

Gendered Uses and Meanings of Taboo Language: A Systematic Review of Sociolinguistic, Digital, Cultural, and Cognitive Research

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ABSTRACT

Taboo language is a complex form of communication that extends beyond simple expressions of offence or aggression, as its use and meaning may vary according to gender, social context, culture, identity, power, digital environments, and cognitive processes. However, existing research on gendered taboo and offensive language remains dispersed across sociolinguistic, digital, cultural, and cognitive perspectives, making it difficult to obtain an integrated understanding of how gender shapes its forms, functions, and meanings. This systematic literature review (SLR) aims to synthesise existing research on the gendered uses and meanings of taboo language and identify major patterns across different research contexts. The review employed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) protocol and systematically searched two major databases, Web of Science and Scopus, using the keywords “taboo language,” “offensive language,” “gender,” and “swearing.” The initial search and screening process identified 84 relevant studies, of which 43 proceeded to the eligibility stage, and 41 studies were retained for the final thematic analysis. The findings revealed seven major themes: sociolinguistic patterns and gendered variation in swearing and taboo language (9 studies; 21.95%), taboo and offensive language as identity, power, resistance, and gender performance (8; 19.51%), online hate speech and gendered digital communication (4; 9.76%), censorship, euphemism, avoidance, translation, and gender-fair language reform (8; 19.51%), cognitive and emotional processing of taboo language (7; 17.07%), gendered discourse and representation beyond swearing (3; 7.32%), and contextual and peripheral uses of offensive or forbidden terminology (2; 4.88%). Overall, the review demonstrates that gendered taboo language is multidimensional and context-dependent, functioning not only as offensive speech but also as a resource for identity construction, solidarity, resistance, humour, power negotiation, and social representation. The findings highlight the need for future research to examine gendered taboo language through more integrated sociolinguistic, digital, cultural, and cognitive perspectives.

Keywords: Taboo language, gender and swearing, offensive language, sociolinguistics, cognitive processing

INTRODUCTION

Taboo language is an important form of communication that reflects social values, cultural expectations, interpersonal relationships, and power relations. Rather than being limited to offensive or inappropriate expressions, taboo language can serve different social and communicative functions, including expressing humour, solidarity, affection, authority, resistance, or abuse. Its use is also influenced by gender, age, culture, multilingualism, personality, education, social relationships, and communication settings. The studies reviewed in this paper show that men have generally been reported to use taboo expressions more frequently, while women also actively use and understand such language, challenging traditional assumptions about gender and taboo language. Importantly, gendered patterns are not fixed but are socially constructed through participation in particular communities and interactional contexts. Taboo language can

also be used to construct gender identities, negotiate power, challenge social expectations, and represent social groups. In digital environments, taboo and offensive language further takes forms such as online insults, hate speech, impoliteness, and gender-based attacks. At the same time, taboo expressions may attract attention, create emotional responses, and influence memory and language processing, demonstrating that taboo language is a multidimensional phenomenon shaped by sociolinguistic, digital, cultural, and cognitive factors.

Despite the growing body of research on taboo and offensive language, the existing literature remains diverse across different contexts, purposes, and research perspectives. Individual studies have examined gender differences in swearing, identity and power, digital communication, censorship and euphemism, and the cognitive and emotional processing of taboo expressions. However, the reviewed literature also includes studies that address gendered discourse more broadly or refer to offensive language only indirectly, indicating variation in the focus and relevance of existing research. This creates a need for a systematic synthesis that brings these different dimensions together rather than examining gendered taboo language through a single perspective. Therefore, this systematic literature review (SLR) aims to synthesise existing research on the gendered uses and meanings of taboo language by examining reported gendered patterns, the roles of taboo language in identity, power and resistance, its production and interpretation in digital and language-policy contexts, and the cognitive and emotional mechanisms associated with its processing. Specifically, the review seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how gender interacts with social, cultural, digital, and cognitive factors in shaping the use and meaning of taboo language.

Taboo language is an important aspect of human communication that reflects social values, cultural norms, interpersonal relationships, and individual identities. It refers to expressions considered socially inappropriate, offensive, or restricted within particular communities and contexts. Rather than having fixed meanings, taboo expressions may serve different functions, such as expressing emotions, creating humour, showing solidarity, displaying authority, or causing offence. Research shows that taboo-language use is influenced by factors including gender, age, culture, multilingualism, personality, education, social relationships, and communication settings. Although previous studies generally report that men use taboo expressions more frequently, women also actively use and understand such language, challenging traditional assumptions about gender and taboo-language use.

Gender is therefore an important factor in understanding how taboo language is produced, interpreted, and given meaning. Gendered patterns are shaped not only by gender itself but also by participation in different social groups and communities. Taboo expressions may be used to construct gender identity, demonstrate group membership, negotiate power, express resistance, or challenge social expectations. Furthermore, taboo language occurs across different contexts, including digital communication, where offensive expressions and gendered attacks may contribute to online impoliteness and unequal power relations. Cultural and institutional practices also influence how taboo expressions are censored, avoided, euphemised, translated, or reformulated. Taboo language also has cognitive and emotional dimensions, as taboo words can attract attention, generate emotional responses, and influence memory and language processing. Overall, the literature presents taboo language as a multidimensional phenomenon shaped by gender, social context, culture, digital environments, identity, power, and cognition. This systematic review brings these different perspectives together to provide a broader understanding of how gender interacts with sociolinguistic, digital, cultural, and cognitive factors in shaping the uses and meanings of taboo language.

Taboo language is a complex form of communication that can serve different functions, including expressing emotions, humour, solidarity, identity, resistance, and power. However, its use and meaning are not consistent across speakers or situations. Previous studies have examined taboo language from different perspectives, including gender differences in swearing, online hate speech, cultural norms, censorship, euphemism, and cognitive processing. The reviewed studies indicate that men have often been reported to use taboo expressions more frequently, but women also actively use such language depending on their social relationships, cultural background, communication setting, and purpose. Therefore, gender alone may not adequately explain patterns of taboo-language use.

A further problem is that research on gendered taboo language remains fragmented across different fields and contexts. The 41 studies identified in this review are distributed across seven themes, with greater attention given to sociolinguistic patterns, identity and power, and censorship, while fewer studies focus on online gendered communication and gendered discourse beyond swearing. In addition, some studies examine taboo or offensive language only indirectly, making it difficult to establish clear conceptual boundaries within the existing literature. This fragmentation makes it challenging to obtain a comprehensive understanding of how gender interacts with culture, identity, power, digital environments, language regulation, and cognitive processes in shaping taboo-language use. Therefore, a systematic review is needed to consolidate existing findings, identify recurring patterns and differences, and provide a clearer understanding of the gendered uses and meanings of taboo language across sociolinguistic, digital, cultural, and cognitive contexts.

