:

- ❖ **Social Linguistic Approach:** Examines language differences linked to the social organization of male and female roles.
- ❖ **Social-Psychological Approach:** Analyzes how linguistic behavior varies statistically according to the psychological traits of opposite genders.
- ❖ **Cognitive Approach:** Focuses on cognitive differences in male and female speech, aiming to create unified linguistic models.



Studies show that men's speech behavior is generally independent, assertive, and status-oriented, whereas women's speech is softer, more emotional, and conciliatory. Research in German professional communication found that men are more inclined towards sarcasm and humor, whereas women are more meticulous observers of conversation dynamics.

In Russia, the term "gender" emerged in linguistic studies during the 1980s, primarily influenced by social constructivism. Studies focused on the social conditioning of linguistic behavior, such as differences in written and oral communication between genders. Uzbek gender linguistics emphasizes practical applications, particularly for forensic analysis.

- Women tend to diversify their speech and respond with greater attention to conversational nuances.
- Men's speech often lacks engagement with detailed conversational contexts.
- Women frequently use exaggerated expressions and interactive phrases, whereas men emphasize terminology and brevity.

Scholars highlight the need to address linguistic asymmetries caused by gender stereotypes and androcentric biases. While not all languages exhibit androcentrism explicitly, many do, necessitating the development of models that incorporate both neutral and gendered perspectives for describing human roles.

Conclusion

The study of gender in linguistics is a multifaceted and evolving field. Research continues to highlight the intricate interplay between language and social constructs of gender, emphasizing the need to further explore and address gender asymmetries in communication. Future investigations should focus on developing comprehensive models that reflect the diversity and complexity of gendered linguistic behavior.

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