

GENDER DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES IN THE SPEECH OF ENGLISH AND UZBEK CHILDREN

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Annotation: this article analyzes the gender differences and similarities in the speech of English and Uzbek children. It examines how gender is manifested in children's speech, the peculiarities of communication strategies, lexical diversity, use of polite forms, as well as differences in intonation and pronunciation. It also highlights the influence of cultural and educational values in English and Uzbek societies on children's language development. The research findings indicate that in both societies, girls' speech is characterized by politeness, courtesy, and elaboration, while boys' speech tends to be more direct, confident, and concise.

Keywords: gender linguistics, children's speech, English language, Uzbek language, communication strategies, polite forms, culture.

Language and speech serve as primary means of social interaction, shaped by numerous factors including gender. Gender linguistics has become one of the most relevant branches of linguistics in recent decades. Studying children's speech from a gender perspective not only reveals general psycholinguistic patterns, but also demonstrates how social and cultural norms are reflected in children's language. By analyzing gender differences in English and Uzbek children's speech, we can compare socialization, ethical standards, and communication styles specific to both languages and cultures.

From early childhood, social roles of boys and girls impact how their speech develops. In English families, there is often an emphasis on gender equality, resulting in fewer significant differences in the speaking styles of boys and girls. Both are encouraged to express their opinions independently, ask questions, and speak openly. In contrast, in Uzbek families, girls are commonly taught to be polite, respectful, and gentle in their speech. Boys, on the other hand, are more often encouraged to be direct, concise, and use command forms.

Gender-related distinctions can also be seen in vocabulary and expressive styles. English girls frequently use polite expressions such as "please," "thank you," and "sorry," while boys tend to prefer brief, direct remarks like "Give me that!" or "Come here!" Similar patterns are observed in Uzbek: girls often use "iltimos" (please), "rahmat" (thank you), and "kechirasiz" (sorry), whereas boys are more inclined to use imperative forms such as "ber" (give), "kel" (come), or "ol" (take). This reflects the early socialization of girls in polite communication practices.

Differences emerge not only in the use of polite forms but also in communication strategies. English girls often provide explanations and elaborations, while boys favor short and simple

statements. For example, girls might say, “Would it be possible to take another one, please?” whereas boys might express themselves more directly: “I want this.” Similar tendencies exist in Uzbek: girls use longer, more explanatory sentences, boys stick to direct statements. This is tied to girls being taught to communicate gently and indirectly.

Gender differences are also noticeable in peer interactions. English boys often employ competitive language such as “I’m faster!” or “This is mine!” Girls prefer cooperative expressions: “Let’s play together!” or “Can I join?” Comparable patterns are seen among Uzbek children; boys may use command forms during disputes over toys, whereas girls opt for phrases that foster agreement or collaboration, like “Shall we play together?” or “Can I join too?”

Sometimes, gender differences are expressed through intonation and tempo. English girls generally use softer intonation, while boys speak louder and at a faster pace. In Uzbek, girls’ speech is more subdued and gentle, boys’ speech is more assertive and concise. Thus, gender differences are evident in both the semantic and phonetic aspects of language.

Despite these distinctions, there are notable similarities in gendered speech among English and Uzbek children. In both cultures, girls use polite forms more frequently, while boys’ speech is dominated by direct commands and short statements. Girls are more prone to polite, explanatory, and cooperative language use, while boys focus on competition and direct requests.

The formation of gendered speech patterns is heavily influenced by social environment and education. In English schools, opportunities for boys and girls are more balanced, which may soften observable differences. In contrast, Uzbek schools and families sometimes reinforce stereotypes - encouraging girls to be polite and gentle, boys to be bold and active - thus accentuating gender differences in speech.

The study of gender differences and similarities in English and Uzbek children’s speech reveals that the social and cultural context strongly influences linguistic development from an early age. While gender differences in English children may be more noticeable in communication strategies and use of polite forms, the differences are often sharper among Uzbek children, largely due to divergent socialization practices. Nevertheless, general patterns persist: girls tend to be politer and collaborative, boys are more direct and competitive. These findings are valuable for gender linguistics, psychology, and pedagogy, and serve as both theoretical and practical guidance for raising children.

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