

A Sociolinguistic Study of Gendered Language in English

Abiodun Akintayo & Olukunle Olosu

Lagos State University of Science and Technology, Ikorodu, Lagos

Abstract

This paper is a socio-linguistic study of gendered language in English with the aim of examining how language reflects and constructs gender realities. This is crucial in order to reveal how language shapes our socio-cultural experiences and reflects societal attitudes towards women. Data were gathered from various sources, *viz.*: educational materials, media texts, corporate communication and literature, in order to identify gendered language patterns. The linguistic theory that drives the research is variationist sociolinguistics proposed by William Labov because of its salient application for the analysis of language use by people in different socio-cultural contexts and domains. The study examines various forms of gendered language such as: generic masculine, gender-biased phrases, gender representation and visibility, 'male first' pattern of mentioning names etc. and alternative inclusive usage patterns are suggested. The analysis reveals a robust positive relationship between inclusive, stereotype free language and gender equality while the prevalence of gender-biased words in communication is negatively correlated with disrespect and gender inequality. The paper concludes by emphasizing the importance of objective and inclusive language use through the use of words and phrases devoid of bias in order to achieve gender equity in communication. This research extends the perspective on gendered language and contributes to a deeper understanding of the subject.

Key words: gendered language, variationist socio-linguistics, gender stereotype, communication

Introduction

Language has historically reflected societal norms and power structures which are mostly dominated by men consequently, gender-related words were developed and the masculine forms typically used as default. Gendered language are words and expressions that describe masculine and feminine forms in English. They sometimes show prejudice towards a particular gender and are used consciously or unconsciously in spoken and written communication. They express discriminatory usage patterns and reflect gender bias or stereotype in everyday communication. Deborah Cameron (1998) described gendered language as: 'ways in which language reflects and reproduces ideas about the gendered nature of the social world, reinforcing distinctions between masculinity and femininity.' Janet Holmes and Miriam Meyerhoff (2003) claimed that gendered language is the linguistic practices that are socially associated with women and men, including lexical choices, grammatical structures, and conversational styles that contribute to gender identity construction." Implicit in the above definitions are the following facts: one, there is an interplay between language use and social construction of gender; two, gendered language is a linguistic practice that shows distinction between masculine and feminine forms.

The subject of gendered language has generated an explosion of interest particularly in feminist linguistics and socio-linguistics where researchers examine how language both shapes and reflects our reality. Numerous notable feminist linguists such as: Deborah Cameron, Dale Spender, Mary Haas among others have substantially contributed to the body of scholarship in this field. They have explored the nexus between language and gender, interrogating how language reflects societal attitudes towards women. Indeed, when we examine how language is used in our real world, we should have an awareness of how our society is overtly gendered. Lakoff (1973) observed how language has been used to emphasize women's marginalization by assigning certain use of language as more appropriate for women. Coates (1986) remarked that language became an arena for gender struggle as men use it to reproduce the patriarchal hierarchies. Tannen (2004) argued that hierarchy is maintained in conversations, where women seemed to have internalized their inferior positions in the society and voluntarily assume the supportive position to be socially acceptable. Coates, (2004) observed that until relatively recently, men were automatically seen as at the heart of society, with women being peripheral or even invisible. Dale Spender (1980:21) remarked: 'language has been historically shaped by men, for men, and this male bias in language helps perpetuate male dominance.' There is obviously a gender imbalance in English which is glaringly tilted in favour of men.

Gendered language often serves as a mirror of societal norms and several factors such as; cultural influence, psychological trait and socio-linguistic peculiarities precipitate it. Deborah Tannen (1990) observed that men and women are socialized into different 'genderlects'- gender-specific ways of speaking – which reflect broader cultural values. Men's language is often associated with status and independence, while women's language tends to emphasize connection and community. This linguistic practice tends to promote gender rankings therefore, language users should be mindful of how their communications may include or exclude people based on gender. It is important to use inclusive language by choosing appropriate lexical choices that are not discriminatory in our communication and an awareness of this usage pattern is crucial for changing the entrenched language bias in English. This is a study of gender-related words in English with the aim of interrogating how language reflects and constructs gender realities. This is crucial in order to reveal how language shapes our socio-cultural experiences and reflects societal attitudes towards women. It highlights various forms of gendered language such as: generic masculine, gender-biased phrases, gender representation and visibility, 'male first' pattern of mentioning names and provides insights and suggestions on alternative inclusive usage.

