

GENDERED LANGUAGE LINGUISTIC MARKERS IN MEN'S DISCOURSE**Sadikova Shahnoza Shuxrat qizi**Doctorate student of Kokand State University
Kokand, UzbekistanShakhnozasadikova1909@gmail.com

Abstract: This article explores the distinctive linguistic features commonly associated with male speech within the framework of gendered language use. Drawing on sociolinguistic and pragmatic approaches, the study analyzes how men employ specific lexical, syntactic, and discourse-level markers to express identity, assert dominance, build solidarity, and manage social interactions. The research highlights common patterns such as directness, use of imperatives, minimal responses, taboo language, and competitive conversational styles. It also considers how contextual factors such as age, social status, and cultural norms influence linguistic behavior. By focusing on the linguistic markers in men's discourse, the article contributes to the broader understanding of how gender roles are constructed and maintained through language in various communicative settings.

Key words: male speech, gendered language, linguistic markers, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, pragmatics, identity, communication styles

Introduction: Language functions not only as a means of communication but also as a tool through which social identities, including gender, are constructed and performed. In sociolinguistic studies, increasing attention has been paid to how linguistic behavior reflects and reinforces gender roles. While much early research focused on women's language, the analysis of men's language has gained prominence as scholars seek a balanced understanding of how both genders use language in distinct ways. Male speech is often characterized by particular linguistic markers that serve to express authority, control, camaraderie, and competitive intent. This article aims to investigate the linguistic features that typically characterize men's discourse, drawing from real-world examples and scholarly analysis to understand how language use among men reflects broader gendered expectations and norms.

Main Part

Men's language has traditionally been described as more assertive, task-oriented, and hierarchical than women's language. One of the most commonly observed features is directness, which manifests in the frequent use of declarative sentences and imperatives. For example, in peer group conversations, men are more likely to use commands like "Give me that" instead of mitigated requests such as "Could you please pass that to me?" (Coates, 2004). This aligns with a cultural expectation for men to appear assertive and in control. Another significant linguistic marker in male discourse is the use of minimal responses and competitive turn-taking. Rather than overlapping or offering supportive feedback during conversations—behaviors more frequently associated with female speakers—men often wait for their turn to speak and use that opportunity to steer the conversation. Tannen (1990) notes that men may interrupt not to show interest but to dominate or redirect the topic, reflecting a report-oriented communication style as opposed to a rapport-oriented one.

Lexical choices also distinguish men's speech. For instance, men tend to use more taboo language and swear words than women, which are associated with toughness, rebellion, and the rejection of politeness norms. Swearing may function as a bonding strategy in male groups, where shared use

of strong language affirms solidarity (Lakoff, 1975; Holmes, 1995). In contrast, women often avoid such language to conform to social norms of politeness and decorum. The use of humor and banter is another key feature. In male peer talk, humor often takes the form of teasing or mock insults, which serve to negotiate status and build group identity (Kuiper, 1991). For example, a conversation among colleagues might include exchanges like “You’re useless at this,” said jokingly, which paradoxically strengthens social bonds through mock aggression. This contrasts with female humor, which tends to be more cooperative and inclusive.

Grammatical and phonological features may also vary. Studies have shown that men are more likely to use nonstandard grammar (e.g., double negatives, contractions, and reduced forms like “gonna” or “ain’t”) as a sign of masculinity and working-class solidarity (Trudgill, 1974). These forms often signal group identity and resistance to formal norms. Moreover, intonation patterns in male speech are generally flatter, conveying emotional restraint—a culturally valued masculine trait (Cameron, 2007). Context plays a critical role in shaping men’s linguistic choices. For example, professional settings often demand more formal language, even from male speakers. However, the underlying strategies—assertiveness, brevity, and goal-directedness—often remain consistent. Additionally, factors such as age, ethnicity, and socioeconomic background influence how masculinity is linguistically constructed. A teenage boy in an urban setting may use different markers than a middle-aged man in a rural community, yet both align their speech with prevailing norms of masculine behavior in their respective contexts (Eckert, 2000). These linguistic behaviors are not innate but socially conditioned. From early childhood, boys are often socialized into competitive play and assertive speech, reinforcing the association between masculinity and dominance in conversation. Media and peer influence further solidify these patterns, creating a self-reinforcing cycle of gendered language use.

