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## GENDER-DISTINGUISHING LEXEMAS

Ismoilova Dilrabo Muhammad qizi

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### Abstract

This article investigates gender-differentiated lexemes in the Uzbek language within the framework of sociolinguistics and gender linguistics. The study examines how lexical items reflect and reinforce gender distinctions in social, cultural, and communicative contexts. It emphasizes that language serves as both a mirror and a mechanism of gender perception, encoding societal attitudes, roles, and stereotypes. Through comparative, semantic, and pragmatic analyses, the research identifies linguistic markers that convey gender differentiation, explores their etymological roots, and evaluates their transformations in modern usage. The findings reveal that gender-differentiated lexemes not only shape linguistic expression but also influence the construction of gender identity and the reproduction of cultural norms in discourse.

**Keywords:** Gender linguistics, gender-differentiated lexemes, sociolinguistics, lexical semantics, gender stereotypes, language and culture, discourse analysis, Uzbek language.

### Introduction

The relationship between language and gender has become one of the central themes in modern linguistics, reflecting broader social and cultural dynamics. As a social phenomenon, language encodes gender distinctions through vocabulary, grammatical categories, and discourse practices. Gender-differentiated lexemes—words and expressions that convey gender-specific meaning—serve as a linguistic reflection of society's perception of masculinity and femininity.

In the context of the Uzbek language, such lexemes are deeply intertwined with national traditions, cultural values, and historical notions of gender roles. While some gender distinctions are grammatical (e.g., gendered nouns and pronouns), many are lexical and pragmatic, arising from cultural associations embedded in



linguistic usage. The study of gender-differentiated lexemes is therefore crucial for understanding how language both mirrors and perpetuates gender ideology. The purpose of this research is to identify, classify, and analyze lexemes that display gender differentiation in Uzbek, exploring their semantic, cultural, and pragmatic functions. By situating the analysis within the broader framework of gender linguistics, the study contributes to understanding how linguistic structures participate in shaping gendered social reality.

### **Literature Review**

Gender linguistics as an independent field began to take shape in the 1970s with the works of R. Lakoff (“Language and Woman’s Place”, 1975), D. Tannen (“You Just Don’t Understand”, 1990), and D. Cameron (1992), who explored how language both constructs and reflects gender identity. Later research expanded to sociolinguistic and cognitive approaches (Holmes, 1995; Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2003), emphasizing that gendered speech is contextually and culturally variable.

In Uzbek linguistics, gender differentiation has been examined within sociolinguistic and cultural frameworks by scholars such as N. Mahmudova, M. Hakimov, and S. Zokirova, who noted that Uzbek lexicon contains numerous gender-marked words reflecting traditional social hierarchies and cultural perceptions. For instance, lexemes like o‘g‘il (son) and qiz (daughter) serve not only as biological markers but also carry socio-pragmatic meanings tied to honor, responsibility, and family status.

Previous studies have classified gender-differentiated vocabulary into:

1. Biological lexemes – directly referring to sex-based differences (ona, ota, erkak, ayol).
2. Social-role lexemes – denoting culturally defined functions (kelin, buvijon, domla, rais).
3. Evaluative lexemes – containing implicit gendered connotations (nazokatli, mard, ojiz, sergap).

However, there remains a need for systematic semantic-pragmatic analysis of these lexemes, particularly their metaphorical extensions and evaluative nuances in contemporary discourse.



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## **Method and Methodology**

The research employs a complex methodological framework, integrating the following approaches:

1. Descriptive method – to identify and classify gender-differentiated lexemes in the Uzbek language corpus.
2. Comparative method – to analyze parallels and contrasts between gendered expressions in Uzbek and other languages.
3. Semantic and etymological analysis – to determine the development and transformation of gendered meanings.
4. Pragmatic and discourse analysis – to explore how gendered lexemes function in real communicative contexts and reflect power relations, social attitudes, and cultural norms.

Data were drawn from literary works, media discourse, folklore, and conversational language, allowing for a multi-dimensional view of gendered lexical behavior.