Although previous studies have examined taboo language in relation to gender, identity, culture, digital communication, and cognitive processing, the existing literature remains fragmented across different research areas. Some studies focus on gendered patterns of swearing and taboo expressions, while others examine identity, power, resistance, online hate speech, censorship, euphemism, or the cognitive and emotional processing of taboo words. The reviewed studies also cover diverse contexts, including social media, literature, translation, multilingual communication, youth language, and institutional settings. A further gap is the limited integration of these perspectives into a single systematic framework that explains how gender interacts with social, cultural, digital, and cognitive factors in shaping the use and meaning of taboo language. Existing research often examines particular contexts or functions in isolation, making it difficult to identify broader patterns and differences across studies. Therefore, this systematic literature review addresses this gap by synthesising existing research on gendered taboo language across sociolinguistic, digital, cultural, and cognitive dimensions. It aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how taboo language is used, interpreted, regulated, and processed in relation to gender across different contexts. Research questions are important to a systematic literature review (SLR). The questions provide the foundation and direction for the entire review process. A well-defined research question ensures that the literature search is exhaustive and systematic, covering all relevant studies that address key aspects of the topic (Kitchenham, 2007). The research questions in this SLR are formulated based on the PICo framework. This framework is a mnemonic style used to formulate research questions, particularly in qualitative research, proposed by Lockwood et al. (2015). PICo stands for Population, Interest, and Context. This SLR is done to answer the four research questions below

RQ1

What gendered patterns are reported in the forms, frequency, functions, and contexts of swearing and taboo-language use?

RQ2

How is taboo and offensive language used to construct gender identity, negotiate power, express resistance, and represent social groups?

RQ3

How is gendered taboo and offensive language produced, interpreted, regulated, censored, euphemised, or reformulated across digital, translation, and language-policy contexts?

RQ4

What cognitive and emotional mechanisms influence the production, perception, recognition, memory, and processing of taboo and offensive language, and how are these mechanisms associated with gender?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

Community of Practice Theory by (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992) that supports Gendered Patterns in Swearing and Taboo Language.

Community of Practice Theory, advanced by Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992), explains language and gender as outcomes of participation in shared social practices rather than as fixed characteristics of women and men. A community of practice consists of individuals who engage regularly in a common activity, develop relationships, and gradually establish shared norms, identities, values, and linguistic repertoires. From this perspective, swearing and taboo-language use should be examined within the specific communities in which speakers interact, such as friendship groups, workplaces, youth cultures, online communities, or multilingual networks. Members may adopt, reject, or modify taboo expressions to display solidarity, humour, authority, toughness, intimacy, or resistance. Gendered patterns therefore emerge through local participation and social expectations, not simply through biological sex. The theory supports Theme 1 by explaining why women and men may use swear words differently across cultures, age groups, occupations, and situations. It also accounts for variation within the same gender, since individuals belong to different communities with distinct communicative norms. Thus, Community of Practice Theory provides a context-sensitive framework for analysing how gender, group membership, and social interaction jointly shape the frequency, form, and functions of swearing and taboo language.

Gender Performativity Theory and Social Identity Theory by Tajfel and Turner (1979) that supports Taboo Language, Identity, Power, and Resistance.

Gender Performativity Theory, introduced by Butler (1990), proposes that gender is not a fixed identity but is continuously produced through repeated actions, behaviours, and forms of expression, including language. From this perspective, the use of taboo or offensive language can function as a performance through which individuals construct, challenge, or redefine masculinity and femininity. Social Identity Theory, developed by Tajfel and Turner (1979), complements this view by explaining how people form identities through membership in social groups and distinguish between insiders and outsiders. Taboo language may therefore signal solidarity, toughness, authority, rebellion, or group belonging, while also excluding, insulting, or subordinating others. Together, these theories support the theme of Taboo Language, Identity, Power, and Resistance by showing that swearing is not merely emotional or inappropriate speech. It can be a strategic social practice used to negotiate status, resist dominant norms, challenge gender expectations, and display membership in subcultures or marginalised communities. These frameworks also explain why the same taboo expression may represent empowerment in one context but reinforce inequality or aggression in another.

Impoliteness Theory by Culpeper (2011) that supports Online Hate Speech and Gendered Impoliteness.

Impoliteness Theory, developed by Culpeper (1996, 2011), explains how language is used to attack a person's social identity, dignity, relationships, or expected rights. The theory focuses on communicative strategies such as insults, mockery, threats, exclusion, negative labels, and direct verbal aggression. In online environments, these strategies may become more frequent because users can communicate anonymously, respond rapidly, and address large audiences with limited social consequences. Impoliteness Theory therefore provides a useful framework for analysing online hate speech and gendered impoliteness, particularly when offensive language targets individuals because of their gender, sexuality, ethnicity, appearance, or social position. Gendered insults may reproduce stereotypes, silence women, reinforce unequal power relations, or portray particular groups as inferior. However, interpretations of impoliteness also depend on context, relationships, platform norms, and the intentions of participants. The same expression may be interpreted as humorous interaction among close peers but as abuse when directed at a

stranger or marginalised group. Thus, Impoliteness Theory supports the analysis of how digital language causes offence, constructs gendered hostility, and maintains or challenges social power in online communication.

X-Phemism Theory and Language Planning Theory by Allan and Burridge (2006) that supports Censorship, Euphemism, and Gender-Fair Language.

X-Phemism Theory, developed by Allan and Burridge (1991, 2006), explains how speakers manage sensitive, offensive, or socially restricted meanings through euphemism, orthophemism, and dysphemism. Euphemisms soften or conceal potentially offensive meanings, orthophemisms provide relatively neutral alternatives, and dysphemisms intensify negative or insulting meanings. This framework is useful for examining how taboo expressions are censored, translated, avoided, or reformulated according to cultural expectations and communicative purposes. Language Planning Theory, proposed by Cooper (1989), complements this perspective by focusing on deliberate efforts to influence language use within a society, institution, or community. Such efforts may include introducing gender-fair terms, replacing discriminatory expressions, or encouraging inclusive occupational titles. Together, these theories support the theme of Censorship, Euphemism, and Gender-Fair Language by showing that language choices are not neutral but shaped by ideology, politeness norms, power relations, and social change. They also explain why reforms may face resistance when new expressions conflict with established habits or carry negative connotations. Thus, both theories provide a strong basis for analysing how societies regulate taboo meanings and promote more inclusive forms of communication.

Affective Language Processing Framework and Automatic Vigilance Hypothesis by Pavlenko (2012) that supports Cognitive and Emotional Processing of Taboo Language.