The core objectives that guided this research are: (i) to analyse the presence and functions of gendered language in English across formal and informal contexts, (ii) to highlight various forms of gendered language used in communication, (iii) to evaluate recent shifts toward gender-neutral language and their sociolinguistic significance, (iv) to provide insights and suggestions on using language more inclusively and respectfully. This research is thus organized to first provide a background to the study, then a review of extant studies, methodology and theoretical framework, presentation and analysis of data, discussion and conclusion. The study is significant because it

contributes to a deeper understanding of how gendered language affects our communication and perception across contexts and domains.

Methodology

The study employed a descriptive qualitative approach and the data corpus were examined to reveal the stereotyped concepts of gender. Data were gathered from various sources such as; interviews, online discussions, journal articles, essays, newspaper and magazine features which spanned one decade – between 2014 and 2024. They were communications of professionals from diverse backgrounds such as; academia, journalism, politics, civil service etc. in both formal and informal contexts. Their linguistic features such as word choices, generic masculine, gender-biased phrases, gender representation and visibility etc. were described, analysed and alternative inclusive usage patterns suggested. In addition, structured interviews and online surveys were conducted to gather perspectives from participants regarding gendered language. The survey comprised demographic and stereotype questionnaires; the demographic category focused on the age, sex, educational attainment and occupation of respondents while the stereotype variety has series of statements on gendered language and requested the respondents to indicate their agreement or disagreement on a 4-point basis.

Language, Gender and Sex

Language, more than anything else, distinguishes human beings from the rest of the animal world. Humans have also been described as tool-making animals; but language itself is the most remarkable tool that they have invented, and is the one that makes most of the others possible (Barber, Beal, & Shaw, 2009). Language is a vital aspect of human communication and a tool for constructing our experiential reality. It reflects societal norms and power structures which are mostly dominated by men consequently, gender-related words were developed and the masculine forms typically used as default. (Hussey et al., 2015) opined that language is not a neutral or objective medium; it is influenced by various social and cultural factors that shape our worldviews and values. One of these factors is gender, a social construct defining the roles, behaviours, and expectations of men and women in society. Gender also affects how we use and understand language and how language affects us (Doughman & Khreich, 2022).

In order to examine gender bias in language, a crucial starting point is to distinguish between the terms: gender and sex. By sex, we mean the biological traits that show the difference between a boy and a girl which are naturally acquired at birth while gender refers to socially constructed characteristics and functions expected from boys or girls and men or women. In other words, gender refers to the behavioural traits expected from men- masculinity and women- femininity. (UNESCO, 1998:1) claimed: 'sex refers to biological distinction and gender describes those characteristics of men and women that are socially determined.' Judith Butler (1990) argued that gender is not something one is, but something one does - repeatedly - through speech and behavior. (Butler, 2006; Probosiwi, 2015) opined that sex is acquired naturally once

an individual was born based on sexual characteristics. It is assigned at birth and generally identified as male and female. However, gender is acquired as the result of social construction influenced by culture, norms and society, categorized as feminine and masculine. In sum, while sex is typically biological and naturally determined at birth, gender is the socially constructed expectation of masculinity (maleness) and femininity (femaleness) which are usually influenced by culture, social norms and power structures. For example, some occupations and roles were traditionally perceived to befit men such as; soldier, security officer, chief executive officer while some others are seen to befit women such as; nurse, secretary, cook etc. All of this reveals traditional gender construct and societal attitude towards men and women.

Literature Review

Gendered language is a subject of considerable scholarly interest due to its significant implications in spoken and written communication, consequently, there is a fairly large literature on it. Kutateladze, Maia (2015) presented a linguistic approach towards gender and attempted to explain gender categories in language. It defined gender sensitive language and illustrated its importance in communication especially business writing. In addition, it examined the reasons for gender sensitive language and delved into the history of gender bias. Doughman et al. (2021) studied the identification and mitigation of gender bias in English text by developing a comprehensive taxonomy that relies on the following gender bias types: Generic Pronouns, Sexism, Occupational Bias, Exclusionary Bias, and Semantics. They also provided a bottom-up overview of gender bias, from its societal origin to its spillover onto language. Conclusively, they linked the societal implications of gender bias to their corresponding types.