## **Discussion**

The analysis shows that Uzbek gender-differentiated lexemes operate on several semantic and pragmatic levels:

1. Denotative differentiation – words directly naming male and female referents (erkak – ayol, o‘g‘il – qiz).
2. Connotative differentiation – lexemes that carry gender-specific evaluative tones (mard – ‘brave’ as a masculine trait; iffatli – ‘modest’ as a feminine ideal).
3. Metaphorical differentiation – expressions where gendered attributes are symbolically projected (bo‘riday jasur – “as brave as a wolf”; oyday go‘zal – “beautiful as the moon”).
4. Sociocultural differentiation – words embedded in cultural and historical traditions (kelin, bek, xotin, bibi), reflecting social stratification and role expectations.

The study also observes that modern Uzbek discourse exhibits gradual shifts toward gender-neutral usage, especially in professional and public spheres (o‘qituvchi, rahbar, dekan now used irrespective of gender). However, gender



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stereotypes persist in colloquial and literary registers, indicating that linguistic change lags behind social transformation.

### **The Main Part**

Most of the research devoted to the issues of linguogenderology—one of the newest branches of linguistics—focuses on the lexical level of language. Therefore, in this study, we also found it appropriate to present our reflections on the gender-related characteristics of lexical units. Unlike previous studies, the present work draws attention specifically to the problem of naming lexical units associated with gender phenomena. At the same time, genderolexemes—as linguistic units that denote objects and phenomena of the real world—participate in differentiating concepts associated with men and women. As names for notions belonging to different genders, they serve to elucidate the essence of the problem of differentiation between male and female concepts. Compared to research conducted on other levels of language, studying the lexical level may seem relatively straightforward. However, even at this level, working with lexical units related to the system of genderolexemes depends on the nature of the intended research. In this regard, approaching gender-related issues from a nominative perspective helps to define the essence of the study more precisely. It is well known that “gender is understood as a conventional ideological construct consisting of accumulated perceptions related to male and female culture” [1], and its essence is reflected in the lexical units of a language. For this reason, the meaning of any form of expression is intrinsically linked to the lexical system of the language. The nomination of concepts characteristic of male and female speech serves as the basis for expression and is analyzed as a naming practice that reflects a particular culture. Regardless of what is being named, nominative units represent the culture of the people or speakers to whom the language belongs. As semiotic signs, genderolexemes function to convey various types of information through specific meanings.

This phenomenon can be observed not only in individual lexemes but also in **phraseological units**, **proverbs**, and even **aphorisms** and **maxims**. Each of these lexical and figurative expressions possesses a nominative function, and they are interpreted as lexical, phraseological, or contextual forms of naming. Lexical and



phraseological names serve to designate objects and phenomena on the basis of particular characteristics, while textual or contextual naming units perform a similar function in representing specific processes or events. Their essence is clarified through scientific notions related to the nomination of words and expressions. First and foremost, it is necessary to define the term genderolexeme. Words and expressions exist as emic units in the consciousness of speakers belonging to a particular language community. Genderolexemes, as elements of the linguistic system, also reside in human memory and form a correlative chain of equivalent social-gender values based on specific principles. Since lexical units are linguistic phenomena, they continuously exist in speakers' memory as part of the **inactive layer of language**. Communicants draw upon the fund of inactive genderolexemes—also referred to as lexogenderemes [2]—during communication. As a result, the inactive genderolexeme transitions from the level of language to that of speech, becoming an active genderlectal word. The term genderlect is defined in specialized linguistic dictionaries as “a set of lexical, emotional-expressive, and grammatical features characteristic of the speech of women or men” [3]. This definition captures the essence of how gender differentiation manifests itself in linguistic expression.

In every language, the lexical system comprises units that designate persons, objects, things, and phenomena. Genderolexemes, as lexical elements referring to male and female entities within a society, are preserved in the linguistic consciousness of speakers as part of their mental lexicon. Such genderolexemes include words that directly express concepts associated with male and female genders. Each of these is linked to particular paradigms reflecting age, religion, profession, or type of activity, thus forming a gender-lexical paradigm. These gender-lexical paradigms are initially studied as units belonging to the **onomastic system** of linguistics, where they are grouped according to the rules of nominative function. In linguistic terminology, such a group of words expressing the notions of “man” or “woman” may be referred to as a **gender-linguistic microfield** [4]. According to specialized literature, “the lexical-semantic system of gender-marked nomination includes the names of sociofacts, corpusfacts, and mentifacts, which constitute the group of direct nominations and serve to express types of naming related to the encoding of gender messages. This group is complemented





by naturfacts and artifacts, which represent indirect types of gender-coded nomination. Gender messages have two levels of encoding, represented through the anthropocentric basis of gender associated with male and female concepts. In the semantic verbalization of the male and female naming spectrum, groups of names associated with kinship and marriage-family relations, age and physiological states, religious-mythological entities, and gender nominations attributed to the worlds of animals and plants are identified.” [1]

