

**SPEECH DEFICIENCIES IN BOYS' AND GIRLS' SPEECH:
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS AND REMEDIAL STRATEGIES IN ENGLISH
AND UZBEK**

Shokirova Diloromxon Abduvali qizi

Associate Professor, Andijan State University, Andijan, Uzbekistan

diloromhon0099887700@gmail.com

Abstract

The study of gender-specific speech deficiencies in children offers valuable insights into the interplay between cognitive development, socialization processes, and linguistic performance. Drawing upon a comparative analysis of Uzbek and English data, this paper investigates the distinctive speech shortcomings observed in boys' and girls' language use, highlighting their linguistic, psycholinguistic, and socio-cultural determinants. The paper synthesizes empirical observations with theoretical perspectives from gender linguistics, discourse analysis, and child language acquisition research. Special attention is given to the ways in which these deficiencies manifest in phonetic, lexical-semantic, and pragmatic domains, as well as to effective strategies for remediation. The study demonstrates that speech deficiencies are not merely individual cognitive limitations but are embedded within culturally mediated communicative norms and gender-specific interactional patterns. The proposed remedial approaches emphasize an integrated methodology that accounts for linguistic structure, discourse environment, and socio-emotional context.

Keywords: Gender linguistics Child speech development Speech deficiencies Boys' and girls' language Phonetic variation Lexical-semantic features Pragmatic competence Uzbek language English language Cross-cultural comparison Language socialization Communicative strategies Educational intervention Socio-pragmatic analysis

Introduction: Speech is not only a vehicle for communication but also a primary medium through which children internalize cultural norms, social roles, and self-identity. In the context of gender linguistics, the study of boys' and girls' speech deficiencies reveals how linguistic competence is shaped not merely by biological maturation but also by gender-specific expectations, communicative environments, and interactional practices.

Within Uzbek and English linguistic traditions, differences in male and female speech have been well-documented in adult discourse (Holmes, 2013; Pauwels, 1998), but fewer studies have systematically examined these variations at early stages of language

development. Speech deficiencies—whether in articulation, vocabulary selection, semantic structuring, or pragmatic use—can hinder effective communication and impact academic achievement, social integration, and self-esteem.

Theoretical Framework: Gender linguistics views speech differences as outcomes of socio-cultural conditioning as much as linguistic competence (Lakoff, 1975; Tannen, 1990). In early childhood, these differences manifest in both structural and functional aspects of language. Boys' and girls' speech often diverges in:

- Lexical choice (e.g., emotive vs. instrumental vocabulary)
- Discourse strategies (e.g., collaborative vs. competitive turn-taking)
- Politeness markers and mitigation devices (Brown & Levinson, 1987)

Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory underscores the role of interaction in cognitive-linguistic development. From this perspective, deficiencies are often linked to limited exposure to varied discourse genres, insufficient feedback, or mismatched communicative expectations between adults and children.

While universal developmental milestones exist, the cultural encoding of gender roles means that similar deficiencies may have different root causes or manifestations across languages. For example, an Uzbek girl's limited use of assertive speech acts may reflect cultural politeness norms, whereas in an English context the same absence might signal pragmatic underdevelopment.

Gender-specific speech deficiencies: Empirical data reveal that boys in both Uzbek and English contexts often exhibit:

- Phonetic imprecision, especially in fricatives and affricates, linked to delayed articulatory control.
- Lexical economy, favoring direct, functional expressions over nuanced description (e.g., "Give ball" instead of "Could you give me the ball, please?").
- Reduced use of politeness markers, possibly reflecting early exposure to competitive conversational norms.
- Interruptive turn-taking, associated with dominance-oriented interactional patterns.

Example (Uzbek): An Uzbek boy responding to "Nima qilyapsan?" ("What are you doing?") with a terse "O'ynayapman" ("Playing") rather than elaborating with details.

Example (English): A boy replying to "What happened at school?" with "Nothing" rather than narrating events.

Girls' speech tends to differ in the opposite direction, often marked by:

- Overuse of hedging ("maybe," "I think," "could be"), which may dilute assertiveness.
- Lexical redundancy, with multiple synonyms used for emphasis rather than precision.
- Indirectness in requests, which can hinder clarity in pragmatic contexts.

- Phonetic hyper-articulation, sometimes slowing speech tempo and affecting natural fluency.

Example (Uzbek): A girl saying, “Agar xohlasang, balki o‘yinchoqni menga berarsan” (“If you want, maybe you will give me the toy”) instead of a direct request.

Example (English): “Would it be okay, if it’s not a problem, to maybe have a turn?” instead of “Can I have a turn?”

Causes and Contributing Factors: In Uzbekistan, cultural norms often encourage girls to speak modestly and deferentially, while boys are encouraged to be assertive and concise. In English-speaking contexts, while overt gender role reinforcement is less institutionalized, subtle media representations and peer group norms still shape discourse habits.

Teacher interaction styles can unintentionally reinforce gendered patterns—for instance, praising girls for politeness and boys for brevity or confidence.

Parental modeling significantly influences speech development. In households where male speech is more dominant and less elaborative, boys may replicate this economy of expression.

Remedial Strategies: For boys: targeted articulation exercises to refine consonant production.

For girls: fluency training to balance articulation clarity with tempo.

Structured activities where children must take on both assertive and cooperative roles, helping boys practice politeness and girls practice directness.

Encouraging boys to elaborate with descriptive adjectives and narrative detail; guiding girls towards precise lexical choices without redundancy.

Mixed-gender collaborative tasks can foster balanced discourse styles by exposing children to alternative communicative models.

Discussion: The observed deficiencies are not merely individual linguistic shortcomings but are deeply interwoven with the socio-cultural fabric. In both Uzbek and English contexts, gendered speech patterns emerge early, reflecting the interplay between linguistic input, social expectations, and identity formation. Importantly, these patterns can be modified through conscious educational and parental interventions.

Conclusion: Addressing gender-specific speech deficiencies requires a holistic, culturally informed approach that integrates linguistic training with socio-pragmatic awareness. This ensures not only improved communicative competence but also the dismantling of restrictive gender stereotypes in early language socialization.

REFERENCES

1. Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. (1987). *Politeness: Some universals in language usage*. Cambridge University Press.

2. Holmes, J. (2013). *Women, men and politeness*. Routledge.
3. Lakoff, R. (1975). *Language and woman's place*. Harper & Row.
4. Pauwels, A. (1998). *Women changing language*. Longman.
5. Shokirova, D. A. (2025). *Bolalar nutqining gender xoslanishi (Ingliz va o'zbek tillari misolida)* [Doctoral dissertation, Andijon davlat universiteti].
6. Tannen, D. (1990). *You just don't understand: Women and men in conversation*. William Morrow.
7. Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Harvard University Press.
8. Kothoff, H. (2006). Gender and humor: The state of the art. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 38(1), 4–25. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2005.06.003>
9. Meinhof, U. H., & Galasinski, D. (2000). *Discourses on violence: Conflict analysis reconsidered*. Routledge.