

THE INTERRELATION OF GRAMMATICAL AND SOCIAL ASPECTS IN THE UNIVERSAL LINGUISTIC THEORY OF THE GENDER PHENOMENON

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Abstract. *This present article kind of examines the theoretical bases of gender as this linguistic thing, you know, especially how it links grammar with the social stuff, within universal linguistics. The results add to a bigger understanding about how language does encode and keeps going, and sometimes even gently resists social hierarchies tied to gender.*

Keywords: *gender, grammatical gender, social gender, universal linguistics, sociolinguistics, language and society, gender theory, morphology.*

Аннотация. *В настоящей статье рассматриваются теоретические основы гендера как лингвистического феномена с акцентом на взаимосвязь его грамматических и социальных аспектов в рамках универсальной лингвистики. Полученные результаты способствуют более глубокому пониманию того, каким образом язык кодирует, воспроизводит и в отдельных случаях оспаривает социальные иерархии гендера.*

Ключевые слова: *гендер, грамматический гендер, социальный гендер, универсальная лингвистика, социолингвистика, язык и общество, теория гендера, морфология.*

Annotatsiya. *Ushbu maqolada gender hodisasining lingvistik fenomen sifatidagi nazariy asoslari ko'rib chiqiladi, universal tilshunoslik doirasida uning grammatik va ijtimoiy jihatlarining o'zaro munosabatiga alohida e'tibor qaratiladi. Olingan natijalar tilning gendernga oid ijtimoiy ierarxialarni qanday kodlashi, qayta ishlab chiqarishi va ba'zi hollarda ularga qanday qarshi turishi haqidagi tushunchalarni kengaytirish imkonini beradi.*

Kalit so'zlar: *gender, grammatik gender, ijtimoiy gender, universal tilshunoslik, sotsiolingvistika, til va jamiyat, gender nazariyasi, morfologiya.*

Introduction. The question of how language structures human perception of gender has been occupying linguists' sociologists and philosophers of language for several decades. Gender, as a linguistic category, takes a kind of distinctive place in that it works at the same time as a morphosyntactic device, and as a socially loaded sign that is embedded in everyday cultural practices. That push and pull between these two sides, the grammatical and the social, makes up one of the most debated zones inside broader universal linguistic theory. While some scholars argue that grammatical gender is an arbitrary classification system with no meaningful link to biological gender or wider social positioning, others insist that the assigning of grammatical gender to nouns, pronouns, and morphological forms is never fully arbitrary. It always leaves behind traces of cultural and social organisation, [1, p. 12]. The universalist angle in linguistics suggests that all human languages have ways of encoding social differences, even if those differences are not overtly grammaticalised in the sentence.

Methodology and Literature Review. So the methodological basis of this article kind of leans on comparative linguistic analysis, plus a critical review of the theoretical

sources touching universal grammar, sociolinguistics, and also gender studies in language. The foundational work on grammatical gender as a typological feature suggests, in a broad sense, that around one quarter of the world's languages have some kind of formal grammatical gender system, and that these systems end up differing a lot in how many categories they distinguish, how semantically grounded the assignment feels, and how much agreement morphology is actually demanded [2, p. 44]. Corbett's wider typological survey is still the reference point for understanding how grammatical gender plays out across languages. It also shows that even in languages where gender assignment looks, at first glance, arbitrary, there are statistically meaningful correlations between the natural gender of the referents and their grammatical classification [3, p. 67].

In Lakoff's early research, it was noted that women's language shows those kinds of systematic differences in how people speak when they're in masculine versus feminine social roles, and the cause was linked to the unequal standing of men and women. Not, you know, any innate cognitive disparity, as it were [4, p. 19]. Later on Cameron expanded this line, but also critiqued it, by saying that the bond between language and gender is not really just "reflection", instead it is more like construction: language does not only echo social gender, it also makes it, again and again, through discursive habits and repeated practice [5, p. 33]. In Russian and Central Asian linguistic traditions, gender gets treated mostly as a grammatical thing, and researchers give a lot of focus to the morphological categories in Russian, where you have masculine, feminine, and neuter as distinct genders, and they carry strong social weight [6, p. 88].

Scholarly work in Uzbek linguistics has looked at the lack of grammatical gender in Uzbek as one of those typological traits of the language, although at the same time it is clear that social gender differences do show up, just not in the grammar itself. Instead, they are put into place through lexical and pragmatic means, like gender related address forms, job labels and also kinship terminology [7, p. 115]. In more recent works, coming from cognitive linguistics, there is an idea that linguistic gender categories are actually motivated by conceptual metaphor and prototype theory. In this view the way a language "decides" on categories for non-animate nouns is not random but rather, it follows associations between the features of an object and the embodied social experience people carry in their minds [8, p. 52].

Results and Discussion. From the reviewed literature, the theoretical synthesis seems to back up a model where grammatical and social gender sort of blend through a few separate mechanisms, yes. First there is semantic motivation, then discursive performance, and finally cognitive schematisation. Semantic motivation is basically the extent to which grammatical gender assignments get pushed along by the social category of gender. And the evidence kind of implies that this motivation is not fully fixed, it is more partial and changeable, rather than something absolute.

Discursive performance as a mechanism for gender language interaction points out how speakers, you know, actively deploy grammatical resources to get social outcomes done. The deployment of masculine generics in languages that allow them, like the “he” generic in English before the more recent reforms, or the masculine plural patterns in Spanish and French, seems to smuggle in an assumption of male normativity, which has been analysed again and again as ideologically consequential [5, p. 41]. The sociolinguistic literature shows that shifts in generic usage are some of the most disputed zones in language reform, partly because they put the grammatical work and the social functions of gender in direct tension: people who push back on reform often say grammatical gender is just a formal convention, nothing else really, while reformers argue that conventions are never, ever socially neutral. And ok, this is not only political, it’s theoretical too, and it’s been pushing forward a lot in explaining how grammatical categories shape the cognitive representation of social groupings, a link commonly theorised via the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis and later revisions of it [8, p. 61].

Cognitive schematisation refers to the process by which repeated exposure to grammatical gender patterning shapes conceptual representations of gendered entities. This finding has been interpreted as evidence for a weak version of linguistic relativity in the domain of gender, and it suggests that grammatical gender systems do not merely reflect pre-existing social and conceptual structures but actively contribute to their formation and maintenance. For languages without grammatical gender, such as Uzbek, Turkish, and Finnish, the social encoding of gender operates through different but equally systematic mechanisms, and comparative analysis of these mechanisms reveals that the universal dimension of gender linguistics lies not in the presence of grammatical gender but in the universal human need to encode social distinctions related to gender, role, and identity.

Conclusion. The interrelation of grammatical and social aspects in the linguistic theory of gender is best understood not as a simple correspondence but as a dynamic and mutually constitutive relationship that takes different forms across typologically diverse languages. Grammatical gender is neither a transparent reflection of social gender ideology nor an arbitrary formal feature without social significance; it is a historically sedimented structure that encodes, transmits, and sometimes resists social meanings associated with gender and gender identity. The theoretical framework developed in this article, integrating typological, sociolinguistic, and cognitive perspectives, offers a productive basis for cross-linguistic and cross-cultural investigation of gender in language.

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