

HISTORICAL STAGES OF THE EVOLUTION OF GENDER LINGUISTICS

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Abstract: *In the modern rapidly developing era, significant reforms are taking place across all spheres of society, including linguistics. Language not only functions as a means of communication but also reflects cultural norms, values, and social structures. In recent decades, gender linguistics has emerged as an important interdisciplinary field that examines the relationship between language and gender. This paper explores the historical development of gender linguistics, focusing on its key stages: biological determinism, the transitional period, and modern gender studies. The study highlights the evolution of theoretical approaches, from early biologically oriented interpretations to contemporary socio-cultural perspectives. Special attention is given to the contributions of prominent scholars and the role of sociolinguistics and pragmatics in shaping modern gender research. The findings demonstrate that although gender is not a purely linguistic category, it is deeply embedded in language and can be effectively analyzed through linguistic methods.*

Keywords: *gender linguistics, gender studies, language and society, sociolinguistics, discourse, communication, gender differences*

By rapidly developing era, there are a number of reforms in every sphere including linguistics. Language is vital to society because it shapes how we perceive the world and serves as a reflection of cultural rules and values. Linguistics is a complex science as it includes all the peculiarities and nuances of the languages. From the last decades, the notion "gender" has been using often. Since, the role of men and women in society, their importance or social attitude, equality is in the center of psychology, sociology, medicine and of course, linguistics as it is needed to determine differences in some terms like sex and gender.

In ancient times, research was conducted only on the social characteristics of women and men in general terms, without direct attention to the linguistic features of gender. Starting from the 17th century, information about the differences in men's and women's speech began to be presented. However, during this period, without conducting direct research, the linguistic characteristics of men and women were defined as follows: the language of men is viewed as the general direct, primary form of language, while the language of women is presented as an abnormal form.

Gender linguistics, based on gender studies, is one of the new directions entering a new stage of development. The concept of "gender" came into scientific circulation and began to be studied from the 1980s.

The term "gender" was first used in science by R. Stoller in his work "Sex and Gender." However, he did not specify the exact difference between the two terms. Later, scholars G. Rubin and R. Unger clearly distinguished between these two concepts. In research related

to this issue in Western countries, the words "sex" and "sexus" were used as terms even before the term "gender" was fully introduced into scientific discourse. The concept of gender entered modern linguistics later than other social sciences, in the second half of the 20th century.

Gender is not a linguistic category, but its content can be revealed through the analysis of language systems, and this necessitates the linguistic study of gender's cultural expression, as noted by one of the gender scholars, A.V. Kirilina. Of course, gender is not a linguistic category, but all the cultural, national, and behavioral characteristics of members of society are reflected in language, and gender is clearly visible.

One of the Russian genderologists, A.V. Kirilina, who specifically addressed the issue of gender linguistics, suggests that "when periodizing gender research, it is advisable to divide it into three parts." That is, between the first and second stages, there is a short period that served as a preparatory base for modern gender research, which lasted until approximately the middle of the 20th century. At this time, the accumulation of facts began, which made it possible to doubt the biological nature of sexual dimorphism. We call this period the transitional period.

Agreeing with the opinion of the scientist A.V. Kirilina, we considered it appropriate to divide gender studies into biological determinism, transitional period (first half of the 20th century), and pure gender studies (second half of the 20th century).

Biological determinism. The study of the relationship between language and gender dates back to ancient times. The question of gender's influence on language first arose in connection with the category of grammatical gender. There were also many supporters of the link between natural sexus and grammatical gender. In particular, one can cite such scientists as I. Herder, J. Grimm, V. Humboldt.

Subsequently, ideas about languages lacking a gender category began to emerge in scholarship. In particular, the earliest views on gender in German linguistics date back to the time of the Brothers Grimm, who distinguished grammatical forms denoting the category of gender. Almost all the sources collected during this period had a common characteristic: men's language was interpreted as established standard, while women's language was interpreted as abnormal. Therefore, the majority of research during this period focused on highlighting the flaws in women's language, rather than comparing the differences in men's and women's language.

Transition period (first half of the 20th century). At the beginning of the 20th century, due to the research of E. Sapir, O. Esperson, and F. Mautner, interest in the gender characteristics of language and speech increased. Scholar F. Mautner published his work criticizing language in 1913. This work recognizes gender differences based on social and historical reasons in the language.

According to F. Mautner, women, due to their lack of education, try to use foreign words even without necessity, while educated men find and use their equivalents in their native language. It is also said that men use language creatively, while women have only mastered the language created by men.

True gender research. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, gender studies began to be studied at a new level. One of the main reasons for the emphasis on gender studies during

this period is the shift of the scientific paradigm from structuralism to a pragmatic approach.

During this period, scholar U. Labov studied the social dialect of New York residents based on oral sources, providing information that the peculiarities of language are also related to the speaker's living conditions, lifestyle, and profession. Subsequently, D. Tannen discusses the differences in the relationships between men and women in his works. That is, in their research, they emphasize the importance of friendship in women's interactions and competition in men's interactions, achieving status, gaining one's own strength, knowledge, and status, and publicizing this. Scholar P. Fishman studied experimental recordings of conversations between spouses, while M. Hartman separately studied the differences in the conversations of the elderly. Thus, the development of sociology, the formation of postmodernist theory of knowledge, and the emergence of the feminist movement led to the emergence of fundamental gender studies in the interdisciplinary aspect.

In conclusion, gender is not only the biological characteristics of men and women, but also their role and responsibility, formed as a result of socio-cultural characteristics. The main goal of gender studies is to clarify the linguistic relationship between men and women in society, to identify behavioral characteristics related to social and national norms, and to identify the linguistic features of their female or male characteristics.

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