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GENDER CHARACTERISTICS OF SPEECH ACTS EXPRESSING EMOTIONAL STATES

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Annotation: This article examines the gender characteristics of speech acts expressing emotional and psychological states in communication. The study analyzes the linguistic, pragmatic, and sociocultural features of speech acts used by men and women to convey emotions, feelings, and inner experiences. Particular attention is paid to the differences in language use, communicative strategies, emotional expressiveness, and speech behavior across genders. The research highlights how gender influences the realization of emotional speech acts in various communicative contexts and demonstrates the role of cultural and social factors in shaping verbal expression. The findings contribute to the fields of pragmatics, sociolinguistics, and gender linguistics.

Keywords: speech acts, emotional state, gender linguistics, pragmatics, sociolinguistics, emotional expressiveness, linguistic analysis, verbal communication.

Introduction: In modern linguistics, the study of speech acts has become one of the important directions in pragmatics and communicative linguistics. Speech acts not only convey information but also reflect the speaker's emotional state, intentions, attitudes, and psychological experiences. Emotional and psychological expressions in speech play a significant role in interpersonal communication, as they help speakers express feelings such as joy, sadness, anger, fear, excitement, and anxiety. The linguistic realization of such emotional states is often influenced by social, cultural, and gender-related factors.

The theory of speech acts was initially developed by John L. Austin and later expanded by John Searle, who emphasized that utterances perform not only informative but also communicative and social functions. According to speech act theory, language serves as a tool for performing actions, expressing emotions, influencing interlocutors, and establishing social relations. In this regard, speech acts expressing emotional and psychological states are considered an important component of human interaction.

Gender linguistics investigates how language behavior differs according to gender and how men and women use linguistic means in communication. Researchers such as Robin Lakoff and Deborah Tannen noted that women's speech is generally characterized by greater emotionality, politeness, and expressiveness, whereas men's speech tends to be more direct, concise, and dominant. These differences can also be observed in speech acts expressing emotional states.

The relevance of this study lies in identifying the gender-specific features of emotional speech acts and analyzing their linguistic and pragmatic characteristics in communication. The article aims to examine how men and women verbalize their emotional and psychological states through language and what communicative strategies they employ in different contexts. The research contributes to the development of pragmatics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and gender studies by providing a deeper understanding of the relationship between language, emotion, and gender.

Materials and Methods: This research is based on the principles of pragmatics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and gender linguistics. The study investigates the gender characteristics of speech acts expressing emotional and psychological states through qualitative and comparative linguistic analysis. The research materials consist of dialogic speech samples, literary texts, everyday conversations, and communicative situations in which speakers express emotions such as happiness, anger, fear, anxiety, disappointment, and excitement.

The theoretical foundation of the study is grounded in the speech act theory proposed by John L. Austin. In his work How to Do Things with Words, Austin emphasized that utterances are not merely carriers of information but also forms of action performed through language. Later, John Searle developed this theory further and classified speech acts according to their communicative functions. According to Searle, expressive speech acts are specifically used to convey the speaker's emotional and psychological state, which makes them highly relevant to gender-oriented linguistic analysis.

The methodological framework also relies on the ideas of Robin Lakoff, who argued that women's language is often characterized by emotional sensitivity, politeness markers, and expressive forms. In her research on language and gender, Lakoff stated that "women experience linguistic discrimination in ways that reflect their social inequality," highlighting the close connection between language use and gender identity. Similarly, Deborah Tannen emphasized that men and women differ in communicative style because they belong to different sociolinguistic subcultures. Tannen noted that women tend to use language to establish closeness and emotional connection, while men frequently use speech to maintain status and independence.

The research applies descriptive, comparative, and contextual analysis methods. The descriptive method is used to identify linguistic units expressing emotional states, while the comparative method helps reveal gender differences in speech behavior. Contextual analysis allows the interpretation of emotional speech acts according to communicative situations and sociocultural background.

In addition, elements of discourse analysis are employed to examine how emotional expressions function in real communication. The study also incorporates psycholinguistic observations regarding emotional expression in speech. According to Lev Vygotsky, language and thought are closely interconnected, and emotional expression through speech reflects cognitive and social processes. Therefore, the analysis of emotional speech acts from a gender perspective provides valuable insights into both linguistic behavior and social interaction. The collected materials were analyzed through qualitative interpretation, and examples of male and female speech were compared to determine the distinctive linguistic and pragmatic features of emotional expression.