Building upon these observations, it should be emphasized that in the linguistic consciousness of any given speech community, there exists a set of genderolexemes representing male and female concepts. These can be classified as specific types within the **gender message encoding system**, encompassing:

- **Names expressing social facts**, such as kinship terms (ota-ona, opa-singil, aka-uka, amma-hola, o‘g‘il-qiz, amaki-tog‘a, buva-bobo), which reflect familial relationships;
- **Corpusfacts**, denoting age and physiological conditions (qari qiz, bo‘ydoq, bo‘yqiz, bo‘yiga yetgan, qizaloq, qizcha, bolakay, kelinchak, kampir, chol, og‘iroyoq, homilador, yukli);
- **Mentifacts**, embodying mythological and religious representations differentiated by gender (jodugar, yalmog‘iz, hur, g‘ilmon, pari, farishta, qorabotir);
- **Naturfacts**, expressing gendered animal or natural associations (xo‘roz–makiyon, megajin, qo‘chqor, lochin, sher, ayiqpolvon, ilon, anakonda, tulpor, toychoq, bo‘taloq);
- **Artifacts**, reflecting aesthetically gendered symbols (gul, atirgul, lola).

Such categorization demonstrates the systematic organization of gender-related nominations that encode sociocultural knowledge and conceptual differentiation between male and female domains. In addition to these genderonominational groupings, another microfield is formed by words such as qiz, opa, singil, kelin, kelinchak, ovsin, kundosh, amma, xola, buvi, ona, kampir, qaynana, qaynisingil, qayniopa, yesir, beva, and oqsoch, all denoting concepts related to the **female gender**. Each of these words contains a **primary nominative feature** associated with femininity and serves, in the process of communication, to indicate the speaker’s or referent’s gender identity. At this point, it is important to examine



the **etymological origins** of the words xotun and xund, which denote the female gender. During the period of the **Mamluk sultans**, women – whether of Mamluk origin or belonging to other social groups – enjoyed a high level of respect. The Mamluks referred to women with reverence, using honorific titles such as xund and xotun. The term xund was originally reserved for the wives of sultans, though in some contexts it was extended to women of high social standing. The word xotun initially denoted “queen” or “princess” but later came to mean “woman” or “lady” in a general sense. In the Uzbek language, the modern form xotin functions as the standard term for “woman” [5].

According to the **Explanatory Dictionary of the Uzbek Language**, xotin is defined as follows:

1. A human being of the female sex, biologically opposed to the male, possessing the ability to bear and nurse children; woman.  
– Bozorqul’s mother was a very beautiful woman. (A. Muhtor, Chinor).  
– “You are approaching twenty-five,” said his mother. “When a woman reaches thirty, she dries up like firewood.” (O‘. Hoshimov, Qalbingga quloq sol).
2. A woman married to a particular man; a wife.  
– “A husband and wife’s quarrel dries as quickly as a kerchief.” (Proverb). [5]

From the above discussion, it becomes clear that the **denotative meaning** of the word xotin (“woman, wife”) represents a concept pertaining to the female gender; however, as an individual **nominative unit**, it functions as a **dominant lexeme** applied specifically to women. In this respect, it must be emphasized that within the previously mentioned female microfield, the word xotin occupies a **dominant position**, serving as the central semantic marker around which other meanings are organized.

This lexical dominance implies that xotin forms the **core semantic nucleus** within the microfield of feminine vocabulary, providing the basis for the derivation and motivation of other genderolexemes formed on the foundation of the female seme. Lexemes such as ona (“mother”) in relation to a child, kelin (“bride/daughter-in-law”) in relation to the husband’s relatives, and kundosh (“co-wife”) in relation to the husband’s other wife(s) are all **secondary nominative derivatives** motivated by the female seme realized in xotin.



Therefore, the secondary nominative features of genderolexemes belonging to the female microfield are distinguished within the paradigm of these lexical units according to the **social functions** of the words. In particular, every nominative unit expressing the concept of womanhood reflects the speaker's perception of social and religious status, functioning through a **secondary nominative meaning** relative to the general female seme.