Lomotey, Benedicta, Adokarley (2019) analysed the role of proverbs in the sustenance of gender violence within the Spanish context. As demonstrated by feminist linguistic activities, one of the avenues through which the status quo of both men and women are enacted and sustained is through language. They researched the complex nature of the relationship between gender, language and the role of discourse on gender relations. This interconnection was investigated using a multidimensional approach which included insights from Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) theory of metaphor and Austin's (1965) Speech Act theory. The study revealed that quite a number of Spanish proverbs contain violent metaphors that can unconsciously shape speakers' perceptions and actions. It concluded by recommending that misogynous ideologies in Spanish proverbs should be exposed, criticised and eliminated through 'conscientization' in order to sustain the campaign for gender equality. Jahan (2021) examined the impact of gendered language on communication and perception in various contexts and domains. The research used a mixed-methods methodology, using both an online survey and an online experiment. The poll assessed the explicit stereotypes held by respondents regarding gendered language and communication in various contexts. It further examined the impact of gendered language on communication and perception among speakers and listeners. It employed a matched guise technique to change the voice quality of a simulated partner in a computer-mediated discussion. The research revealed that the participants exhibited varying

degrees of stereotypes regarding gendered language and communication, ranging from moderate to strong. The findings provided partial support for the idea that gendered language substantially impacts the communication and perception of both speakers and listeners.

Riggins and Sladek (2024) examined how writing studies scholarship has responded to changes in society's understanding of gender. Journal issues published from 1970 -2020 were examined using corpus linguistics model to track changes in the usage of gendered versus gender-neutral nouns and pronouns with generic referents. The findings revealed that patterns of noun usage in writing studies journals over time had an overall preference for gender-neutral language and a reduction in masculine-coded nouns across several journals. Suwastini, Wiraningsih & Adnyani (2023) studied how gender constructs could be disseminated through language using English textbooks to analyse the concept. The study employed a descriptive qualitative approach and examined the dialogues and monologues in the textbook to reveal the stereotyped concepts of gender. Perspectives of language and gender from Lakoff and Coates were used as theoretical cleavages. The result of the study revealed that the textbook is replete with gendered language stereotypes in the use of lexical hedges and fillers, empty adjectives, intensifier along with male domination in the conversation, 'Male firstness' pattern of mentioning names, choice of topics and focus of the conversation.

MacArthur, Cundiff and Mehl (2020) utilized recordings sampled from undergraduates' daily conversations to investigate two forms of gender bias: paternalism through use of the infantilizing label girl to refer to women and androcentrism through a tendency to use more masculine (e.g., man, guy) than feminine (e.g., girl, woman) labels in everyday speech. U.S. participants (n = 175) wore the Electronically Activated Recorder (EAR), a device that recorded sound samples from their environments for 30 seconds every 12.5 minutes, for up to 4 days. Verbatim transcripts were then analysed for instances of commonly used labels for females and males (e.g., girl, woman, boy, man). The results indicated that the label girl surpassed all other labels for women, as well as boy labels for men. Evidence of a masculine-label bias was also found because participants used masculine labels more frequently than feminine labels. These findings indicate the need for future research to investigate the potential consequences of infantilizing and androcentric language as well as the need for professionals from all walks of life to be mindful of how their speech may include, exclude, or infantilize people based on gender.

The present study is different from earlier scholarship because it contributes to a deeper understanding of how gendered language affects our communication and extends the perspective by using the theory of variationist socio-linguistics proposed by William Labov, thus making a valuable contribution to the existing body of literature on the subject.

Theoretical Framework

Sociolinguistics primarily studies the nexus between language and society and how they have an effect on each other. It is concerned with the use of language by people

in different socio-cultural contexts and domains. (Nasution et al., 2023) claimed that sociolinguistics examines how people use language in everyday situations and how various sociocultural elements like culture, norms, and environment affect language usage. Georgieva (2014, p. 4) opined that sociolinguistics is the study of language in relation to society. Language is utilized in diverse ways by people in different situations to facilitate communication among one another.