Results and Discussion: The analysis of speech acts expressing emotional and psychological states revealed significant gender-related differences in communicative behavior, emotional expressiveness, and pragmatic language use. The findings demonstrate that men and women employ different linguistic strategies when expressing emotions, attitudes, and inner experiences in communication.

The research showed that female speakers tend to use more emotionally expressive and evaluative language units. Women frequently employ intensifiers, emotionally colored vocabulary, interjections, and polite forms to convey feelings and maintain interpersonal harmony. Expressions such as "I'm really worried," "I feel so happy," or "That's absolutely wonderful" were observed more often in female speech. This supports the ideas of Robin Lakoff, who emphasized that women's speech is generally characterized by emotionality, politeness, and expressive forms.

In contrast, male speakers were found to express emotional states in a more direct and restrained manner. Men often preferred concise structures and less emotionally marked expressions such as “It’s fine,” “I’m upset,” or “There is a problem.” Emotional experiences in male speech were more frequently communicated through assertive or action-oriented utterances rather than detailed emotional descriptions. These observations correspond with the views of Deborah Tannen, who argued that male communication is usually oriented toward status, independence, and problem-solving, whereas female communication emphasizes emotional connection and solidarity.

The study also identified differences in the use of expressive speech acts within various communicative contexts. In informal conversations, women demonstrated a greater tendency to share personal feelings and psychological experiences openly. They used supportive expressions, empathy markers, and emotionally responsive reactions more actively than men. Male speakers, however, showed a preference for controlling emotional openness, particularly in formal and public communication settings.

Another important finding concerns the pragmatic functions of emotional speech acts. Female speech more frequently fulfilled the functions of empathy, emotional support, and relationship maintenance. Male speech acts, on the other hand, more commonly reflected confidence, authority, or emotional self-control. Such distinctions illustrate the influence of sociocultural expectations and gender stereotypes on verbal behavior.

The analysis further revealed that cultural and social factors significantly shape the realization of emotional speech acts. In many communicative situations, emotional expressiveness among women was socially accepted and encouraged, while emotional restraint was more commonly associated with masculine behavior. This confirms the sociolinguistic perspective that language use is strongly influenced by social norms and gender roles.

From a pragmatic point of view, speech acts expressing emotional states serve not only as indicators of feelings but also as communicative tools that regulate interpersonal relations. The findings support the speech act theories of John L. Austin and John Searle, according to whom utterances perform social and psychological functions in addition to conveying information.

Overall, the study demonstrates that gender differences in emotional speech acts are reflected in lexical choice, communicative strategies, emotional intensity, and pragmatic purpose. These distinctions highlight the close relationship between language, gender, emotion, and social interaction, contributing to the broader understanding of pragmatics and gender linguistics.

In conclusion, the study of speech acts expressing emotional and psychological states demonstrates that gender plays an important role in shaping communicative behavior and linguistic expression. The analysis revealed that men and women differ in their use of emotional vocabulary, expressive forms, communicative strategies, and pragmatic functions during interpersonal interaction.

The findings indicate that female speakers generally tend to express emotions more openly and emotionally, using polite, supportive, and empathetic language units. Male speakers, in contrast, often prefer more concise, direct, and restrained forms of emotional expression. These differences are influenced not only by individual communicative styles but also by sociocultural norms, gender stereotypes, and social expectations regarding masculine and feminine behavior.

The research also confirms that speech acts perform not only informative but also psychological and social functions, as emphasized in the theories of John L. Austin and John Searle. Emotional speech acts contribute to the establishment of interpersonal relationships, emotional influence, and social interaction within communication.

Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of gender linguistics in understanding how language reflects social identity and emotional experience. The obtained results contribute to the development of pragmatics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and discourse analysis by providing a deeper understanding of the relationship between language, emotion, and gender. Overall, the research demonstrates that gender characteristics in emotional speech acts represent a complex interaction of linguistic, psychological, and sociocultural factors. Future studies may further investigate these features in cross-cultural communication, media discourse, and digital interaction environments.

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