Hence, there exists both the **word** ayol ("woman") and the \*seme of womanhood embedded in the structure of other lexemes. Although the female seme participates in the semantic composition of all such words, each retains an independent lexical identity as a linguistic unit containing the female seme. These words, therefore, cannot be regarded as synonyms of ayol, as their inclusion within a single microfield is not due to synonymy, but rather to their shared **gender seme** – the semantic feature denoting femaleness – or to their association with entities belonging to the female domain. For this reason, words expressing paradigms of femininity such as qiz ("girl"), ovsin ("sister-in-law"), kelin ("bride/daughter-in-law"), and kundosh ("co-wife") are all **motivated by secondary nomination**, derived from the primary female seme. For instance, the lexeme kundosh is semantically motivated by the conceptual relation between multiple wives of the same man. The dictionary meaning of kundosh is defined as "a woman who shares the same husband with another; one of several wives of a single man" [6].

For example:

Olimbek Dodkho's eight wives gathered in the house of the senior co-wife, Nodirmohbegim, sitting together around the brazier. Every evening after the tarawih prayer, the Dodkho used to stay in the mosque circle, but that night he returned early. Everyone stirred: one of the wives took his turban, another reached for his cloak, while yet another began pulling at his shoes. The youngest of the co-wives – Unsinoy from Ganjiravon, who had joined the household only five months earlier – offered him a pipe of tobacco. Dodkho took a single, deep puff, then, ignoring his wives holding the hookah, went to the corner, slightly opened the window, and looked out. The wind howled like a hungry wolf, then hissed and moaned like a cat in a death grip. Nothing – nothing – could be seen. (A. Qahhor, "Dahshat")





This literary illustration captures not only the **semantic structure** of kundosh but also its **pragmatic implications** within Uzbek cultural and gender discourse, where the coexistence of multiple female figures in relation to one male subject encodes specific social and emotional meanings within the lexical and narrative system. The word kanizak (“maidservant”) also contains the female seme, and in the **Explanatory Dictionary of the Uzbek Language**, it is defined as follows:

Kanizak [servant, maid, female attendant]

1. A captive woman, a female slave. – “Now you will give me a few servants, a kaniz, and some household utensils.” (Latifalar).
2. A female attendant in the palace of a khan, emir, or other ruler. – “It is said that the poet had an affair with one of the kaniz in the harem.” (A. Qodiri, Mehrobdan chayon) [6].

Thus, it can be concluded that any word whose **primary nomination** represents the concept of woman acquires its **secondary nominative feature** according to the **social status** of the speakers within that linguistic community. In this way, the word receives its specific social or cultural designation. The paradigm of words belonging to the female seme microfield is differentiated in the linguistic consciousness of speakers based on existing naming features, and in the language system these appear as **denotative names** representing specific concepts. Simultaneously, as members of the microfield associated with the female seme, these words constitute a distinct **category of genderolexemes**. Similarly, words expressing the concept of the male gender form their own microfield based on the male seme. The lexical units belonging to this microfield include o‘g‘il (“son”), bola (“child/boy”), yigit (“young man”), er (“husband”), aka (“elder brother”), uka (“younger brother”), tog‘a (“maternal uncle”), amaki (“paternal uncle”), dada (“father”), bobo (“grandfather”), chol (“old man”), qaynata (“father-in-law”), qaynag‘a (“husband’s elder brother”), qayniuka (“younger brother-in-law”), pochcha (“sister’s husband”), kuyov (“son-in-law”), beva (“widower”), og‘a (“senior male figure”), and ini (“younger male sibling”).

The words belonging to this male microfield also emerge as denotative names differentiated in relation to the **social position** of the referent. According to the **theory of nomination**, words expressing the male seme represent primary nomination, since they directly denote the male gender concept. Primary