The linguistic theory that drives this research is variationist sociolinguistics; an approach proposed by William Labov, an American linguist, widely regarded as the pioneering scholar of the model. It primarily focuses on the working of language among people of diverse backgrounds through the conscious or unconscious lexical choices they use in expressing themselves and why they choose those words. Specifically, variationist sociolinguistics studies the linguistic patterns of change and the factors of social variations that affect how people of different genders express themselves in diverse socio-cultural contexts. In the context of gendered language, sociolinguistic variations explains how language use reflects gender roles and shapes social perception thereby contributing to a better understanding of gender. It explores how the linguistic practices, usage patterns, expressive styles and communication strategies are influenced by gender in different socio-cultural settings. (Daba, 2017) claimed that a major concern of the variationist model is the analysis of how language use differs across genders thereby affecting vocabulary choices, sentence structures and conversational styles. It explains the linguistic patterns and variations in how men and women express themselves. (Mashiri, 2019) observed that socio-linguistic variations explores the interconnection of gender with other sociocultural factors such as age, ethnicity, socio-economic status and geographical location thereby revealing how language practices are shaped by multiple identities and social contexts. Brown and Gilman (2016) submitted that sociolinguistics research on gender involves analysing how linguistic choices can either reinforce traditional gender stereotypes or challenge societal norms. Research has shown that language can be gender-biased; however, little research has investigated the prevalence of this bias in everyday communication using socio-linguistic theory. This study, therefore, explicates the sociolinguistic variations tied to gendered language in order to have a deeper understanding of how they are used in different linguistic contexts.

Data Presentation

In this section, a taxonomy of gendered language is presented and grouped into: gendered language in descriptions, generic masculines, gender-biased phrases, 'male first' pattern of mentioning names, proverbs, gender representation and visibility.

a) Gendered Language in Descriptions

A content analysis of the educational materials and media texts used in this study reveal that men and women are described differently using gender-biased words. In many cases, men are portrayed with positive attributes such as: strong, decisive, critical, strategic etc. while women are portrayed more often with negative qualities such as: weak, emotional, indecisive etc. Written text is a veritable medium to

disseminate gendered language and reveal traditional gender construct and societal attitude towards women. The table below shows how men and women are described in some of the media texts used for this study and a remark of ‘positive’ or ‘negative’ is inserted in front of each of the lexical choices to indicate its contextual interpretation.

Table showing descriptions of men and women in the texts

<i>S/ N</i>	<i>MEN</i>	<i>Remark</i>	<i>WOMEN</i>	<i>Remark</i>
1.	rational	positive	emotional, impulsive	negative
2.	decisive	positive	indecisive	negative
3.	detached, unfeeling	negative	caring, loving	positive
4.	assertive	positive	diplomatic	positive
5.	Firm	positive	weak, soft	negative
6.	tough	positive	permissive	negative
7.	courageous	positive	timid	negative
8.	strong	positive	fragile	negative

b) Use of Generic Masculine

This a linguistic practice that allows one word, which is typically masculine, to be used to describe two genders. It projects the man and sidelines female gender, thereby promoting male as default usage. In this regard, women are described as men and subsumed under the male gender; for example, the expression; ‘every man for himself’ refers to both male and female. Even though ‘woman’ is not mentioned in the phrase; it is implied. ‘Each pupil must submit *his* assignment,’ ‘Everyone must carry *his* cross’ – the pronoun ‘his’ is used for the two genders. The generic ‘he/ his’ are used as referents to nouns of no specific gender. In business letter writing, the salutation ‘Dear sir’ is popularly used even when the recipient is a woman. This usage pattern undermines women and reinforces the idea that men are the standard while women are the exception. The table below presents a list of generic masculine words and the suggested inclusive alternative choices.