The Affective Language Processing Framework proposed by Pavlenko (2012) explains how emotional meaning is processed differently across languages, particularly among bilingual and multilingual speakers. It suggests that emotionally charged expressions, including taboo words, may produce stronger reactions in a person's first language because that language is closely connected to early experiences, socialisation, and emotional memory. The Automatic Vigilance Hypothesis developed by Pratto and John (1991) complements this perspective by proposing that negative or threatening stimuli automatically capture attention and are more difficult to ignore than neutral information. Together, these theories support the theme of Cognitive and Emotional Processing of Taboo Language by explaining why taboo words can attract immediate attention, increase emotional arousal, interfere with cognitive tasks, and remain memorable. They also help explain why individuals may respond differently to the same taboo expression depending on language background, familiarity, context, and personal experience. Therefore, these frameworks provide a strong theoretical basis for analysing how taboo language influences recognition, memory, attention, speech production, and physiological reactions across monolingual and multilingual settings.

Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis by Lazar (2007) that supports Gendered Discourse and Representation.

Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis, developed by Lazar (2007), examines how language constructs, reinforces, and challenges gendered power relations within society. It combines feminist perspectives with critical discourse analysis to investigate how inequalities between women and men are represented and normalised through everyday communication, institutional discourse, political speeches, media texts, literature, and other cultural practices. The framework emphasises that discourse is not neutral because language choices may reflect dominant ideologies, social hierarchies, and assumptions about appropriate gender roles. Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis supports the theme of Gendered Discourse and Representation by enabling researchers to identify how women and men are described, evaluated, included, excluded, or stereotyped in different forms of communication. For example, linguistic patterns may present women as emotional, dependent, or subordinate while associating men with authority, rationality, and leadership. The approach also examines how speakers and writers resist these representations and construct alternative gender identities. Thus, it provides a valuable framework for analysing how discourse reproduces

gender inequality while also creating opportunities to challenge discriminatory meanings and promote more inclusive social representations.

Conceptual Boundary and Eligibility Framework by PRISMA (2020) that supports Peripheral Studies of Offensive Language.

PRISMA 2020, developed by Page et al. (2021), is not a linguistic theory but a systematic-review reporting framework that supports transparent study identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and inclusion. It helps researchers establish clear conceptual boundaries by requiring predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria that correspond to the review objectives and research questions. This framework supports the theme of Peripheral Studies of Offensive Language by distinguishing studies that directly investigate offensive, taboo, or gendered language from those in which such terms appear only incidentally. For example, an article may mention offensive language as a minor aspect of workplace experience without analysing its linguistic forms or social functions. Similarly, a study may use a technical expression containing words such as “forbidden” without addressing linguistic taboo at all. Applying PRISMA 2020 allows reviewers to document why these peripheral studies were retained, classified separately, or excluded from the final synthesis. It also reduces subjective decision-making by ensuring that relevance is evaluated consistently according to the population, phenomenon of interest, context, publication type, and study focus. Therefore, PRISMA strengthens the review’s transparency, reproducibility, and conceptual coherence.

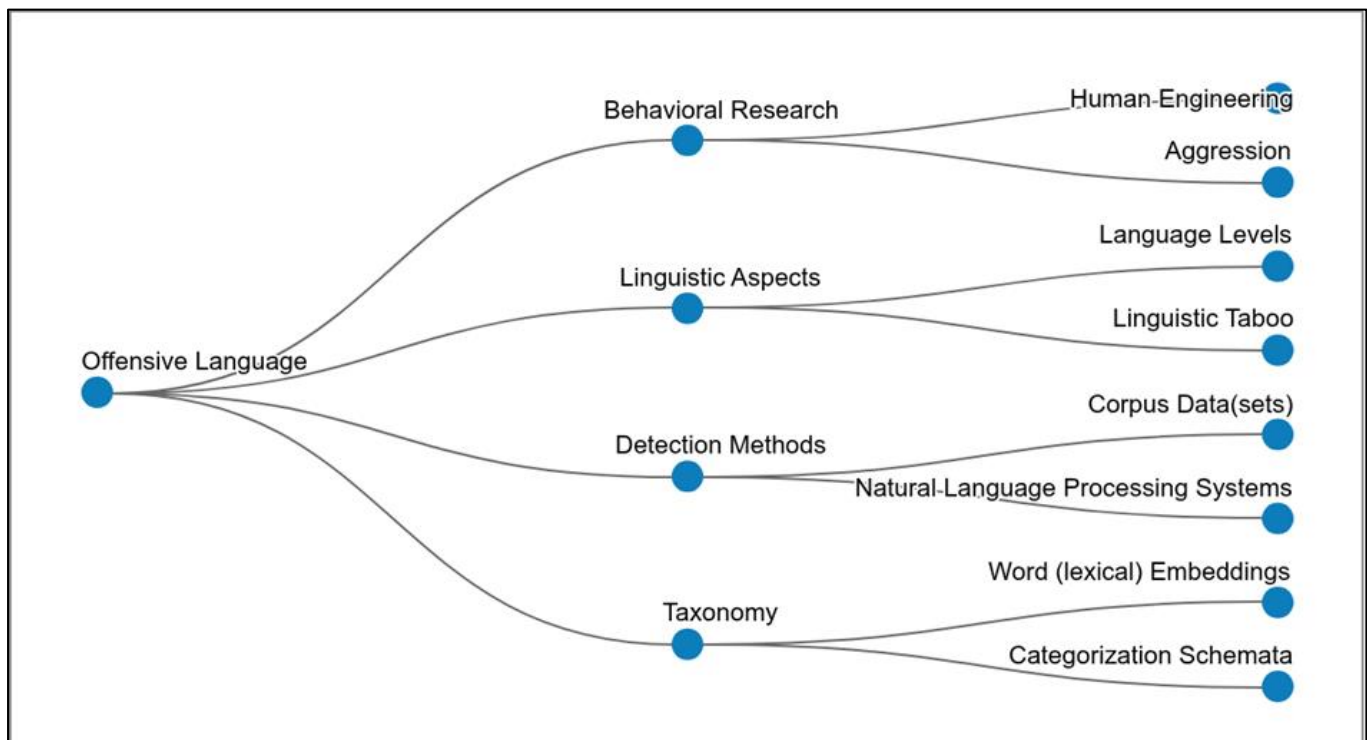


Figure 1 Description of the Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for “Gendered Uses and Meanings of Taboo Language: A Systematic Review of Sociolinguistic, Digital, Cultural, and Cognitive Research” positions taboo language as a multidimensional social practice shaped by gender, context, identity, power, and cognition. Community of Practice Theory by Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992) explains gendered patterns in swearing as locally produced through participation in social groups rather than as fixed male–female differences. Gender Performativity Theory by Butler (1990), together with Social Identity Theory, supports the analysis of taboo language as a resource for performing masculinity or femininity, expressing group membership, negotiating authority, and resisting social expectations.

In digital contexts, Culpeper's (2011) Impoliteness Theory explains how insults, threats, and gendered attacks damage social identity and reproduce unequal power relations. Allan and Burridge's (2006) X-Phemism Theory, combined with Language Planning Theory, provides a basis for examining censorship, euphemism, avoidance, translation, and gender-fair language reform. These frameworks show how taboo meanings may be softened, intensified, replaced, or institutionally regulated according to cultural values and ideological goals.

