



THE FORMATION AND USE OF GENDER-NEUTRAL LEXICON IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LANGUAGES

Narmuratov Zayniddin Radjabovich

Termiz Iqtisodiyot va Servis universiteti o'qituvchisi

Abdurasulov Jasur

Termiz Iqtisodiyot va servis universiteti

Magistr, 1-kurs

Abstract. This thesis analyzes the formation and use of gender-neutral lexicon in English and Uzbek languages by integrating sociolinguistic theory with contextual language analysis. Drawing on feminist linguistics and critical discourse analysis, the study demonstrates how gender-neutral forms function within real communicative practices. The research is based on comparative analysis of media texts, official documents, and public discourse, with particular attention to the Uzbek linguistic and cultural context. The findings reveal that gender-neutral lexicon operates differently across languages due to distinct social ideologies, yet both systems show a gradual shift toward inclusivity. Practical recommendations are proposed for language policy, education, and media usage.

Keywords: gender linguistics; gender-neutral lexicon; feminist linguistics; critical discourse analysis; English language; Uzbek language.

Introduction.

In contemporary linguistics, gender is understood not merely as a grammatical category but as a socially constructed phenomenon embedded in discourse. Feminist linguistics argues that linguistic forms participate in maintaining or challenging power relations, while critical discourse analysis focuses on how ideology is reproduced through everyday language use. These approaches provide a theoretical framework for examining gender-neutral lexicon in actual communicative contexts.



In English-language discourse, feminist linguistic principles are evident in institutional and media texts. For example, in employment advertisements published by international organizations, gender-marked terms such as salesman or chairman are systematically replaced by neutral forms like sales associate and chairperson. Moreover, job announcements increasingly employ the singular they (e.g., Each applicant must submit their CV), which reflects a deliberate avoidance of gender specification. From a discourse-analytic perspective, such choices reduce implicit gender hierarchy and broaden the range of potential social identities addressed by the text.

Applying the same theoretical framework to Uzbek, gender-neutral lexicon can be observed in official and media discourse, though it emerges through different mechanisms. An analysis of Uzbek legal documents and state media materials shows frequent use of generalized terms such as *shaxs*, *fuqaro*, and *vakil*. For instance, contemporary legal texts prefer constructions like *har bir shaxs qonun oldida tengdir*, which exclude explicit gender reference and align with principles of formal equality. In contrast, earlier journalistic texts often employed gender-marked contextual cues when referring to professional roles, implicitly associating leadership or authority with men.

Lexical items such as *o'qituvchi*, *rahbar*, and *tadbirkor* function as gender-neutral units at the grammatical level; however, their interpretation depends on discourse context. In traditional narratives, *rahbar* is frequently associated with male referents through accompanying descriptors or imagery, whereas in modern media and educational discourse it increasingly refers to individuals regardless of gender. This shift illustrates how gender neutrality in Uzbek operates pragmatically rather than morphologically, reflecting broader social changes.

A comparative analysis of English and Uzbek job advertisements highlights both similarities and differences in gender-neutral strategies. English texts rely on explicit lexical innovation and pronoun reform, while Uzbek texts favor neutral role



nouns and impersonal constructions. Grammatically, English requires conscious avoidance of gendered pronouns, whereas Uzbek achieves neutrality through omission. Culturally, English discourse is influenced by identity-based activism, while Uzbek usage is shaped by institutional norms, modernization processes, and selective adaptation of global practices.

The study also considers the social reception of gender-neutral language in Uzbekistan. Discussions in social media and public commentary reveal both support for inclusive terminology among younger, urban speakers and resistance grounded in traditional and religious values. This coexistence of acceptance and skepticism demonstrates that gender-neutral language is negotiated within society rather than uniformly adopted.

Based on the findings, a step-by-step implementation strategy is proposed: (1) development of methodological guidelines for gender-neutral language by linguistic institutions and language policy bodies; (2) incorporation of inclusive language principles into teacher training and university curricula; (3) organization of seminars for journalists and editors; and (4) gradual introduction of gender-neutral standards in official and media texts. These measures would allow gender-neutral lexicon to develop organically while respecting cultural sensitivities.

Conclusion

Overall, the research confirms that gender-neutral lexicon represents both a linguistic and social process. Its effective use depends on contextual awareness, theoretical understanding, and practical application. Strengthening the connection between theory and empirical analysis contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of gender and language in English and Uzbek.

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