<i>Generic Masculine</i>	<i>Inclusive Alternative Words</i>
forefathers	ancestors, forebears
founding fathers	Founders
spokesman	spokes person
brotherhood	Solidarity
man made	artificial, manufactured
manpower	human resources, workforce
postman	mail carrier
foreman	supervisor
weatherman	meteorologist
cameraman	camera operator

congressman	member of congress, legislator
insurance man	insurance agent
Clergyman	clergy, priest
anchorman	anchor
Salesman	sales person
businessman	business person, business owner
Chairman	chairperson
security man	security officer
Policeman	policeman officer
Mankind	human being

c) Gender-biased Phrases

These are expressions that exclude women and make men the focus; they are consciously or unconsciously constructed in a way which suggests that a typical human being is male therefore, masculine nouns and pronouns are used to refer to the two genders. (Bodine, 1975) remarked: “human beings were to be considered male unless proven otherwise.” This usage pattern relegates women and has underlying stereotypical tendency. However, there are a few instances where conventional lexical choices foreground women for example; ‘maiden speech’ (inaugural speech), *‘ladies and gentlemen’* (everyone, distinguished guests).

<i>Gender-biased Phrases</i>	Inclusive alternative usage
<i>The best man for the job</i>	The best person for the job
man up	be bold, take responsibility
man-made	artificial, manufactured
man enough	strong enough
man the front desk	operate / run the front desk
no-man’s land	neutral zone
master plan	comprehensive plan
man-hours	staff hours, productive time
man the goalpost	be the goalkeeper
Workmanship	skill
founding father	originator, inventor

d) ‘Male first’ pattern of mentioning names

This is the linguistic practice of mentioning names or titles of men first particularly in a paired pattern; male name comes first when referring to a couple. The masculine term or title usually precedes the feminine and this usage pattern occurs in formal and informal contexts and it subtly promotes gender stereotypes because it suggests that men are more important than women. In many cases, the first name of the man is mentioned while that of the woman is not; consequently, the woman is relegated to the

background even when she is the senior partner on the list. The examples below will serve as illustration.

Mr. and Mrs. Bola Ahmed Tinubu,
Pastor and Pastor (Mrs.) Enoch Adeboye,
Chief and Chief (Mrs.) John Fabiyi,

Mr. and Professor (Mrs.) Segun Daisi,
Alhaji and Alhaja Lateef Jakande,
Oba and Olori Dayo Mayegun

e) Gender Representation and Visibility

(Pilcher & Whelehan, 2004) observed that gender representation is how images of women or men that depict their lives are represented in public sphere. In other words, it shows societal perception, expectations and attitudes towards men and women. Language is a means through which gender discrimination can be perpetrated as this is shown in the choices of words in spoken and written communication. The written text is an appropriate medium to disseminate or confirm gender stereotype or to deconstruct it. In the data in this study, there is substantial evidence that men are more visible and usually described using active verbs with positive connotation such as; dominates, commands, innovates etc. while women are usually described using lexical choices with negative connotation such as; soft, emotional, delicate, timid etc. Women are thus presented in a less favourable way to display lowly attributes while men display competence and leadership traits. In this regard, there is a subtle promotion of status and power in favour of men and the implication is that these statements can affect women negatively and make them to go into oblivion in mental representation.

f) Proverbs

Proverbs are simple sayings which express wisdom and moral truth usually based on the practical experiences of a people (Akintayo, 2013:31). Owing to their indirectness, proverbs allow a speaker to convey a home truth or say an unpleasant thing in a way that is less offensive (Yusuf, 2004:6). Proverbs in English mirror the society and reflect the people's cultural values and belief system. They show the mode of thinking of the people and serve as moral compass. William Penn, an English writer, once enthused: "The wisdom of nation lies in their proverbs." English language has a rich collection of proverbs but some of them present a source of stereotype against women. The examples below show patent gender prejudice against women.

- 1) A woman and a glass are ever in danger.
- 2) Women are wavering as the wind.
- 3) If the husband be not at home, there is nobody.
- 4) A man of straw is worth of a woman of gold.
- 5) A woman's tongue three inches long can kill a man six feet high
- 6) When you see an old man, sit down and take a lesson; when you see an old woman, throw a stone.

If the idea of equality of men and women is to be respected, these English proverbs should be modernized to be stereotype free. With the passage of time, gender-

biased proverbs in English might go into oblivion under the surge of civilization and modernization.