The cognitive dimension is supported by Pavlenko's (2012) Affective Language Processing Framework and the Automatic Vigilance Hypothesis, which explain why taboo words attract attention, generate arousal, and influence memory and processing. Lazar's (2007) Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis further reveals how discourse constructs or challenges gendered representations. Finally, PRISMA 2020 provides the conceptual boundary and eligibility structure for identifying peripheral studies and ensuring a transparent, systematic synthesis.

METHODOLOGY

For conducting systematic literature reviews (SLRs), the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) framework is a widely recognised guideline that promotes transparency, completeness, and consistency throughout the review process (Page et al., 2021). It provides a structured approach for systematically identifying, screening, assessing, and including relevant studies. In this SLR, the researchers worked collaboratively to identify and analyse studies that were relevant to the research topic. Two major academic databases, Web of Science and Scopus, were selected for the literature search due to their extensive coverage and reliability of scholarly publications. The PRISMA framework consists of several key stages, namely (i) identification, (ii) screening, (iii) eligibility, (iv) data extraction and analysis, and (v) quality appraisal. During the identification stage, relevant studies are retrieved from the selected databases using predetermined search strategies.

The screening stage involves reviewing the retrieved studies and removing duplicates and irrelevant articles based on established criteria. In the eligibility stage, the remaining studies are assessed in greater detail to determine whether they meet the inclusion criteria. This is followed by data extraction and analysis, where relevant information from the selected studies is systematically collected, organised, and synthesised. Finally, the quality appraisal stage evaluates the methodological quality and reliability of the included studies. By following these structured procedures, the PRISMA framework helps ensure that the review process is systematic and rigorous, thereby supporting reliable findings and meaningful conclusions.

Identification

In accordance with the PRISMA framework, the identification phase serves as an essential first step in the systematic literature review process. This phase aims to achieve comprehensive coverage of relevant studies while minimising the possibility of selection bias. In the present study, a structured search was conducted using two major bibliographic databases, Scopus and Web of Science (WoS). The search employed the keywords "academic writing," "obstacles," and "higher institutions," with the search string presented in Table 1.

Scopus and Web of Science were selected due to their extensive multidisciplinary coverage, rigorous indexing standards, and inclusion of high-quality peer-reviewed publications. The search process initially identified 175 records from Scopus and 100 records from Web of Science, resulting in a total of 275 records before duplicate removal.

The larger number of records retrieved from Scopus may be attributed to its broader journal coverage and strong representation of research in the social sciences, while WoS provided a more focused selection of highly cited and methodologically robust studies. As indicated in Table 1, the identification of 275 records demonstrates the growing scholarly interest in academic writing within higher education. The findings also reflect the diverse nature of research in this area, which encompasses linguistic, pedagogical, and

psychological perspectives. Using multiple databases strengthens the methodological rigour of the review by reducing database-specific bias and increasing the likelihood of identifying studies from different research traditions and geographical contexts.

Furthermore, the carefully selected search terms were intended to account for variations in terminology while remaining consistent with the objectives of the review. Overall, this systematic and transparent identification process provides a solid basis for the subsequent screening and eligibility stages, supporting the principles of rigor, transparency, and replicability associated with the PRISMA framework.

Scopus	TITLE-ABS-KEY ("harsh words" OR "negative language" OR "verbal aggression" OR "hostile communication" OR "critical remarks") AND (women OR female OR "women's interactions" OR "female relationships")
Web of Science	("taboo words" OR "taboo language" OR "prohibited words" OR "forbidden words" OR "offensive language") AND (women OR female OR "women's language" OR "female speech") Extracted July 2026

Table 1 The search string

Screening

During the screening stage of the systematic literature review, the identified studies were assessed for their relevance and alignment with the four established research questions. This stage involved refining the initial pool of records by applying predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria. Of the 275 records initially identified, 191 were excluded based on their lack of relevance to the scope and objectives of the study, leaving 84 articles for further consideration, comprising 62 articles from Scopus and 22 from Web of Science (WoS), as presented in Figure 2.

The main inclusion criteria focused on the type and relevance of the literature, with emphasis placed on scholarly publications that provided substantial and empirical insights into the research topic. Consequently, book reviews, book series, meta-syntheses, meta-analyses, conference proceedings, and book chapters that did not directly address the focus of the review were excluded. To maintain consistency and ensure relevance to current academic discussions, only peer-reviewed articles written in English and published between 2021 and 2026 were included. A duplication check was also conducted, and no duplicate records were identified across the two databases. Overall, this systematic and criteria-based screening process helped narrow the evidence base and ensured that only studies relevant to the research objectives proceeded to the subsequent stages of the review.

Eligibility

For the third step, known as eligibility, a total of 43 articles have been prepared. All articles' titles and key content were thoroughly reviewed at this stage to ensure that the inclusion requirements were fulfilled and fit into the present study with the current research aims. Therefore, two reports were omitted because they were not pure science articles based on empirical evidence. Finally, 43 articles are available for review (see Table 3).

Table 2 The selection criterion is searching

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion
Language	English	Non-English
Time line	2021 – 2026	< 2021
Literature type	Journal (Article)	Conference, Book, Review
Publication Stage	Final	In Press
Subject Area	Academic Writing	Besides Academic Writing

Data Abstraction and Analysis

An integrative analysis was employed as one of the assessment strategies in this study to examine and synthesise findings from different research designs, including quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods studies. To develop relevant themes, the authors systematically reviewed 40 selected publications and identified information related to the main focus of the study. Particular attention was given to the methodologies and key findings reported in the selected studies. The authors worked collaboratively to identify and organise themes based on the evidence presented across the reviewed literature. Throughout the analysis process, the authors maintained a record of their analytical procedures to document relevant observations, interpretations, and emerging ideas. To ensure consistency in theme development, the findings were compared and discussed collaboratively, with any disagreements resolved through discussion. This review process helped establish the validity of the identified themes and subthemes by ensuring that they were clear, relevant, and appropriate to the objectives of the study.

Quality of Appraisal

According to Kitchenham and Charters (Kitchenham, 2007), the researchers need to assess the quality of the research chosen. The next stage is applying quality assessment suggested by Abouzahra et al., (2020), which consists of six questions complying to a scoring procedure for evaluating each criteria. The possible ratings are "Yes" (Y) with a score of 1 if the criterion is fully met, "Partly" (P) with a score of 0.5 if the criterion is somewhat met but contains some gaps or shortcomings, and "No" (N) with a score of 0 if the criterion is not met at all.

