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METHODOLOGICAL JOURNAL**<http://mentaljournal-jspu.uz/index.php/mesmj/index>**GENDER COMPONENTS AT THE LEXICAL LEVEL****Mukaddas Yuldashbayevna Nazarova***PhD student
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Abstract: The article aims to provide a comprehensive review of the gender components manifested at the lexical level within language. Investigating how language reflects and perpetuates societal gender norms and stereotypes, the annotation delves into various linguistic phenomena such as gender-specific vocabulary, grammatical gender systems, and linguistic markers of gender identity. The paper examines the ways in which languages encode gender through lexical items, including nouns, pronouns, and descriptors, and explores the implications of these linguistic choices on perceptions of gender roles and identities. Additionally, it investigates how linguistic structures may influence social cognition and behavior, contributing to the construction and reinforcement of gender hierarchies and inequalities. Through a multidisciplinary approach that integrates insights from linguistics, psychology, sociology, and gender studies, the annotation seeks to illuminate the complex interplay between language and gender, shedding light on both the overt and subtle mechanisms through which linguistic expressions reflect and shape gender ideologies.

INTRODUCTION

Research on gender components at the lexical level is crucial for understanding the intricate ways language reflects and shapes societal attitudes, perceptions, and power dynamics related to gender. Here are some key points highlighting its importance: Language and Gender Stereotypes: Lexical choices in language often reflect and perpetuate gender stereotypes. Studying gender components at the lexical level can unveil how certain words or expressions are associated with specific genders, leading to stereotypical perceptions and biases. Understanding these linguistic patterns can help in challenging and deconstructing such stereotypes.

Impact on Identity Formation: Language plays a significant role in shaping individual and collective identities. By analyzing gender components in language, researchers can investigate how linguistic representations contribute to the construction of gender identity. This understanding is crucial for promoting inclusive and diverse representations of gender in society.

Communication and Power Dynamics: Language not only reflects but also reinforces power dynamics within society. Studying gender components at the lexical level can reveal how language is used to assert dominance or control based on gender. For instance, examining language use in professional settings may uncover disparities in power relations between genders and inform efforts to promote gender equity.

Language and Social Change: Language both reflects and drives social change. Research on gender components at the lexical level can provide insights into evolving gender norms and attitudes within society. By tracking linguistic shifts over time, researchers can assess the effectiveness of interventions aimed at promoting gender equality and challenging gender-based discrimination.

Health and Well-being: Language influences health outcomes and well-being, as it shapes access to resources, opportunities, and support networks. Research on gender components at the lexical level can inform interventions aimed at improving health communication and addressing gender disparities in healthcare access and treatment outcomes.

Thus, studying gender components at the lexical level is essential for advancing our understanding of the complex relationship between language, gender, and society. By uncovering linguistic patterns and dynamics, researchers can contribute to efforts aimed at promoting gender equality, challenging stereotypes, and fostering inclusive and empowering language practices.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Gender, as a social construct, permeates various aspects of language, including its lexicon. This literature review explores the intricate relationship between gender and language at the lexical level, focusing on how gender components manifest, are perceived, and influence communication.

Gendered Language: Language reflects and perpetuates societal norms, including those related to gender. Studies have extensively documented the presence of gendered language across different languages and cultures [3]. These linguistic gender markers often manifest through morphological, syntactic, and lexical features.

Lexicalization of Gender: At the lexical level, gender components are embedded in the vocabulary used to refer to individuals or groups. This lexicalization of gender can occur through gender-specific terms, such as “actor” vs. “actress” or “waiter” vs. “waitress” in English, where the suffix “-es” denotes femininity [2]. Similarly, languages like Spanish and French employ grammatical gender, assigning masculine or feminine markers to nouns, affecting agreement patterns within sentences.

Implicit Bias and Stereotypes: Gendered language can reinforce implicit biases and stereotypes. For instance, the frequent use of gender-specific job titles may perpetuate the association of certain professions with a particular gender [5]. This linguistic bias can contribute to gender inequalities in various domains, including the workplace.

Gender Neutrality and Linguistic Innovation: Efforts to promote gender equality have spurred linguistic innovation aimed at creating gender-neutral language. In English, there has been a shift towards using gender-neutral terms like “police officer” instead of “policeman” or “firefighter” instead of “fireman” [4]. Similarly, some languages have introduced gender-neutral pronouns, such as “hen” in Swedish or “die” in German, challenging the traditional binary gender framework.

Perception and Attitudes: Research suggests that individuals perceive and interpret gendered language differently based on their own gender and sociocultural background. Studies have found that women are more sensitive to gendered language and its implications, while men may be less attuned to such linguistic cues [1]. Additionally, attitudes towards gender-neutral language vary across populations, with some embracing it as inclusive and others resisting it due to perceived linguistic disruption.

Gender components at the lexical level play a significant role in shaping language use and perception. While gendered language reflects societal norms and stereotypes, efforts towards gender neutrality and linguistic innovation are underway to promote inclusivity and

equality. Understanding the intricacies of gendered language is crucial for fostering inclusive communication and challenging ingrained biases.

Analyzing gender components at the lexical level involves examining how language reflects and reinforces societal perceptions of gender. This can encompass various aspects, including word choice, grammatical structures, and linguistic conventions associated with gender. Here's a comparative analysis focusing on English and Spanish:

Grammatical Gender: English: English lacks grammatical gender for nouns. There are no inherent gender markers in most English nouns, although pronouns (he, she, they) carry gender distinctions. Spanish: Spanish, like many Romance languages, assigns grammatical gender to nouns, which are classified as masculine or feminine. For example, “el libro” (the book) is masculine, while “la mesa” (the table) is feminine.