Conclusion

The study revealed that there is evidence of male domination and numerous gendered language stereotypes such as; generic masculine, gender-biased phrases, 'male first' pattern of mentioning names, stereotyped proverbs, gender representation and visibility in written texts are all glaringly tilted in favour of men. Men are positively projected and over-represented while women are under-acknowledged and are usually described with the less desirable adjectives; consequently, men assume superior position and women supportive roles. The exposure of female students to some of the educational materials, media texts and literature used in this study will certainly have a negative impact on their gender identity and could affect their perception of societal attitude to women. Waxman, (2013) argued that the presence of gender bias in the language used by parents and in school text books causes children to develop sexist perceptions and behaviors towards other children of opposite gender and deepens the problematic outcomes of gender inequalities in society.

Additionally, another indirect implication of gender-biased language is that it affects a person's choice of career because some career paths are perceived to be suitable for men while some only benefit women. On this, Briere and Lanktree (1983) remarked: 'sex-biased wording affects a person's perception of a career's attractiveness'. Consequently, countries that adopt a gendered language tend to have disproportionate labor force participation (Gay et al., 2013). This study underscores that gendered language in English is deeply rooted in societal expectations and cultural values and it can be a tool of subjugation or empowerment depending on how it is used. It is therefore imperative for academics and professionals in all domains to communicate using gender-neutral, inclusive language in order to build equity and respect in society.

References

- Akintayo, A. (2013). Some features of proverbs in Nigerian pidgin. *Papers in English and Linguistics (PEL)* O.A.U., Ile-Ife. Vol. 14, 31-46.
- Akintayo, A. (2010). Is it Nigerian English or linguistic incompetence? *Generalogia*, vol. 1(1), 147-162.
- Barber, C., Beal, J. & Shaw, P. (2009). *The English Language : A Historical Introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bodine, A. (1975). Androcentrism in prescriptive grammar: singular 'they', sex-indefinite 'he', and 'he or she'. *Language in Society*, 4:129 – 146.
- Briere, J. & Lanktree, C. (1983). Sex-role related effects of sex bias in language. *Sex Roles*, 9(5):625–632.
- Butler, Judith (2006). *Gender Trouble*. New York: Routledge.
- Butler, J. (1990) *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. N.Y. Routledge

- Coates, Jennifer (2004). *Women, Men and Language: A Socio-linguistic Account of Gender Differences in Language*. (3rd edition). Harlow, England: Pearson Educational Ltd.
- Coates, J. (1986). *Women, Men and Language: A Socio-linguistic Account of Sex Differences in Language*. London & New-York: Longman.
- Daba, H. A. (2017). Sociolinguistic study of address terms in Hausa. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, Madison.
- Deborah Cameron (1998). Gender, language, and discourse: a review essay. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*. Vol. 23(4)
- Doughman, Khreich, El Gharib, Wiss & Berjawi (2021). Gender bias in text: origin, taxonomy and implications. *Proceedings of the 3rd Workshop on Gender Bias in Natural Language Processing*. pp. 34–44
- Doughman, J, & Khreich, W. (eds), (2022). *Gender Bias in Text: Labeled Datasets and Lexicons*
<https://www.scirp.org/reference/referencespapers> Accessed: 5th March, 2025
- European Institute for Gender Equality (2019). *Gender-sensitive Communication*. Accessed from: [https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/gender-sensitive-comm./](https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/gender-sensitive-comm/) 2nd March 2025
- Gay, Santacreu-Vasut & Shoham. (2013). The grammatical origins of gender roles. Berkeley Economic History Laboratory Working Paper, 3.
- Georgieva, M. (2014). *Introducing Sociolinguistics*. St. Kliment Ohridski: University of Sofia.
- Hellinger, M. & Bussmann, H. (eds), (2001). *Gender Across Languages. The Linguistic Representation of Women and Men* (Vol. 1). Amsterdam: John Benjamin Publishing Co.
- Hussey, Thompson, McEnteggart, Barnes-Holmes D., & Barnes-Holmes Y. (2015). Interpreting and inverting with less cursing. *Journal of Contextual Behavioural Science*. www.elsevier.com/locate/jcbs Accessed: 2nd February, 2025
- Jahan, I., (2021). The Impact of gendered language on our communication and perception across contexts and domains. *Journal of Lang. & Ling. Studies*, 17(4), 3523–3534; 2021.
- Holmes, J. & Meyerhoff, M. (2003). *The Handbook of Language and Gender*. Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Janet A Sniezek & Christine H Jazwinski. (1986). Gender bias in English: In search of fair language. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 16(7):642–662.
- Briere, J. & Lanktree, C. (1983). Sex-role related effects of sex bias in language. *Sex Roles*, 9(5):625–632.
- Kramarae, C., Treicher, P. A, & Russo, A. (1985). *A Feminist Dictionary*. London: Pandora Press
- Kutateladze, Maia (2015). Importance of Gender-sensitive language and some guidelines for business writing Journal. *Humanities*, Volume 4, Issue 1
- Labov, W. (2022). *Sociolinguistics Patterns*. University of Pennsylvania Press, USA
- Labov, W. (1972) *Language in the Inner City*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

