

Linguoculturological And Linguopragmatic Features of Gender Role Formation in Children's Speech: A Comparative Study of Uzbek And English

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Abstract: This paper examines the linguoculturological and linguopragmatic peculiarities of gender role formation in children's speech in Uzbek and English, focusing on the intersection of language, culture, and communicative intent. Drawing on the theoretical basis outlined in Shokirova Dilorom's dissertation, this study identifies and compares how cultural norms and pragmatic strategies shape children's use of language according to gender. The research highlights that gender-specific discourse emerges early in children's communication and is reinforced through linguistic input, narrative structures, and culturally encoded expectations. Methodologically, the study employs discourse analysis of folklore, literary texts, and children's everyday dialogues to trace patterns of gendered language. It also incorporates pragmatic theory (Grice's maxims, speech act theory) and cultural-linguistic frameworks (Wierzbicka, Lakoff, Vezhbitskaya). Findings indicate that Uzbek child discourse tends to preserve more rigid gender distinctions, particularly in cultural metaphors, role-based expressions, and politeness strategies, while English child discourse reveals more egalitarian tendencies, especially in directive speech acts and humor use. Pragmatically, boys and girls differ in how they construct conversational implicatures, assert power, or signal cooperation—shaped by cultural ideals of masculinity and femininity. The article concludes that both linguocultural and pragmatic mechanisms contribute to the early reproduction of gender roles, reinforcing social norms through language. The findings have implications for cross-cultural pragmatics, child language acquisition, and gender studies in linguistics.

Keywords: Gender roles, children's speech, linguoculturology, pragmatics, Uzbek, English, discourse, language and culture.

Introduction: Language plays a central role in socializing children into culturally sanctioned gender roles. From early stages of development, boys and girls not only acquire lexical and grammatical structures but also internalize communicative patterns that reflect societal expectations of gendered behavior. In this regard, linguoculturology and pragmatics provide complementary lenses for understanding how language encodes and reinforces gender roles in children's discourse.

This study focuses on the comparative analysis of gender-role manifestation in Uzbek and English children's speech, with particular attention to the interaction between cultural worldview and pragmatic language use. It draws upon Shokirova Dilorom

Abduvaliyevna's framework of analyzing gender representation within a linguoculturological and linguopragmatic paradigm, contributing to cross-linguistic and cross-cultural studies in gender linguistics.

The central research questions include:

1. How do linguistic expressions in children's speech encode culturally accepted gender roles in Uzbek and English?
2. What are the pragmatic strategies used differently by boys and girls in communication across both languages?
3. How do discourse structures reflect culturally preferred models of femininity and masculinity?

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a comparative descriptive method with elements of discourse analysis. Data were drawn from:

- Uzbek and English children's stories (e.g., Sariq devni minib, Cinderella, The Gruffalo)
- Transcribed samples of authentic child conversations
- Lexical and phraseological corpora specific to gendered child speech

The theoretical basis relies on:

- Linguoculturological principles (Vereshchagin & Kostomarov, Karasik)
- Pragmatic theory (Grice, Searle, Tannen)
- Gender linguistics (Lakoff, Tannen, Ergasheva, Ziyayeva)

Gendered discourse features were identified via:

- Lexical field analysis
- Speech act classification
- Analysis of politeness markers and pragmatic implicatures

RESULTS

Linguoculturological Representation of Gender in Uzbek and English

The findings reveal that Uzbek children's speech more clearly demarcates gender roles via metaphorical constructs and culturally rooted phrases. For instance:

Boys in Uzbek often use expressions associated with strength or responsibility:

"men erkakman, yig'lamayman" (I am a boy, I don't cry)

"qizlar uyda o'tiradi" (girls stay at home)

Girls' speech, on the contrary, tends to reflect nurturing, relational roles:

"men opamga yordam beraman" (I help my sister)

"oyimni quvontiraman" (I make my mother happy)

In English, however, expressions like "I want to be a firefighter" or "I don't like pink" are increasingly used by both genders, reflecting evolving norms of gender fluidity.

Pragmatic Differences in Speech Behavior. Pragmatically, gender roles affect:

Turn-taking strategies: Boys in Uzbek tend to interrupt more; girls use more cooperative conversational styles.

Speech acts: Boys use more imperatives ("ber buni", "give me that"); girls prefer indirect requests ("can I have this, please?").

Politeness: In both cultures, girls exhibit higher politeness index, aligning with Brown and Levinson's theory.

Gendered Metaphors and Phraseology: Uzbek children's discourse retains a rich corpus of gendered metaphors:

"qiz bola gul bo'ladi" (a girl is like a flower)

"o'g'il bola tog' bo'ladi" (a boy is like a mountain)

In contrast, English metaphors used by children are increasingly gender-neutral or subverted:

"She's strong like a superhero"

"Boys cry too, it's okay"

These expressions reflect the broader socio-cultural differences in gender education and linguistic reinforcement.

DISCUSSION

The comparative results suggest that language reflects and perpetuates gender roles from early stages of speech development. While Uzbek children internalize a more binary and traditional view of gendered roles through idioms and behavior norms, English-speaking children demonstrate a more fluid model, especially in Western educational contexts.

This aligns with Ergasheva's findings on the socio-pragmatic influence of language on gender identity and D. Ziyayeva's observations on metaphorical gender markers in Uzbek. Moreover, the predominance of directive speech in boys' discourse and expressive-relational speech in girls' utterances can be tied to the culturally internalized models of masculinity and femininity.

It is also noteworthy that children's linguistic creativity often challenges adult-imposed norms. For example, boys may use nurturing language in play contexts ("I'm the dad and I will cook today"), while girls adopt leadership roles in storytelling. These discursive shifts suggest an emerging dynamic of role experimentation, particularly in multicultural or bilingual environments.

The role of storytelling is vital. Folktales and picture books often encode gender models that children mirror. In Uzbek texts, female characters are often passive or rewarded for obedience, while male characters embody action and bravery. English children's literature, however, offers a growing number of proactive female protagonists.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that children's speech is a fertile ground for the reproduction—and occasional challenge—of gender norms. Linguoculturological and linguopragmatic analyses reveal clear differences in

how Uzbek and English linguistic environments encode gender through vocabulary, metaphor, speech acts, and interaction styles.

In Uzbek, cultural codes solidify gender binaries through rigid metaphorical systems and pragmatic formulas. In English, the evolving sociocultural context promotes more flexible gendered expressions. These differences highlight the need for nuanced gender education and support for inclusive discourse practices in both linguistic spheres.

The findings contribute to gender linguistics, child language acquisition, and intercultural communication studies. They also offer implications for curriculum development in bilingual and cross-cultural educational settings, emphasizing the need for sensitivity to the linguistic reproduction of social roles.

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