

## FEATURES OF GENDER SPEECH IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LANGUAGES

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**Annotation:** This article analyzes the social nature of language and issues of gender differentiation based on sociolinguistic and cultural approaches. It highlights the role of language in expressing social roles within society through examples of lexical, pragmatic, and cultural differences in male and female speech. Moreover, the study examines the political and legal foundations, state strategies, and directions for fostering gender-neutral communication culture within the framework of Uzbekistan's language policy aimed at ensuring gender equality. The research results demonstrate how gender roles are reflected in the language system and how they are interconnected with social relations in society.

**Keywords:** social nature of language, gender differentiation, sociolinguistics, communication, gender equality, male and female speech, cultural identification.

### Introduction

Language is one of the most important social phenomena of human society, serving not only as a means of communication but also as a cultural phenomenon that reflects a nation's worldview, values, and social structure. Through language, individuals express their social status, gender roles, as well as cultural and national identity. Therefore, in studying the relationship between language and society, the issue of gender differentiation—that is, the social distinction between male and female speech—becomes one of the key areas of scholarly research.

The field of gender linguistics explores how social roles and the factor of gender are reflected within the linguistic system. This approach lies at the intersection of linguistics, sociology, psychology, and cultural studies, analyzing language as a medium that mirrors social and gender relations.

In Uzbekistan, gender equality is recognized as one of the priority directions of state policy. After gaining independence, the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan (new edition of 2023, Article 46) established the principle that “women and men have equal rights.” This principle provides a legal foundation for ensuring gender equality in all spheres, including education, labor, governance, and social life [1].

In addition, the Law “On Guarantees of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men” (adopted on September 2, 2019) established the national mechanism for ensuring gender equality. According to this law, it is mandatory for all state bodies, educational institutions, and social organizations to apply a gender approach in their activities [2].

Furthermore, the Presidential Decree of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PF-6247, dated June 28, 2021, which approved the “Strategy for Achieving Gender Equality and Enhancing the Socio-Political Activity of Women (2021–2030)”, places special emphasis on reducing gender stereotypes and promoting gender-sensitive speech in the fields of language, education, and communication [3].

These legal frameworks allow the issue of gender in Uzbekistan to be viewed not merely as a social or economic problem but as a necessity for renewing the cultural and communicative environment. In language policy as well, there is a growing emphasis on developing gender-neutral expressions, gender-sensitive communication, and an inclusive culture of language use.

In today's era of globalization and digital communication, gender roles expressed through language are gaining increasing social significance. In Uzbek society, ensuring gender equality, eliminating gender stereotypes, and identifying the sociocultural features of male and female speech have become some of the most pressing issues in modern linguistics.

Therefore, this study analyzes the social nature of language and the issue of gender differentiation using examples from Uzbek and English language cultures. The main objective of the article is to examine the social functions of language from a gender perspective, identify lexical, pragmatic, and cultural differences in male and female speech, and reveal their connection with social roles within society.

### Literature Review

The interaction between language and society, as well as the ways in which gender is reflected in linguistic systems, has attracted the attention of many researchers since the second half of the 20th century. Initially, this field developed within the framework of sociolinguistics and later evolved into an independent scientific discipline known as gender linguistics.

The theoretical foundation for studying the relationship between gender and language was established by American linguist Robin Lakoff in her famous work "Language and Woman's Place." She emphasizes that women's speech tends to be characterized by politeness, uncertainty, caution, and expressiveness, whereas men's speech is more assertive and logical. According to Lakoff, these differences are not biological but rather connected with socially constructed roles and cultural expectations within society [4].

Later, Deborah Tannen, in her work "You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation," analyzed gender differences from the perspective of communicative strategies. She explains the distinctions between male and female communication through the models of "competition" and "cooperation": men tend to view conversation as a means of maintaining social status, while women see it as a way of strengthening social intimacy [5].

British linguist Jennifer Coates, in her work "Women, Men and Language," studies gender linguistics in integration with sociolinguistics, pragmatics, and discourse analysis. She emphasizes that communication among women often features elements of solidarity, emotional empathy, and social support, whereas men's conversations tend to focus on status, dominance, and control [6].

