



LINGÜÍSTICA APLICADA AL INGLÉS

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Tema: SOCIOLINGUISTICS

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LINGUISTIC VARIETIES & REGISTERS

VARIETIES
(ling. forms)

- Historical Varieties** (time)
- Geographical Varieties or Dialects** (place)
- Social Varieties or Sociolects** (personal circumstances: age, sex, ethnic group, socio-economic status, occupation, etc.)
- Idiolect** (idiosyncratic features)

REGISTERS
(ling. uses)

- Mode (genre)**
 - spoken
 - written
- Tenor (style)**
 - formal
 - casual
 - informal
- Field (text type)**
 - subject matter
 - purpose

ENGLISH HISTORICAL VARIETIES

OLD ENGLISH

Northumbrian

Mercian

Kentish

West Saxon

MIDDLE ENG.

Chaucer's English

MODERN ENG.

Shakespearean English

Victorian English

Contemporary English

ENGLISH GEOGRAPHICAL VARIETIES

BRITISH ISLES

English

Welsh
Scottish

Irish

NORTH AMERICA

American

Canadian

**OTHER NATIONAL
STANDARDS OF
ENGLISH**

African
Australian
Caribbean
Indian
Malay/Chinese
New Zealand
Pakistani

...

SOCIAL VARIETIES (SOCIOLECTS)

- SOCIAL STATUS
- ETHNIC GROUP
- SEX
- AGE

Differences between Standard American English and Afro-American Vernacular English (AAVE)

1. No diphthongization of vowel
2. No contrast of /l/ and /ɛ/ before nasals
3. [θ] changes to [f] when in word final position
4. Final “r” deleted, preceding vowel is consequently raised
5. Simplification of certain consonant clusters
6. Different choice of preposition
7. Loss of third person singular marker in “do;” indefinite (“anything”) becomes negative indefinite (“nothing”) in negative sentence (double negation)
8. Loss of past tense marker in regular verbs
9. Deletion of certain verbs
10. Deletion of verb “to be” in certain environments

WOMEN'S LANGUAGE FEATURES

- GENDER (cultural)
- SEX (biological)
- Women and men speak different, this has to do with their physical nature, however it also has to do with their education (it is cultural mark). For example, girls are recommended to speak softly, to use polite language avoiding swearwords (It is inconceivable for a woman to use "strong" expletives, such as *damn* or *shit*).

WOMEN'S LANGUAGE FEATURES

- Phonetic level

Women's pronunciation is more normative than men's, either due to aesthetic reasons (to sound better) or due to prestige reasons (according to Peter Trudgill). In this case we find a biological feature intensified by sociocultural reasons.

WOMEN'S LANGUAGE FEATURES

- Grammatical level

There are a series of morphological features characteristic of women, but there are not research studies to confirm them. For example:

- Use of diminutive words (with an affectionate function)
- Use of intensive terms (superlatives)
- Syntax: they use more frequently interrogative and exclamative sentences.

WOMEN'S LANGUAGE FEATURES

- Semantic level

There are semantic fields more characteristic of one sex than the other. For example:

- Women talk about colours, clothes, etc.
- Men talk about sports, cars, etc.

Magazines tend to be sex-specific.

Women use more taboo words when speaking and more euphemisms when writing due to cultural imposition.

WOMEN'S LANGUAGE FEATURES

Non-verbal communication

Women are more expressive, more delicate, use more gestures, smile more frequently, etc.

STEREOTYPES

- Stereotypes are used to preserve the established social order.
- Women talk a lot (when patriarchy has always been taking out women's speech and thought).
- Women interrupt more in turn-taking (true in informal conversations between women), but in fact men interrupt more than women.
- Women don't finish their sentences because they speak without thinking (Jespersen).

STEREOTYPES

- Linguistics reference books continue without analysing deeply women's language, dedicating just a chapter and considering it a deviation from the norm (being the norm men's language)

WOMEN'S LANGUAGE

Feminine style should no longer be considered as inferior or inappropriate in the public sphere, since as we have seen it is more normative.

Language should be “feminised” through emotion and sensitivity to enrich the world.

NON-SEXIST LANGUAGE

Eliminate the generic use of 'he' by:

- using plural nouns
- deleting 'he', 'his', and 'him' altogether
- substituting articles ('the', 'a', 'an') for 'his'; and 'who' for 'he'
- substituting 'one', 'we', or 'you'
- minimizing use of indefinite pronouns (e.g., 'everybody', 'someone')
- using the passive voice
- substituting nouns for pronouns

NON-SEXIST LANGUAGE

Eliminate the generic use of 'man':

- for 'man', substitute 'person'/'people', 'individual(s)', 'human(s)', 'human being(s)'
- for 'mankind', substitute 'humankind', 'humanity', 'the human race'
- for 'manhood', substitute 'adulthood', 'maturity'
- delete unnecessary references to generic 'man'

NON-SEXIST LANGUAGE

Eliminate sexism when addressing persons formally by:

- using 'Ms' instead of 'Miss' or 'Mrs.', even when a woman's marital status is known
- using a married woman's first name instead of her husband's (e.g., "Ms. Annabelle Lee" not "Mrs. Herman Lee")
- using the corresponding title for females ('Ms.', 'Dr.', 'Prof.') whenever a title is appropriate for males
- using 'Dear Colleague', 'Editor' or 'Professor', etc. in letters to unknown persons (instead of 'Dear Sir', 'Gentlemen')

NON-SEXIST LANGUAGE

Eliminate sexual stereotyping of roles by:

- using the same term (which avoids the generic 'man') for both females and males (e.g., 'department chair' or 'chairperson'), or by using the corresponding verb (e.g., 'to chair')
- not calling attention to irrelevancies (e.g., 'lady lawyer', 'male nurse')