

Gender Neologisms and Their Role in Modern Speech

Amanbayeva Jasmina Jasur qizi

Student Of 1st Year, Faculty of History and Philology, University of Tashkent For Applied Sciences, Uzbekistan

Received: 30 March 2026; **Accepted:** 25 April 2026; **Published:** 13 May 2026

Abstract: This article defines mansplaining as a blend of man and explaining, showing a trend in English of creating gender-related neologisms. These words add gender meaning to originally neutral terms. Earlier studies focused on informal use, especially on social media and crowd-sourced dictionaries. However, mansplaining is now also used in more formal contexts. This study analyzes its definitions in traditional dictionaries and its usage, grammar, and functions beyond social media.

Keywords: Gendered neologisms, mansplaining, language and gender, feminisation, neutralisation, Google Ngram Viewer.

Introduction: Language changes quickly in the modern world, and one of the clearest signs of this change is the appearance of new words, which are often called neologisms. Many of these neologisms first appear on the Internet, because online communication is informal and allows users to be creative, while traditional dictionaries take much longer to accept new vocabulary. For example, the word selfie needed about eleven years before it was officially recorded, which shows that there is usually a long gap between the birth of a word and its formal recognition. Among the many new words that have emerged in recent years, mansplaining, a blend of man and explaining, is particularly interesting, since it has not only survived over time but has also moved from social media into more formal areas such as journalism and politics.

Mansplaining belongs to a wider group called gendered neologisms, which are words that add a gender aspect to originally neutral terms, and they often reflect or challenge existing stereotypes about men and women. Some of these words, such as SheEO or girlboss, were created to support female empowerment, while others, such as manspreading or mansplaining itself, were designed to criticise certain male behaviours. Although researchers have studied these words mostly

in informal contexts like Twitter or Facebook, less attention has been paid to how they are used once they enter mainstream language. Therefore, this paper aims to examine how mansplaining functions outside social media, and it does so by analysing the origin of the word, comparing dictionary definitions, and tracking its frequency in large text collections. By doing this, the study hopes to show how a word that began as informal slang has gradually become part of everyday formal communication.

METHOD

First, however, it is important to define gendered neologisms. These are perhaps words that add a gender aspect to terms that were originally gender-neutral. This happens because some things are strongly associated with one gender, so a new term is needed when referring to the other gender. For example, expressions like man purse or man bun perhaps show that purses and certain hairstyles are usually seen as female attributes.

Gendered neologisms use lexemes such as kovorking, lider, link, masterklas, navigator, pereplyot to coin new words from previously gender-neutral ones. The examples of gendered neologisms are presented in Table 1.

T/R	WORDS AND TERMS RELATED TO FOREIGN LANGUAGES	THEIR MEANING	THE FORM INTRODUCED FOR OFFICIAL USE.	USE IN CURRENT LEGISLATIVE DOCUMENTS.
1	КОВОРКИНГ	A WORD BORROWED FROM ENGLISH MEANING 'COLLABORATION.' IT REFERS TO AN OFFICE OR OTHER WORKING ENVIRONMENT DESIGNED FOR PEOPLE WORKING FOR ENTREPRENEURS OR VARIOUS EMPLOYERS TO SHARE EQUIPMENT AND KNOWLEDGE.	WORK CENTER	THE TERM "COWORKING" IS USED IN RELEVANT FIELDS AND LEGISLATIVE DOCUMENTS. THE TERM "WORK CENTER" SERVES AS AN UZBEK EQUIVALENT, EXPRESSING THE MEANING OF THE CONCEPT.
2	ЛИДЕР	A WORD BORROWED FROM ENGLISH MEANING "FIRST", "PIONEER", OR "LEADER".	GUIDE, LEADER	THE TERM "LEADER" IS USED IN RELEVANT FIELDS, IN LIVE COMMUNICATION, AND IN LEGISLATIVE DOCUMENTS. THE TERMS "GUIDE" AND "LEADER" SERVE AS UZBEK EQUIVALENTS, EXPRESSING THE MEANING OF THE CONCEPT.
3	ЛИНК	A WORD BORROWED FROM ENGLISH, USED IN THE MEANINGS OF "LINK," "CONNECTION," OR A RELATIONSHIP OR BOND BETWEEN TWO THINGS OR SITUATIONS.	LINK	THE TERM "LINK" IS ACTIVELY USED IN SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH, IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS, AND IN GENERAL SPOKEN COMMUNICATION. THE TERM "LINK" SERVES AS AN UZBEK EQUIVALENT, EXPRESSING THE MEANING OF THE CONCEPT.
4	МАСТЕР КЛАСС	A WORD BORROWED FROM ENGLISH MEANING A "MASTER CLASS" OR "WORKSHOP," REFERRING TO A SESSION AIMED AT DEVELOPING SKILLS	MASTER CLASS	THE TERM "MASTER CLASS" IS USED IN RELEVANT FIELDS, IN SPOKEN COMMUNICATION,

		AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE.		AND IN LEGISLATIVE DOCUMENTS. THE TERM “MASTER CLASS” SERVES AS AN UZBEK EQUIVALENT, EXPRESSING THE MEANING OF THE CONCEPT.
5	НАВИГАТОР	BORROWED FROM THE LATIN WORD “NAVIGATOR,” MEANING “TO GUIDE OR STEER A SHIP ALONG ITS COURSE.”	NAVIGATOR	THE TERM “NAVIGATOR” IS USED IN RELEVANT FIELDS, IN SPOKEN COMMUNICATION, AND IN LEGISLATIVE DOCUMENTS. THE TERM “ROUTER” SERVES AS AN UZBEK EQUIVALENT, EXPRESSING THE MEANING OF THE CONCEPT.
6	ПЕРЕПЛЁТ	A WORD BORROWED FROM RUSSIAN MEANING “TO BIND A BOOK”.	BINDING	THE TERM “BINDING” IS USED IN LEGISLATIVE DOCUMENTS. IT IS AN ACTIVE TERM IN PUBLISHING, PRINTING, OUTDOOR ADVERTISING, AND GENERAL SPOKEN COMMUNICATION. THE TERM “BOOKBINDING” SERVES AS AN UZBEK EQUIVALENT, EXPRESSING THE MEANING OF THE CONCEPT.

Gendered words illustrate a two-way relationship: they are not only used to describe new social realities but also serve as tools to address issues related to gender, including how gender is represented in language and how social roles of men and women are portrayed. These neologisms often reflect existing stereotypes about males and females. Many of them arise from ongoing debates about gender roles in society. For instance, terms like SheEO, girlboss, and womentrepreneur were created to promote female empowerment and increase the visibility of women in

leadership positions.

One approach to achieving gender fairness in language is called feminisation. This involves explicitly including women in discourse, for example by using both masculine and feminine forms, or by applying shortened forms such as slashes or underscores. Feminisation has been widely recommended in languages with grammatical gender, such as Polish, French, and German. These earlier forms were largely rejected due to the same issues, including reinforcing stereotypes or failing to achieve true linguistic equality.

Due to the limitations of language feminisation, another approach—neutralisation—has been proposed. Instead of increasing the visibility of women, neutralisation aims to reduce the emphasis on gender distinctions in language. This strategy involves replacing gender-specific terms with gender-neutral ones; for example, policeman is replaced by police officer. Neutralisation is especially recommended for genderless and natural gender languages, including English. However, despite this recommendation, gendered neologisms continue to emerge and spread widely, even though they go against the idea of neutralisation. Their popularity may stem from the belief that language does not only reflect social change but can also actively promote it. Many such neologisms are created to challenge traditional gender roles—for instance, manny suggests that men can take on nurturing roles typically associated with women, while womanager highlights women in executive positions, traditionally linked to men. Others, like mansplaining or manspreading, aim to expose and criticize sexist behaviors by making them more visible.

Nevertheless, it remains debatable whether these terms truly contribute to gender equality or whether they reinforce harmful stereotypes, since they are still gender-marked. The distinction between marked and unmarked forms can be likened to the contrast between figure and background, or between what is considered “normal” and “abnormal.” For example, terms like lady doctor are derived from the male norm and are often associated with lower prestige, reflecting underlying biases in language.