nomination refers to the process of naming based on **denotative meaning**, which distinguishes one concept from another in the linguistic consciousness of speakers. Every word, as a linguistic sign, exists as the **name of a specific entity**, reflecting the essence of its **denotatum**. At the same time, certain correlative concepts that share the male seme may additionally express **age** or **social meaning** components. For example, words such as oqsoqol (“elder”), imom (“imam”), mutavalli (“trustee of a mosque”), so‘fi (“dervish”), bo‘ydoq (“bachelor”), and kuyov (“groom/son-in-law”) all possess semantic structures formed on the basis of the male seme while also incorporating meanings related to age and social role. This property characterizes all genderolexemes belonging to the male microfield, where each word’s motivation derives from the referent’s **social function or status**. Accordingly, such lexemes are interpreted within the framework of primary nomination. In contrast, **secondary nomination** refers to cases where the name of an existing entity, object, or phenomenon is transferred to another entity through metaphorical or associative usage. For instance, the words qumri (“dove”) and qo‘chqor (“ram”) – originally denoting birds and animals – form secondary nominations when applied metaphorically to human referents. The word qo‘chqor, denoting the male sheep, belongs to the category of primary nomination; yet, when used metaphorically to describe a person, it represents a secondary nomination. In both cases, however, the **gender seme** remains present, marking the masculine quality associated with the referent.

For example:

Alomat: (odob bilan) Assalomu alaykum.

Qo‘chqor: (qo‘rqa-pisa). Va... Vaalay...

Olimjon: Sening isming--Alomat. Tushundingmi?

Alomat: Tushundim. Mening ismim—Alomat.

Olimjon. Bu kishi—Qo‘chqor aka.

Qo‘chqor(arang jilmayib). Shundoq, shundoq...

Alomat. Qo‘chqor aka.

Qo‘chqor. Labbay?..

Alomat. Ko‘nglingizga kelmasin-u, nega sizga hayvonning nomini qo‘yishgan, “qo‘chqor” deb?

Qo‘chqor (Olimjonga). Iye?..



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Alomat. Qo‘chqor—qo‘yning erkagi-ku.

Qo‘chqor. Haligi... nima deydi... Ha endi, biz odamning erkagimiz-da,  
Alomatxon...

Alomat. Menga nima xizmat bor, odamning erkagi?

Olimjon. Alomat, “Qo‘chqor aka” de, “Qo‘chqor a-ka”. Tushundingmi?

Alomat. Tushundim. Xo‘sh, nima xizmat bor? Qo‘chqor aka?  
(Sh.Boshbekov “Temir xotin”)

In expressions such as “Qo‘chqor qo‘yning erkagi-ku” (“A ram is the male of the sheep”), one observes a **gendered mode of linguistic reasoning**, where the culturally embedded explanation of a **genderolexeme** like qo‘chqor (“ram”) reflects a specifically gender-oriented interpretation characteristic of the language community’s worldview. The class of words belonging to the **microfield of genderolexemes** can be categorized according to various linguistic and conceptual principles. For example, when analyzed based on the **principle of gender symmetry**, genderolexemes such as bo‘yiga yetmoq (“to reach maturity”) and bo‘ydoq (“bachelor”), kelin (“bride”) and kuyov (“groom”), qiz (“girl”) and o‘g‘il (“boy”), uylanmoq (“to marry” for men) and turmushga chiqmoq (“to marry” for women), kampir (“old woman”) and chol (“old man”), er (“husband”) and xotin (“wife”)—as well as beva and tul—are employed to denote the state of being **bereaved** (i.e., a person who has lost a spouse, irrespective of gender). In the **Explanatory Dictionary of the Uzbek Language**, these are defined as follows: Beva - “A woman whose husband has died or who has been divorced; or a man or woman whose spouse has died and who has not remarried; a widower or widow. Beva chol, beva xotin.” [6] Tul – “A widowed man or woman left alone after the death of a spouse; a bereaved or orphaned person.” [6] Juvon - “A young person, human or animal, who has not yet reached middle age. 1. A young married woman. 2. A woman who is divorced or widowed.” [6] These examples illustrate how words within the same microfield of genderolexemes may differ morphologically while sharing semantic features associated with gender identity. Furthermore, **genderolexemes** may exhibit morphological or semantic differentiation according to **evaluative or behavioral traits** traditionally associated with femininity or masculinity. For example, adjectives and epithets such as suluv, go‘zal, chiroyli, nozik, nazokatli, ofatijon,