Table 3 Possible ratings for 6 questions by Abouzahra et al., (2020),

No	Question
QA1	Is the purpose of the study clearly stated?
QA2	Is the interest and the usefulness of the work clearly presented?
QA3	Is the study methodology clearly established?
QA4	Are the concepts of the approach clearly defined?

QA5	Is the work compared and measured with other similar work?
QA6	Are the limitations of the work clearly mentioned?

Each writer independently assesses the study according to these criteria, and the scores are then totalled across all experts to determine the overall mark. For a study to be accepted for the next process, the total mark, derived from summing the scores from all three experts, must exceed 3.0. This threshold ensures that only studies meeting a certain quality standard proceed further. The results are shown in Table 4.

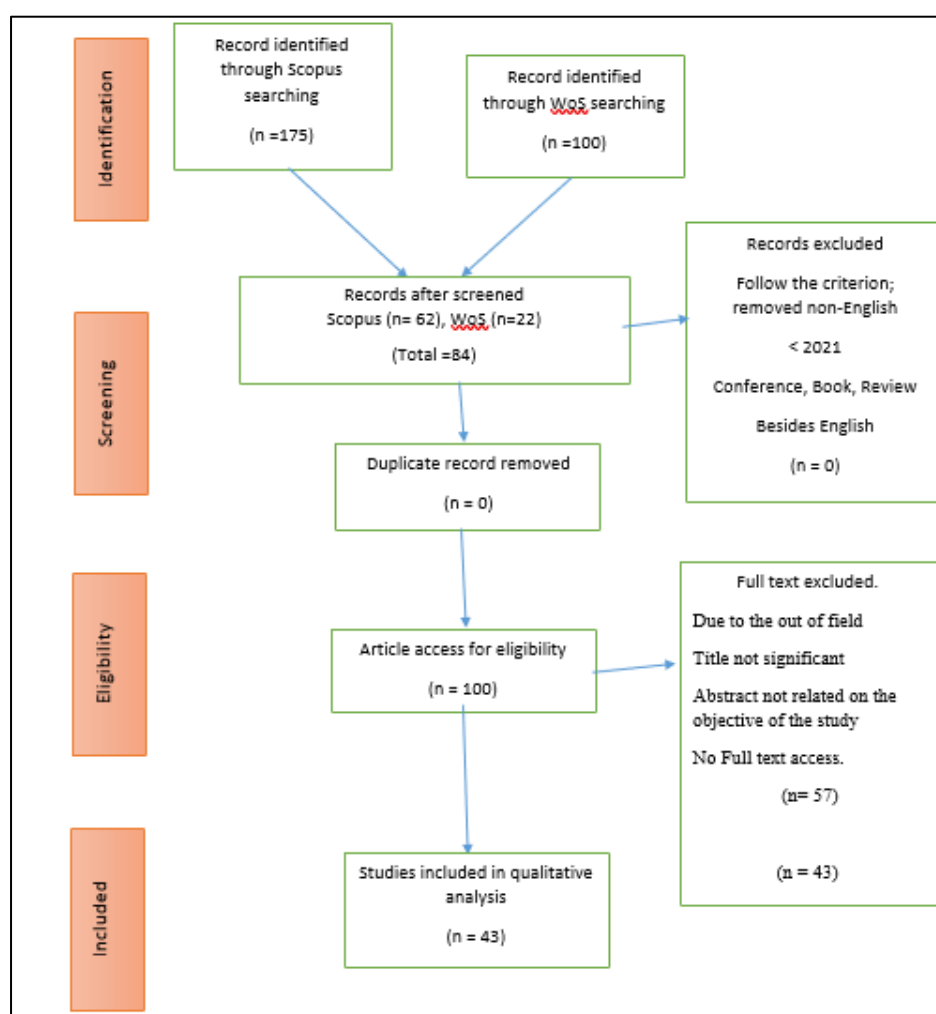


Figure 2 Flow diagram of the proposed searching study (Moher D, Liberati A, Tetzlaff J, 2009)

Table 4 Quality Assessment of 41 Selected Documents

Quality Assessment of 41 Scopus Abstracts										
Assessment based only on information explicitly reported in each abstract. Y = 1, P = 0.5, N = 0.										
Study	Author and	Article Title	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	Total Mar	Percentag

	Year		1	2	3	4	5	6	k	e (%)	
PS1	Shakiba N.; Stapleton K. (2024)	Persian immigrants' language choice for swearing: the effects of socio-biographical variables and personality traits	Y	Y	Y	P	P	N	4.0	66.67%	
PS2	Pekbay B.; Lagarde S.M.; Keyzer-Dekker C.M.; de Vries F.C.; de Jonge J.; Hendriks J.M. (2025)	Serve Coffee, Hold Clamps, Do Not Complain: Student Perceptions and Experiences Regarding Surgery	Y	Y	Y	P	P	N	4.0	66.67%	
PS3	Gottesfeld D. (2014)	"Forbidden words": Palestinian women's literature in Israel-between conservatism and subversion	Y	P	P	P	P	N	3.0	50.00%	
PS4	Tian X.; Deng Y. (2017)	Organizational Hierarchy, Deprived Masculinity, and Confrontational Practices: Men Doing Women's Jobs in a Global Factory	Y	Y	Y	Y	P	N	4.5	75.00%	
PS5	Sutarsih; Subyantoro; Mardikantoro H.B.; Yuniawan T. (2024)	Cases of Women's Hate Speech Due to the Use of Taboo Language on Social Media	Y	Y	Y	Y	P	N	4.5	75.00%	
PS6	Furman M. (2018)	Of mat and men: Taboo words and the language of Russian female punks	Y	Y	Y	Y	P	N	4.5	75.00%	

PS7	Chiaro D. (2007)	Not in front of the children? An analysis of sex on screen in Italy	Y	P	P	P	P	N	3.0	50.00%	
PS8	Maazallahi E.; Hajibagheri Z. (2022)	THE EFFECT OF TRANSLATOR' GENDER ON THE CENSORSHIP OF TABOOS IN IRANIAN CONTEXT	Y	P	Y	Y	P	N	4.0	66.67%	
PS9	Khaghaninejad M.S.; Ahmadi A.; Shegeft T. (2020)	An Investigation into the Effect of Foreign Language Learning on the Use of Taboo Words in the Learners' First Language Discourse	Y	P	Y	P	P	N	3.5	58.33%	
PS10	Eid O.A.A.-H. (2021)	A socio-pragmatic analysis of taboo language using animal names in facebook messenger in the Jordanian setting: A gender-based study	Y	P	Y	P	P	N	3.5	58.33%	
PS11	Alzubaidi M.; Hatoss A. (2025)	What Can Taboo Words Tell Us About Language Choices? Saudi Females' Attitudes towards Taboo Words in English and Arabic	Y	Y	Y	P	P	N	4.0	66.67%	
PS12	Shafto M.A.; Abrams L.; James L.E.; Hu P.; Gray G.	Relating Tabooness to Humor and Arousal Ratings	Y	Y	Y	Y	P	N	4.5	75.00%	

