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P. Kitseliuk (PSACEA, Dnipro)
Ye. Khramova (PSACEA, Dnipro)

Scientific and language supervisor: K. Sokolova, Cand Sc. (Phil), Assoc. Prof.

GENDER OF NOUNS IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

What is ‘gender’ in a language? About a quarter of the world’s languages uses gender. In technical terms, gender in languages is just one way of breaking up nouns into classes or categories. A noun is a part of language that names a person, place, thing, idea, action or quality. For example, nouns can refer to an individual name of a person, like Mike or Amrita. Also, it can refer to a place or thing. Examples of nouns might include Sydney, Louis Vuitton, or Qantas. In some languages, nouns, such as Qantas, can be male or female - masculine or feminine.

It’s important to distinguish between grammatical gender and natural gender. Natural gender is simply the biological sex of a person, animal or character. Grammatical gender is a way of classifying nouns. But this doesn’t always match up with the “natural gender” of the person or object being described.

In some languages, grammatical gender is more than just “male” or “female.” Some languages have a ‘neuter’ class. Other languages others have different genders for animate versus inanimate objects. See how this works in other languages. English makes life a little easier for us when it comes to gender and grammar. [1]

Most English nouns do not have grammatical gender. Nouns referring to people do not have separate forms for men (male form) and women (female form). However, some nouns traditionally had different forms. Nowadays, people usually prefer more neutral forms.

<i>male form</i>	<i>female form</i>	<i>neutral form</i>
actor	actress	actor
chairman	chairwoman	chair or chairperson
headmaster	headmistress	headteacher or head
host	hostess	(social) host (on an aircraft) cabin attendant
policeman	policewoman	police officer
steward	stewardess	(on an aircraft) cabin attendant
waiter	waitress	waiter

Traditional work-roles. Some jobs were normally done by men in the past, and their names had no form for women (e.g. *fireman*, *fisherman*). Some were normally done by women, and their names had no form for men (e.g. nurses and secretaries were almost always women). Nowadays, *fire-fighter* is preferred to *fireman*, and *nurse* is preferred for both sexes instead of *male nurse* for a man. *Personal assistant* (or *PA*) is often used instead of *secretary*. The neutral words are more ‘politically correct’ (not likely to offend anyone):

Two fire-fighters were injured in a blaze at an electronics factory yesterday.

My brother's a nurse in the local hospital. [2]

What is gender-inclusive language? We've had a look why some words are referred to as "she". In fact, we use "man" and words ending in "-man" far more as gendered nouns in English. Let's look at the example of "fireman." We don't really say "firewoman" in English. But women certainly fight fires. The profession of fighting fires was historically a predominantly male job.

At the same time, traditionally feminine nouns such as actress and waitress are becoming less common. There are lots of examples where the masculine term of actor and waiter is now used for both men and women.

That's why language is important. A linguistics professor explains that the language we use doesn't only reflect our culture, but also constructs it. That means that language can set expectations about how people are supposed to be. If you see a job advertised online and it says "Barman needed now!" it implies they are looking for a man, not a woman. Similarly, how many men do you think would apply to an advert asking for "waitresses"? It's the same with fireman or policeman. The more we use these words, the more people expect those jobs to be done by men. But, there are very, very few jobs out there that require one gender to do the role rather than being open to both.

Luckily, you can spot these gender-biased words easily in English. And, it's also very easy to replace them with neutral language. We have a list of examples with gender inclusive words. [1]

In conclusion, understanding the gender of nouns in the English language adds depth to language comprehension and communication. While English lacks grammatical gender as extensively as some other languages, it still exhibits traces of gender distinctions in pronouns, common nouns, and occasionally in job titles or social roles. Recognizing these nuances enhances language proficiency and cultural sensitivity. Moreover, as language evolves, attitudes towards gender and inclusivity continue to shape linguistic norms. Therefore, navigating gender in English necessitates both an awareness of traditional grammar rules and a sensitivity to contemporary language usage, ensuring effective and respectful communication in diverse contexts.

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**L. Mykhailova, Senior lecturer
(PSACEA, Dnipro)**

ONLINE AND OFFLINE EDUCATION OF MODERN FORMAT LEARNING

Nowadays online education is counterpart to offline education. It has become a necessary measure since Covid epidemic and war in Ukraine as well.

Offline is the traditional way of education and the original method of learning that allows students to have regular face-to-face interactions with their peers and lecturers. However, as much as online education is predicted to be the future of learning, it cannot replace the holistic aspect of offline. Offline education also allows lecturers to monitor the responses and behavior of their students and accordingly address them. Hence, no matter how advanced online education is, offline education will continue to play an important role in the development of students.

Online education provides an excellent opportunity for students who are unable to enroll in traditional classrooms as well as supports students in setting their own pace for studying. Online education include virtual classrooms. Students can easily access learning materials from anywhere as long as they have proper access to an internet connection. Additionally, online classes provide lecturers with a