yengiltak, suyuqoyoq (feminine) and chapani, tanti, botir, shilqim (masculine) are lexically differentiated on the basis of **female and male semes**, serving simultaneously to characterize **gendered qualities** and **behavioral stereotypes** associated with each gender. At the same time, the category of genderolexemes within the **microfields of femininity and masculinity** also includes words denoting **objects and items associated with each gender**. For instance, in the realm of clothing, oppositional pairs such as atlas ko‘ylak (“silk dress”) vs. yaktak (“male tunic”), paranji (“veil”) vs. to‘n (“robe”), ro‘mol (“scarf”) vs. do‘ppi (“skullcap”), and lozim (“woman’s trousers”) vs. shim (“men’s trousers”) exemplify the lexical encoding of gender distinction. These genderolexic paradigms serve as important **empirical evidence** in the linguistic study of gender differentiation within the Uzbek **lexical system**. Likewise, the **names of objects specifically associated with women** constitute a separate gendered lexical group, while these same items remain **lexically lacunar** (i.e., unmarked or absent) within the male lexicon. For example, words denoting **jewelry and adornments** – baldoq (“ring”), uzuk (“signet ring”), sirg‘a (“earring”), bilaguzuk (“bracelet”), tillaqosh (“gold ornament”) – and **cosmetic items** – surma (“kohl”), o‘sma (“eyebrow dye”), hina (“henna”), lak (“nail polish”), tush (“mascara”), g‘oza (“powder puff”) – represent **feminine lexical markers**. These items encode **gender-specific material culture** and reinforce the **gendered structure of lexical categorization** in the Uzbek language.

The **connotative structure of language** functions, on the basis of primary nominative units, as a means of facilitating **interpersonal communicative relations**. These linguistic elements, depending on the speech situation and contextual factors, acquire **contextual and expressive meanings**, thus serving as valuable material for **linguogenderological research**. In the process of communication, such features of language manifest themselves in various **speech acts** that generate subtle shades of meaning and emotional nuances – acts expressing affection, flattery, praise, reproach, cursing, tenderness, rudeness, delicacy, modesty, shyness, immodesty, and frivolity, among others. For instance, words belonging to other grammatical or semantic categories – such as hayo (“modesty, chastity”) and ibo (“bashfulness, decorum”) – originally denote concepts associated predominantly with **women and girls**. Within Uzbek



national culture, qualities such as *iffat* (“virtue”), *hayo* (“modesty”), and *ibo* (“shyness”) are considered essential attributes of femininity, particularly in the speech and behavior of **young women and brides-to-be**. The reflection of these cultural values in linguistic expression occurs through **inactive genderolexemes** – lexical units that are not actively used in general discourse but become activated in specific communicative contexts. At times, such elements diverge from conventional lexical usage and appear as **speech acts**, expressing gender-specific attitudes, social expectations, or emotional nuances. This transformation – from an inactive to an active lexical unit – marks a distinctive feature of **women’s speech and expression within the cultural-linguistic system**. It reflects how **linguistic culture encodes gendered norms and behaviors**, whereby dormant or culturally bound lexemes become communicatively active as indicators of femininity in specific sociocultural settings.

For example,

– Saodat, – dedim. Qaradi. O‘choqda yongan olov issig‘idanmi yoki uyatdanmi uning yuzi qip-qizil olma edi. Qo‘lidagi sochig‘i bilan oldinga yaqin kelib to‘xtadi. – Eshitdingmi, – dedim. Yerga qaradi. Uni ortiqcha uyaltirmas uchun eshikka qarab yuriy boshladim-da, - Maylimi? – deb so‘radim. Javob o‘rniga –Osh yemay ketasizmi? – dedi. Bu uning ikkinchi turlik qilib aytilgan “mayli” javobi edi (A.Qodiriy).

Saodat’s response “Ha,” uttered in a reserved tone to the invitation “Osh yemay ketasizmi?” (“Won’t you stay and eat pilaf?”), exemplifies a cultural pattern characteristic of **Uzbek women’s speech**, in which notions such as *ibo* (“modesty”), *hayo* (“bashfulness”), and *iffat* (“virtue, chastity”) are expressed. These culturally grounded forms of politeness and restraint function as **verbal manifestations of feminine etiquette and behavioral norms** within Uzbek communicative culture.