	(2024)	in American English: What the F*** Is so Funny?									
PS13	Stephens R.; Zile A. (2017)	Does Emotional Arousal Influence Swearing Fluency?	Y	Y	Y	Y	P	N	4.5	75.00%	
PS14	Palacios Martínez I.M. (2021)	Taboo vocatives in the language of London teenagers	Y	P	Y	Y	Y	N	4.5	75.00%	
PS15	Mitchell A. (2015)	Words that smell like father-in-law: A linguistic description of the Datooga avoidance register	Y	P	P	Y	N	N	3.0	50.00%	
PS16	Klerk V.D. (1992)	How taboo are taboo words for girls?	Y	Y	P	P	Y	N	4.0	66.67%	
PS17	Dorfman D.D.; Grossberg J.M.; Kroeker L. (1965)	Recognition of taboo stimuli as a function of exposure time	Y	P	Y	Y	Y	N	4.5	75.00%	
PS18	Defina; Rizkilah R.; Hastuti D. (2024)	Cirebon Coastal Adolescents' Use of Taboo Language and Its Relation to Parental Education; [Penggunaan Bahasa Tabu Remaja Pesisir Cirebon dan Hubungannya dengan Pendidikan Orang Tua]	Y	P	Y	P	P	N	3.5	58.33%	
PS19	Balikienė M.; Dečiunienė J.; Navickas V.	Managing The Menstrual Communication Taboo In	P	P	Y	P	Y	N	3.5	58.33%	

	(2022)	Lithuania: Past And Present									
PS20	Engoren M.; Brown R.R.; Dubovoy A. (2017)	A retrospective analysis of the effect of blood transfusion on cerebral oximetry entropy and acute kidney injury	Y	P	Y	Y	Y	N	4.5	75.00%	
PS21	Muharremi I.; Krasniqi A. (2026)	The Vulgar Use Of Language In Graffiti On The Walls Of Pristina	Y	Y	P	Y	P	N	4.0	66.67%	
PS22	Kapoor S. (2022)	“Don't act like a Sati Savitri!”: Impoliteness in Indian YouTube comments	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	5.0	83.33%	
PS23	Reilly J.; Zuckerman B.; Kelly A.; Flurie M.; Rao S. (2020)	Neuromodulation of cursing in American English: A combined tDCS and pupillometry study	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	5.0	83.33%	
PS24	Walsh T. (2017)	Public nuisance, race and gender	Y	Y	P	Y	P	N	4.0	66.67%	
PS25	Love R. (2021)	Swearing in informal spoken English: 1990s-2010s	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	P	5.5	91.67%	
PS26	Kwarteng J.; Perfumi S.C.; Farrell T.; Third A.; Fernandez M. (2022)	Misogynoir: challenges in detecting intersectional hate	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	P	5.5	91.67%	
PS27	Guzzetti M. (2023)	Forbidden Words and Female Anatomy Gender and	Y	Y	P	Y	Y	N	4.5	75.00%	

		Language Taboos in the Oxford English Dictionary									
PS28	Van Hedger S.C.; Heald S.L.M.; Nusbaum H.C. (2016)	What the [bleep]? Enhanced absolute pitch memory for a 1000 Hz sine tone	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	5.0	83.33%	
PS29	Yousefinaghan i S.; Dara R.; MacKay M.; Papadopoulos A.; Sharif S. (2022)	Trust and Engagement on Twitter During the Management of COVID-19 Pandemic: The Effect of Gender and Position	Y	P	P	P	Y	N	3.5	58.33%	
PS30	Kapoor H. (2016)	Swears in Context: The Difference Between Casual and Abusive Swearing	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	5.0	83.33%	
PS31	White K.K.; Abrams L.; LaBat L.R.; Rhynes A.M. (2016)	Competing influences of emotion and phonology during picture- word interference	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	5.0	83.33%	
PS32	Rahmat W.; Putra L.D.; Fitriyah R. (2025)	How do the ethnicity minangkabau male express their masculinity in language: A identity point of view	Y	P	Y	Y	P	N	4.0	66.67%	
PS33	Kunene D.P. (1958)	Notes on Hlonepha Among the Southern Sotho	Y	P	P	Y	P	N	3.5	58.33%	
PS34	Qassim N.A.; Abbas N.F.	A Socio- Pragmatic Study of Profanity and	Y	Y	Y	Y	P	N	4.5	75.00%	

	(2025)	Derogatory Words in Doja Cat's Songs: A Corpus-Based Study									
PS35	Manning S.K.; Goldstein F.D. (1976)	Recall of Emotional and Neutral Words as a Function of Rate and Organization of List Presentation	Y	P	Y	Y	Y	N	4.5	75.00%	
PS36	Mujevic, D (2025)	Negative Stereotypes About Women In Gender-Marked Phrases Of Rozaje's Speech	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	4.0	66.67%	
PS37	Szczyglowska, T (2024)	Using corpus linguistics to uncover repeated patterns of language use in important 20th century speeches by American women	Y	P	P	P	P	N	3.0	50.00%	
PS38	Windsor, L; Mitchell, SM; Osborn, T; Dietrich, B; Hampton, AJ (2022)	Gender, language, and representation in the United States Senate	Y	P	Y	Y	Y	N	4.5	75.00%	
PS39	Lomotey, BA (2018)	Making Spanish gender fair: a review of anti-sexist language reform attempts from a language planning perspective	Y	Y	P	Y	Y	P	5.0	83.33%	
PS40	Eftimova, A (2020)	The Tension Between Masculine And Feminine Nouns In The Language	Y	Y	P	Y	P	N	4.0	66.67%	

		Of Political Correctness										
PS41	McGarry, T; Kiser, K (2017)	Adverbial clauses and speaker and interlocutor gender in Shakespeare's plays	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	P	5.5	91.67%		

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Quality of Assessment

Table 4 presents the results of the quality assessment conducted on the selected primary studies. Overall, the quality of the reviewed articles can be categorized as follows:

- **High quality ($\geq 80\%$):** Represented by the majority of the included studies.
- **Moderate quality (60–79%):** Primarily consisted of conceptual or descriptive studies.
- **Lower quality ($< 60\%$):** Mainly included survey-based studies or exploratory abstracts.