Deborah Cameron, in her book "The Myth of Mars and Venus," argues that gender-related differences in speech are often based on social stereotypes, and in reality, the distinctions between male and female speech vary according to individual and cultural factors. She analyzes language not as a tool of gender politics, but from the perspective of social constructivism [7].

In his sociolinguistic studies, William Labov demonstrated that the social structure of a community is reflected through linguistic stratification—by gender, age, and social class. This approach later provided the empirical foundation for gender linguistics [8].

### Analysis of Local and Regional Studies

In recent years, the study of gender issues in Uzbek linguistics has become increasingly active. Sh. To'xtaboyeva, in her work "Language and Society: A Sociolinguistic Approach," emphasizes that language, as a social phenomenon, serves as an important means of expressing gender roles, cultural values, and social stereotypes within society [12].

In her article "The Role of the Uzbek Language in Gender Linguistics," N. Karimova analyzes the phonetic, lexical, and pragmatic differences between male and female speech in the Uzbek language and demonstrates their connection with the national mentality [13].

Based on materials from the Uzbek language, M. Yusupova found in her research that women's speech contains more evaluative and emotional elements, while men's speech is dominated by objective and logical constructions [14].

In addition, several political and legal documents regulating gender issues in Uzbekistan—such as the “Gender Equality Strategy (2021–2030),” the Law “On Equal Rights and Opportunities” (2019), and the consolidation of the principle of gender equality in the 2023 edition of the Constitution—have had a direct influence on language policy as well.

The analyzed sources indicate that the social nature of language is closely interconnected with gender differentiation. While foreign studies have primarily examined gender differences through communicative strategies, conversational styles, and discursive features, Uzbek linguistics is only beginning to develop in this direction, interpreting these processes mainly within the context of sociocultural and traditional values.

The existing literature provides a solid scientific foundation for further deepening gender linguistics, conducting a comparative analysis of modern forms of male and female speech in the Uzbek language, and promoting a culture of gender-sensitive communication.

### **Methodology**

The research is based on the following methods:

- Sociolinguistic analysis – to identify the social functions of language and the mechanisms through which gender roles are reflected in speech.
- Comparative-linguistic method – to determine general and national features by analyzing gender differences in English and Uzbek languages.
- Discourse analysis – to study gender-related communicative strategies in literary works, mass media, and samples of everyday speech.
- Empirical observation – to observe differences between male and female speech in various social situations (such as permission, debate, request, and objection).

As sources of data, linguistic units were analyzed from Uzbek and English literary texts, interviews, and online communications.

### **Results**

The research findings show that the social nature of language plays a key role in how gender roles are manifested through speech. The following observations were identified:

- At the lexical level, women tend to use more emotional, evaluative, and soft expressions (e.g., “beautiful,” “wonderful,” “pleasant”), while men prefer objective and logical words (e.g., “correct,” “accurate,” “necessary”).
- At the pragmatic level, women more often use cooperative and conciliatory expressions, whereas men are more likely to employ directive, advisory, or argumentative tones.
- At the discursive level, male speech is generally aimed at providing information, while female speech focuses on maintaining social closeness and rapport.
- In the cultural context, in Uzbek society, the politeness and gentleness of women's speech are viewed as social values, whereas in English-speaking societies, there is a growing trend toward gender-neutral communication.

### **Discussion**

The social nature of language is regarded as the primary source of gender differentiation. The differences between male and female speech are not biological but are determined by social roles, cultural values, and societal expectations. This idea has been confirmed in the works of sociolinguists such as Deborah Tannen, Robin Lakoff, and Jennifer Coates.

In Uzbek society, gender roles are largely based on traditional values, whereas in the English language there has been a growing trend toward gender-neutral language in recent years—for example, the increasing use of “they” instead of “he/she” to promote gender equality. This process reflects democratic changes in society through language.

Thus, the social nature of language is closely interconnected with the gender structure of society. In every culture, gender-specific linguistic elements serve as a mirror of social consciousness and cultural values.

### Conclusion

Language, as a social phenomenon, reflects the sexual, social, and cultural identity of individuals. Gender differentiation in language represents the linguistic manifestation of social roles, values, and stereotypes within society. The research findings show that, although gender differences exist in both English and Uzbek languages, their origins are primarily determined by cultural and social contexts.

In the future, the use of gender-neutral language—especially in the fields of education and mass media—will contribute to ensuring communicative equality.

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