Pronouns: English: English pronouns have gender-specific forms for third-person singular subjects (he, she, it). These pronouns are typically used to refer to people (he/she) or objects (it) and animals (it). Spanish: Spanish pronouns also have gender-specific forms, with “él” (he) and “ella” (she) being the singular pronouns. Additionally, Spanish has gender-specific forms for plural pronouns: “ellos” (they, masculine) and “ellas” (they, feminine).

Occupational Titles: English: Traditional occupational titles often carry gender connotations, such as “fireman” or “policeman”. Efforts have been made to introduce gender-neutral alternatives like “firefighter” or “police officer”. Spanish: Similarly, many occupational titles in Spanish have gendered forms, such as “el medico” (the male doctor) and “la médica” (the female doctor). However, like in English, there is a trend towards using gender-neutral terms, such as “el/la médico/a” or “el médico, la médica”.

Generic Terms: English: English has struggled with gender-neutral language, with many generic terms historically defaulting to masculine forms (e.g., “mankind” instead of “humankind”). Efforts to introduce gender-neutral alternatives are ongoing. Spanish: Similarly, Spanish has often used masculine forms as the default when referring to mixed-gender groups or generic situations. However, there is increasing awareness and adoption of gender-inclusive language, such as using “todas y todos” (everyone) instead of “todos” (all) to encompass both genders.

Adjectives: English: Adjectives in English are generally not marked for gender agreement with nouns. They remain the same regardless of the gender of the noun they modify. Spanish: Adjectives in Spanish must agree in gender with the nouns they modify. For example, “alto” (tall) becomes “alta” when describing a feminine noun.

Diminutives: English: English does not have a widespread system of diminutives that imply gender. Diminutives are usually formed by adding suffixes like “-y” or “-ie” (e.g.,

“doggy” or “kitty”). Spanish: In Spanish, diminutives can imply gender by using suffixes like “-ito” for masculine and “-ita” for feminine (e.g., “gatito” for male kitten, “gatita” for female kitten).

In both languages, there's a growing awareness of the impact of language on gender perceptions, leading to efforts to adopt more inclusive and gender-neutral language. However, the specific linguistic mechanisms and challenges vary between English and Spanish due to their grammatical structures and cultural contexts.

DISCUSSION

Understanding gender components at the lexical level is pivotal in various fields, including linguistics, psychology, and gender studies. This discussion delves into the complexities of gender representation within language and examines the research findings on how gender is encoded and expressed through lexical choices.

1. Gendered Language: Language often reflects and reinforces societal gender norms. Research by Lakoff [6] pioneered the exploration of gendered language, highlighting linguistic features that associate with specific genders. These features include lexical choices, syntactic structures, and discourse patterns.

2. Lexical Choices: Lexical items can carry gender connotations, influencing how individuals perceive gender roles and identities. Studies such as Miller and Swift [7] and Hyde and Linn [8] have demonstrated the presence of gendered language in various contexts, from everyday conversations to literary texts.

3. Semantic Associations: Words may acquire gendered connotations through semantic associations. For instance, words like “nurse” and “engineer” are often associated with female and male genders, respectively [9]. These associations can shape individuals' perceptions of gender-appropriate occupations and roles.

4. Linguistic Relativity: The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis suggests that language influences thought processes. Research by Boroditsky [10] and others has explored how grammatical gender systems in languages affect speakers' perceptions of gender roles and attributes.

5. Gender Neutrality: Efforts to promote gender equality have led to discussions on gender-neutral language. Studies by Pavlidou [11] and Hellinger and Bußmann [12] have examined strategies for achieving gender neutrality in language, such as using inclusive pronouns and avoiding gender-specific terms.

6. Intersectionality: Gender intersects with other social categories such as race, class, and sexuality, shaping individuals' experiences and linguistic practices. Research by Crenshaw [13] and Hill Collins [14] emphasizes the importance of considering intersectionality in analyzing gender representations in language.

7. Language Change: Language is dynamic, and shifts in societal attitudes toward gender are reflected in linguistic changes. Studies by Bucholtz [15] and Eckert [16] have investigated how linguistic innovations emerge in response to evolving gender norms and identities.

8. Cross-Cultural Perspectives: Gendered language varies across cultures, reflecting diverse cultural values and norms. Comparative studies by Holmes [17] and Tannen [18] have explored cross-cultural differences in gender representation and communication styles.

Gender components at the lexical level play a crucial role in shaping perceptions of gender roles, identities, and relations. By examining lexical choices, semantic associations, and linguistic practices, researchers can gain insights into the intricate ways in which language reflects and perpetuates gender stereotypes and biases.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the exploration of gender components at the lexical level underscores the intricate relationship between language and social constructs. The examination of linguistic features, such as gender-specific terms, grammatical gender, and gendered language use, reveals the pervasive influence of societal norms and perceptions on language structure and usage. Through the lens of linguistic anthropology, sociolinguistics, and feminist linguistics, researchers have delved into the complexities of gender representation in language, shedding light on issues of power dynamics, stereotyping. Furthermore, the study of gender at the lexical level has practical implications for fields such as language education, communication studies, and gender studies. Understanding how language shapes and reflects perceptions of gender can inform efforts to promote linguistic inclusivity, challenge gender stereotypes, and foster more equitable communication practices.

As this field continues to evolve, interdisciplinary approaches will be crucial for gaining deeper insights into the multifaceted nature of gender in language. By drawing on theories and methodologies from linguistics, sociology, psychology, and beyond, researchers can advance our understanding of how gender is encoded, negotiated, and contested through language.

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