- Lakoff, R. (1973). Language and woman's place. *Language in Society*, 2(1), 45–80. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.2307/4166707> 12 March 2025
- Lera Boroditsky. (2011). How language shapes thought. *Scientific American*, 304(2):62–65.
- Lomotey, Benedicta Adokarley (2019). Women, metaphors and the legitimisation of gender bias in Spanish proverbs. *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 20(2), 324-339. Accessed: <https://vc.bridgew.edu/jiws/vol20/iss2/22> 5th March 2025
- Mashiri. P. (2019). Terms of address in Shona: A sociolinguistic approach. Accessed from: [http://archive.lib.M.S.Uedu/DMC/African %20Journals/pdfs/Journals%20of %20 Zimbabwe /vo/ 26nl/Juz 026001007pdf](http://archive.lib.M.S.Uedu/DMC/African%20Journals/pdfs/Journals%20of%20Zimbabwe/vo/26nl/Juz026001007pdf) Accessed: 20th January 2025
- MacArthur, Cundiff & Mehl (2020). Estimating the prevalence of gender-biased language in undergraduates' everyday speech. *Sex Roles* 82,(4) DOI:10.1007/s11199-19-01033-z Retrieved from: <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/288175818.pdf> 15th Dec. 2024
- Millett, K. (2000). *Sexual politics. Feminist Literary Criticism*. Urban and Chicago: University of Illinois Press. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315846163> 15th Dec. 2024
- Nasution, T., Herman, H., Resmi, R., Saragih, R., Sabata, Y. N., and Saputra, N. (2023). Character values in the oral tradition of folk songs from Dairi. *Studies in Media and Communication*, 11(5), pp. 10-17. <https://doi.org/10.11114/smc.v11i5.60> 2nd Feb. 2025
- Pilcher, J., & Whelehan, I. (2004). *50 Key Concepts in Gender Studies. Encyclopedia of Violence, Peace, and Conflict*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-012373985-8.00071-4> 1st March 2025
- Probosiwi, R. (2015). Perempuan dan Perannya dalam Pembangunan Kesejahteraan Sosial. *Jurnal Natapraja*, 3(1), 41–72.
- Riggins and Sladek (2024). A historical perspective on gendered language in writing studies journals in *ATD*, Vol. 21, (2/3)
- Shrestha, Mangala (2004). Gender issues in community forestry in Nepal sustainable development, *Nepalese Journal of Development and Rural Studies*, Vol. 1 (1): 53-58
- Spencer, Dale (1980). *Man Made Language*. (2nd edition) London: Pandora Press.
- Suwastini, Wiraningsih & Adnyani (2023) Representation of gendered language in English textbook for Indonesian junior high school. *International Journal of Language Education Volume 7, No 1*, pp. 94-119
- Tannen, D. (2004). *Communication Matters I: He Said, She Said Women, Men and Language*. Retrieved: 3rd Feb 2025 <http://www.learnloud.com/Catalog/Social-Sci/Gender-Studies/>
- Umar, Ahmed (2018) Metaphor in the construction of gender in media discourse: analysis of metaphors used to describe women in Nigerian newspapers. *International Journal of Gender and Women's Studies* Vol. 6, No. 1, pp. 88-99
- UNESCO (1998). *Gender Sensitivity. Modules 5*, Zambia.

- Yusuf, Y. (2004) Linguistic sources of euphemism. *IBADAN, JOES* Vol.1, Ibadan: Gold Press Ltd
- Waxman, Sandra (2013). Building a better bridge. Navigating the social world: What infants, children, and other species can teach us, pp. 292–296.