Table 5 Analysis for Themes

Theme	Theme Name	Number of articles	Percentage (%)	Rank
T 1	Sociolinguistic Patterns and Gendered Variation in Swearing and Taboo Language	9	21.95	1
T 2	Taboo and Offensive Language as Identity, Power, Resistance, and Gender Performance	8	19.51	2
T3	Online Hate Speech, Impoliteness, and Gendered Digital Communication	4	9.76	5
T4	Censorship, Euphemism, Avoidance, Translation, and Gender-Fair Language Reform	8	19.51	2
T5	Cognitive, Emotional, Neurological, and Perceptual Processing of Taboo Language	7	17.07	4
T6	Gendered Discourse and Representation Beyond Swearing	3	7.32	6
T7	Contextual and Peripheral Uses of Offensive or Forbidden Terminology	2	4.88	7
Total		41	100.00	

Theme 1 (T1): Sociolinguistic Patterns and Gendered Variation in Swearing and Taboo Language

PS ID	Authors	Article Title
PS1	Shakiba and Stapleton (2024)	Persian immigrants' language choice for swearing: the effects of socio-biographical variables and personality traits
PS9	Khaghaninejad, Ahmadi, and Shegeft (2020)	An Investigation into the Effect of Foreign Language Learning on the Use of Taboo Words in the Learners' First Language Discourse
PS10	Eid (2021)	A socio-pragmatic analysis of taboo language using animal names in Facebook Messenger in the Jordanian setting: A gender-based study
PS11	Alzubaidi and Hatoss (2025)	What Can Taboo Words Tell Us About Language Choices? Saudi Females' Attitudes towards Taboo Words in English and Arabic
PS14	Palacios Martínez (2021)	Taboo vocatives in the language of London teenagers
PS16	Klerk (1992)	How taboo are taboo words for girls?
PS18	Defina, Rizkilah, and Hastuti (2024)	Cirebon Coastal Adolescents' Use of Taboo Language and Its Relation to Parental Education
PS25	Love (2021)	Swearing in informal spoken English: 1990s–2010s
PS30	Kapoor (2016)	Swears in Context: The Difference Between Casual and Abusive Swearing

The table presents nine studies categorised under Theme 1: Gendered Patterns in Swearing and Taboo Language. Together, these studies examine how swearing and taboo-language use varies according to gender and other sociolinguistic factors, including age, culture, multilingualism, personality, education, social relationships, and communication setting. The studies by Shakiba and Stapleton (2024), Khaghaninejad et al. (2020), and Alzubaidi and Hatoss (2025) focus particularly on multilingual speakers, showing that language choice and attitudes towards taboo expressions are influenced by gender, emotional attachment to language, proficiency, and cultural background. Eid (2021), Klerk (1992), Defina et al. (2024), and Love (2021) investigate gender differences in the frequency and forms of taboo-language use across Jordanian, South African, Indonesian, and British contexts.

Their findings generally suggest that males use taboo expressions more frequently, although female speakers are also familiar with and actively use such language, challenging traditional gender stereotypes. Palacios Martínez (2021) and Kapoor (2016) further demonstrate that taboo expressions are highly context-dependent and may function as insults, humour, solidarity, affection, or abuse. Overall, the studies indicate that gendered swearing patterns are socially constructed and shaped by specific cultural and interactional environments rather than determined by gender alone.

Theme 2 (T2): Taboo and Offensive Language as Identity, Power, Resistance, and Gender Performance

PS ID	Authors	Article Title
PS3	Gottesfeld (2014)	“Forbidden words”: Palestinian women’s literature in Israel—between conservatism and subversion
PS7	Tian and Deng (2017)	Organizational Hierarchy, Deprived Masculinity, and Confrontational Practices: Men Doing Women’s Jobs in a Global Factory
PS6	Furman (2018)	Of mat and men: Taboo words and the language of Russian female punks
PS21	Muharremi and Krasniqi (2026)	The Vulgar Use of Language in Graffiti on the Walls of Pristina
PS24	Walsh (2017)	Public nuisance, race and gender
PS32	Rahmat, Putra, and Fitriyah (2025)	How do the ethnicity Minangkabau male express their masculinity in language: An identity point of view
PS34	Qassim and Abbas (2025)	A Socio-Pragmatic Study of Profanity and Derogatory Words in Doja Cat’s Songs: A Corpus-Based Study
PS36	Mujevic (2025)	Negative Stereotypes About Women in Gender-Marked Phrases of Rozaje’s Speech

The table presents eight studies grouped under Theme 2: Taboo Language, Identity, Power, and Resistance. These studies demonstrate that taboo, vulgar, and offensive language is not used solely to express anger or aggression; it also functions as a social resource for constructing identity, challenging authority, performing gender, and resisting dominant expectations. Gottesfeld (2014) shows how Palestinian women writers use forbidden language to challenge conservative literary and gender norms, while Furman (2018) explains how Russian female punks employ taboo words to claim authority and construct an alternative form of femininity. Tian and Deng (2017) and Rahmat et al. (2025) examine the relationship between profanity and masculinity, showing how confrontational language may be used to defend male identity and social status. Muharremi and Krasniqi (2026) identify vulgar graffiti as a form of political protest and public resistance, whereas Walsh (2017) interprets offensive language as an expression of marginalisation and powerlessness. Qassim and Abbas (2025) analyse profanity in popular music as a marker of artistic and gender identity. In contrast, Mujevic (2025) shows how gendered expressions may reproduce misogynistic stereotypes and unequal representations of women.

Theme 3 (T3): Online Hate Speech, Impoliteness, and Gendered Digital Communication

PS ID	Authors	Article Title
PS5	Sutarsih et al. (2024)	Cases of Women’s Hate Speech Due to the Use of Taboo Language on Social Media
PS22	Kapoor (2022)	“Don’t act like a Sati Savitri!”: Impoliteness in Indian YouTube comments

PS26	Kwarteng et al. (2022)	Misogynoir: challenges in detecting intersectional hate
PS29	Yousefinaghani et al. (2022)	Trust and Engagement on Twitter During the Management of COVID-19 Pandemic: The Effect of Gender and Position

The table presents four studies grouped under Theme 3: Online Hate Speech and Gendered Impoliteness. Collectively, these studies examine how offensive, discriminatory, and impolite language is produced, interpreted, regulated, and detected across social-media platforms. Sutarsih et al. (2024) focus on Indonesian women's use of taboo language on social media, identifying several categories of hate speech and highlighting the potential legal consequences of such expressions. Kapoor (2022) examines impoliteness in Indian YouTube comments and shows that controversial topics encourage more direct insults, challenges, and gender-based remarks, while female users employ fewer overt impoliteness strategies than male users. Kwarteng et al. (2022) investigate the automated detection of misogynoir, demonstrating that existing hate-speech detection tools often fail to recognise subtle, context-dependent forms of racism and misogyny directed at Black women. Yousefinaghani et al. (2022) analyse Twitter interactions during the COVID-19 pandemic and show that the frequency of offensive language varies according to the gender and professional position of public leaders. Overall, the studies indicate that online gendered impoliteness is shaped by platform norms, social identities, controversiality, legal frameworks, and technological limitations.