Genderolexemes such as *ibo*, *hayo*, and *iffat*, when used in literary discourse, are often expressed in **implicit form**, and therefore may appropriately be referred to as **genderpragmemes**. The activation or actualization of genderolexemes in the process of speech occurs, on the one hand, through **lexical means**, and on the other, through **speech acts**. Hence, it becomes essential to distinguish between the concepts of **genderolexeme** and **genderpragmeme**. These represent distinct





categories within the system of **lexical units** and **speech acts**, respectively. Observations reveal that both **language phenomena** and **speech phenomena** occupy a significant place in **genderolinguistic research**, and that **gendered expressions** may emerge either through the use of lexemes or through performative speech acts. This observation indicates that **J. L. Austin's** and **J. R. Searle's speech act theories** serve as a **conceptual and methodological foundation** for the linguogenderological study of language. Therefore, lexical or vocabulary-based units – beyond their denotative meaning – also serve to express **gender or sex-related components** within the semantic structure of the word. In contextual usage, these units display **differentiation between male and female speech**, thereby encoding sociocultural distinctions in linguistic expression. This phenomenon can be observed, for example, in **Arabic loanwords** used in Uzbek such as *kotib / kotiba* (“secretary, male/female”), *muhtaram / muhtarama* (“respected, male/female”), and *shoir / shoira* (“poet, male/female”). In these pairs, in addition to their denotative meanings –writing, creativity, or respect – each word includes a **gender component** that marks **the referent's sex** through morphological differentiation. Such gender-based semantic duality underscores the role of **linguistic morphology and pragmatics** in encoding social perceptions of gender within the Uzbek language. As noted by **F. Mo'sayeva [7]** in her candidate dissertation, these morphological and pragmatic distinctions exemplify how **linguistic gender marking** reflects both **semantic** and **cultural dimensions** of gender expression in Uzbek.

Indeed, emphasizing that the **lexical level of language** is a phenomenon rich in **lexical units**, it may also be asserted that the **names of objects, phenomena, and events in reality** fully reflect the conceptual essence of the notions they denote. From this perspective, in the semantic content of the words *o'g'il* (“boy, son”) and *qiz* (“girl, daughter”), the primary meaning initially contains a **biological gender marker**. Preserving this semantic feature, a wide range of lexical units – such as *qizaloq* (“little girl”), *singil* (“younger sister”), *opa* (“elder sister”), *qiz* (“girl”), *amma* (“paternal aunt”), *xola* (“maternal aunt”), *ona* (“mother”), *aya* (“nursemaid”), *xotin* (“wife, woman”), *juvon* (“young woman”), *zavja* (“spouse”), *ayol* (“woman”), *kelin* (“bride, daughter-in-law”), *ovsin* (“sister-in-law”), *kundosh* (“co-wife”), *buvi* (“grandmother”), *kampir* (“old woman”),



kanizak (“maidservant”), malika (“queen”), marhuma (“deceased woman”), qaynona (“mother-in-law”), yesir (“widow, orphaned woman”), cho‘ri (“servant woman”), and oqsoch (“grey-haired woman”) – represent a **network of hyponyms and hypernyms** expressing the **social differentiation of women** within the linguistic system.

These units, undoubtedly, belong to the system of **inactive lexical items** characteristic of the **lexical stratum of language**, representing **nominative units of the female gender** that encode **social roles and statuses**. In communicative practice, however, **speech interaction** actualizes these lexical items through their **syntagmatic and pragmatic relations**, where the expression of gender and its differentiation becomes evident in the **semantic content of speech acts**. When such lexical units enter the **contextual system** of discourse and acquire specific **contextual semantic components**, they activate diverse shades of meaning associated with gendered expression.

For instance, in men’s speech, this activation may yield **connotations of flattery, verbal aggression, coarseness, or threat**, whereas in women’s speech, it often manifests as **gentleness, refinement, modesty, and shyness**. In certain contexts, however, women’s speech may also convey **negative connotations**, reflecting socially disapproved behavior or breach of cultural norms. Thus, the **differentiation of gender expression** at the lexical level illustrates how language encodes not only biological but also **sociocultural dimensions of gender**, manifesting through active and inactive lexical systems, contextual actualization, and pragmatic meaning formation.

## Conclusion

The study concludes that genderolexemes – lexical units encoding gender differentiation – constitute a distinct nominative and semantic system within the Uzbek language. They reflect the intersection of linguistic structure, cultural ideology, and social experience. The activation of such lexemes in discourse gives rise to genderlects, which embody gender-specific communicative styles and cognitive models.

By examining gender differentiation at the lexical level, linguogenderology provides a deeper understanding of how language constructs and transmits



cultural representations of gender. Future research may extend this analysis to syntax, discourse, and cognitive metaphor to further elucidate the mechanisms of gendered meaning formation in Uzbek and other Turkic languages.

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