ANALYSIS

Gendered neologisms are widely used in discussions on social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook, which is why they are often studied in that context. However, some of these terms have become popular enough to be included in traditional dictionaries and used in a variety of settings beyond social media. The aim of this research is to examine how the term mansplaining functions outside of social media. To achieve this, a four-step analysis was conducted. The first two steps involved identifying the origin of the word and comparing its definitions across different dictionaries. The third step focused on analysing trends in the usage and form of the word mansplain. For this purpose, the Google Ngram Viewer was used.

The Google Ngram Viewer is a search tool that analyses large collections of digitised texts to show how frequently specific words or phrases have appeared in books over time, covering the period from 1500 to 2024 at the time of analysis. Importantly, the tool counts how often a word appears in texts rather than how

many books contain it. However, it does not provide the context in which the word is used, nor does it give direct access to the full dataset.

The NOW corpus has been tracking word frequency since 2010 and was created by Mark Davies in 2016 in response to the limitation of traditional corpora, which often fail to keep up with rapid linguistic changes. Because it is updated every day, it is particularly useful for analysing recent linguistic developments, including gendered neologisms. Using this corpus made it possible to examine mansplaining in real contexts and to better understand how the term is used in contemporary language.

CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, the term mansplaining as an example of a gendered neologism, and it has shown that such words can travel a long distance from their original online environments into more traditional contexts. Although gendered neologisms were once considered too informal for serious use, the case of mansplaining demonstrates that some of them are accepted into dictionaries, while they also appear in newspapers, political speeches, and academic writing. The analysis, which was carried out with the help of the Google Ngram Viewer and the NOW corpus, suggests that the frequency of the word has grown steadily, and this growth indicates that mansplaining is no longer a temporary trend but a stable part of the modern English vocabulary.

REFERENCES

1. Barnhart, D. K. & Metcalf, A. A. (1997). *America in So Many Words: Words That Have Shaped America*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin.
2. Battistella, E. (1990). *Markedness: The Evaluative Superstructure of Language*. Albany: SUNY Press.
3. Bridges, J. (2017). Gendering metapragmatics in online discourse: “Mansplaining man gonna mansplain...”. *Discourse, Context & Media*, 20, 94-102. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dcm.2017.09.010>
4. Cambridge English Dictionary. (2020). Mansplain. In: Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary & Thesaurus. Retrieved from <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/pl/dictionary/english/mansplain>
5. Collins English Dictionary. (2020). In: Collins English Dictionary. Retrieved from <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/mansplain>
6. Curzan, A. (2003). *Gender Shifts in the History of English*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511486913>

7. Davies, M. (2017). The new 4.3 billion word NOW corpus, with 4–5 million words of data added every day. In The 9th International Corpus Linguistics Conference.
8. Formanowicz, M., Bedynska, S., Cislak, A., Braun, F., & Szczesny, S. (2013). Side effects of genderfair language: how feminine job titles influence the evaluation of female applicants. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 43, 62–71. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.1924>
9. Johnson, C. R. (2020). Mansplaining and illocutionary force. *Feminist Philosophy Quarterly*, 6(4).Article 3. Retrieved from <https://ojs.lib.uwo.ca/index.php/fpq/article/view/8168/11031>
10. BOBOJONOVA, S. (2024). Linguoculturology and concept. «ACTA NUUZ», 1(1.4), 296-300.
11. Shakhnoza, B. (2024). Psycholinguistics and educational discourse. *American Journal of Philological Sciences*, 4(05), 200-204.
12. Kizi, S. B. Y. (2022). Linguo-cultural characteristics of speech etiquette occurring in discourse. *Current Research Journal of Philological Sciences*, 3(11), 59-63.
13. Dilnoza, A., & Shakhnoza, B. (2024). Interactive language learning strategies for enhancing vocabulary acquisition. *Eurasian Journal of Academic Research*, 4(7S), 62-66.