Men’s discourse is often marked by linguistic strategies that reflect broader social constructs of masculinity. A consistent feature across cultures is the tendency toward directness and assertiveness in communication. In English, a man might say, “Give me the report,” avoiding mitigating expressions such as “please” or “could you,” thereby projecting authority. This same function is evident in Russian through the use of unsoftened imperatives such as “Дай мне отчёт” (Dai mne otchet), which carry similar connotations of command and control. These forms, as noted by Coates (2004), serve as markers of a dominant conversational style expected of male speakers. The direct nature of such speech aligns with what Deborah Tannen (1990) describes as the “report” style of male communication—language focused on conveying facts, status, and solutions, rather than fostering social connection. Additionally, men’s speech frequently exhibits competitive turn-taking and a higher incidence of interruptions, used not to build rapport but to redirect or take control of the topic. For instance, in English, a speaker might cut off another with a phrase like “Yeah, but that’s not the point,” asserting a redirection of focus. Similarly, in Russian, an interruption such as “Нет, слушай, надо делать, а не думать!” (No, listen, we need to act, not think!) serves to dominate the discourse and reaffirm masculine decisiveness. Coates (2004) highlights that such interruptions are performative—they signal control and are often interpreted as markers of leadership or confidence in male peer groups. Another salient linguistic feature in male discourse is the use of taboo language. In English, expressions like “What the hell is this?” or “That’s damn stupid” are often normalized in male groups as expressions of frustration or camaraderie. Russian equivalents such as “Какого чёрта ты творишь?” (What the hell are you doing?) or milder forms like “Блин” (Damn) function similarly. Holmes (1995) and Lakoff (1975) both note that men often use swearing to reinforce solidarity, toughness, and emotional detachment. In Russian sociolinguistic contexts, taboo expressions—though highly contextual—

are particularly marked in male working-class speech and can carry ritualistic, bonding value (Shmeleva, 2004).

Humor also plays a distinctive role in male communication, especially through teasing and mock-insults that paradoxically function as a form of inclusion. In English, a man might jokingly say, “Nice haircut—did you lose a bet?” while in Russian, a similar comment might be “Ты чё, с закрытыми глазами стригся?” (Did you get your hair cut with your eyes closed?). These types of jokes are rarely offensive within male peer circles; instead, they build relational closeness while preserving emotional distance. Kuiper (1991) emphasizes that such banter serves as a form of ritualized aggression, essential in male bonding rituals. Linguistic variation also extends to grammar and pronunciation. In casual English, men may say “He don’t know nothing” or “I ain’t gonna do it,” using nonstandard grammar as a badge of identity or in-group belonging. In Russian, nonstandard contractions and slang like “Он ниче не знает” (He doesn’t know anything) or “Я ща приду” (I’ll be there in a sec) fulfill similar functions. Trudgill (1974) showed that men, especially from working-class backgrounds, favor vernacular forms more than women, as these can index toughness, rebellion, or authenticity. Russian data supports this, where male speakers often exhibit looser grammatical norms in informal contexts as a way of aligning with peer expectations (Prokofieva, 2011). Finally, men are often characterized by emotional restraint in speech. Rather than expressing feelings openly, male speakers might rely on flat intonation and emotionally neutral vocabulary. An English speaker might say “Whatever” or “It’s fine” in a detached tone, masking emotion. A Russian equivalent might be “Нормально” (It’s okay) or “Да пофиг” (I don’t care), which signal indifference even when concern may be felt. As Cameron (2007) notes, such linguistic choices are not innate but socially learned behaviors that reflect internalized expectations about masculinity and emotional control. Across these examples, it becomes clear that men’s linguistic behavior is heavily influenced by cultural expectations and peer group dynamics. Whether through direct speech, taboo language, or emotionally neutral expressions, men use language to construct a gendered identity that often prioritizes authority, control, and emotional detachment. These markers are neither fixed nor universal but show remarkable consistency across linguistic and cultural contexts, reinforcing the notion that language is a key medium through which gender is performed and negotiated.

Conclusion: The linguistic markers found in men’s discourse reflect broader cultural ideologies about masculinity, authority, and power. Features such as directness, assertiveness, taboo language, and competitive conversational styles are shaped by social norms and are used by men to construct and negotiate their gender identity. While not all men conform to these patterns—and variations exist based on context and individual background—these tendencies highlight the deeply embedded relationship between language and gender. Understanding the linguistic characteristics of male speech provides insights into the ways gender roles are enacted and maintained through everyday communication, underscoring the importance of studying both male and female speech patterns in linguistic research.

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