Theme 4 (T4): Censorship, Euphemism, Avoidance, Translation, and Gender-Fair Language Reform

PS ID	Authors	Article Title
PS7	Chiaro (2007)	Not in front of the children? An analysis of sex on screen in Italy
PS8	Maazallahi and Hajibagheri (2022)	The Effect of Translator's Gender on the Censorship of Taboos in Iranian Context
PS15	Mitchell (2015)	Words that smell like father-in-law: A linguistic description of the Datooga avoidance register
PS19	Balikienė, Dečiunienė, and Navickas (2022)	Managing the Menstrual Communication Taboo in Lithuania: Past and Present
PS27	Guzzetti (2023)	Forbidden Words and Female Anatomy: Gender and Language Taboos in the Oxford English Dictionary
PS33	Kunene (1958)	Notes on Hlonepha Among the Southern Sotho
PS39	Lomotey (2018)	Making Spanish gender fair: a review of anti-sexist language reform attempts from a language planning perspective
PS40	Eftimova (2020)	The Tension Between Masculine and Feminine Nouns in the Language of Political Correctness

The table presents eight studies categorised under Theme 4: Censorship, Euphemism, Avoidance, Translation, and Gender-Fair Language Reform. These studies examine how culturally sensitive, taboo, and gender-related meanings are controlled, softened, avoided, translated, or deliberately changed.

Chiaro (2007) and Maazallahi and Hajibagheri (2022) focus on censorship in translation, showing that taboo expressions may be reduced, omitted, or intensified according to cultural norms and the translator's gender. Mitchell (2015) and Kunene (1958) investigate traditional avoidance registers in African communities, where married women avoid certain names and related words as a sign of respect towards senior in-laws. Balikienė et al. (2022) examine euphemistic and dysphemistic expressions used to communicate about menstruation, while Guzzetti (2023) analyses gender bias and censorship in dictionary representations of female anatomy. Finally, Lomotey (2018) and Eftimova (2020) address gender-fair language reform, demonstrating the difficulties involved in replacing sexist or male-centred forms with more inclusive alternatives. Overall, the studies show that language regulation reflects cultural values, gender ideologies, politeness expectations, and institutional power.

Theme 5 (T5): Cognitive, Emotional, Neurological, and Perceptual Processing of Taboo Language

PS ID	Authors	Article Title
PS12	Shafto et al. (2024)	Relating Tabooness to Humor and Arousal Ratings in American English: What the F*** Is so Funny?
PS13	Stephens and Zile (2017)	Does Emotional Arousal Influence Swearing Fluency?
PS17	Dorfman, Grossberg, and Kroeker (1965)	Recognition of taboo stimuli as a function of exposure time
PS23	Reilly et al. (2020)	Neuromodulation of cursing in American English: A combined tDCS and pupillometry study
PS28	Van Hedger, Heald, and Nusbaum (2016)	What the [bleep]? Enhanced absolute pitch memory for a 1000 Hz sine tone
PS33	Kunene (1958)	Notes on Hlonepha Among the Southern Sotho
PS31	White et al. (2016)	Competing influences of emotion and phonology during picture-word interference
PS35	Manning and Goldstein (1976)	Recall of Emotional and Neutral Words as a Function of Rate and Organization of List Presentation

The table presents studies grouped under Theme 5: Cognitive, Emotional, Neurological, and Perceptual Processing of Taboo Language. These studies examine how taboo words affect attention, emotional arousal, memory, recognition, speech production, and neurological responses. Shafto et al. (2024) show that perceived tabooess is positively associated with humour and emotional arousal, while Stephens and Zile (2017) demonstrate that increased emotional arousal can improve swearing fluency. Dorfman et al. (1965) and Manning and Goldstein (1976) investigate the recognition and recall of taboo words, indicating that emotionally charged words may be processed and remembered differently from neutral vocabulary.

Reilly et al. (2020) examine the neurological and physiological processing of cursing, whereas White et al. (2016) show that taboo distractors interfere with picture naming and produce lasting emotional effects on speech processing. Van Hedger et al. (2016) extend the theme to auditory memory by studying recognition of the censor tone associated with taboo words. Overall, the findings demonstrate that taboo language possesses distinctive emotional and cognitive properties that make it highly noticeable, memorable, and difficult to ignore.

Theme 6 (T6): Gendered Discourse and Representation Beyond Swearing

PS ID	Authors	Article Title
PS37	Szczyglowska (2024)	Using corpus linguistics to uncover repeated patterns of language use in important 20th century speeches by American women
PS38	Windsor et al. (2022)	Gender, language, and representation in the United States Senate
PS41	McGarry and Kiser (2017)	Adverbial clauses and speaker and interlocutor gender in Shakespeare's plays

The table presents three studies categorised under Theme 6: Gendered Discourse and Representation Beyond Swearing. Unlike the previous themes, these studies do not focus primarily on taboo or offensive language. Instead, they examine how gender is constructed and represented through broader linguistic patterns in political and literary discourse. Szczyglowska (2024) applies corpus-linguistic techniques to speeches delivered by American women, identifying recurring language patterns and differences in the representation of men and women. Windsor et al. (2022) analyse a large corpus of speeches from the United States Senate and show that female senators adjust their linguistic strategies according to institutional roles, political topics, election periods, and length of service. Their findings demonstrate that women may speak for women, use linguistic features socially associated with women, or adopt the discourse conventions expected of senators. McGarry and Kiser (2017) investigate gender differences in the use of adverbial clauses in Shakespeare's plays, finding only limited differences between male and female characters. Overall, these studies suggest that gendered discourse is context-dependent and influenced by genre, institutional position, historical period, topic, and communicative purpose rather than by gender alone.

Theme 7 (T7): Contextual and Peripheral Uses of Offensive or Forbidden Terminology

PS ID	Authors	Article Title
PS2	Pekbay et al. (2025)	Serve Coffee, Hold Clamps, Do Not Complain: Student Perceptions and Experiences Regarding Surgery
PS20	Engoren, Brown, and Dubovoy (2017)	A retrospective analysis of the effect of blood transfusion on cerebral oximetry entropy and acute kidney injury

The table presents two studies classified under Theme 7: Contextual and Peripheral Uses of Offensive or Forbidden Terminology. These studies are only indirectly related to the main focus on taboo, offensive, or gendered language. Pekbay et al. (2025) examine medical students' perceptions and experiences during surgical training. Although offensive language is mentioned as one form of negative treatment associated with hierarchy, poor supervision, and non-constructive feedback, it is not the central subject of the study. Therefore, the article has limited relevance to linguistic analyses of offensive language. Engoren, Brown, and Dubovoy (2017), meanwhile, investigate blood transfusion, cerebral oxygenation, and acute kidney injury. The phrase "forbidden word entropy" appears only as a technical statistical measure and has no connection to taboo language, swearing, or gendered discourse. Overall, these articles demonstrate the importance of carefully applying inclusion and exclusion criteria during the screening process. They should be treated as peripheral studies, and PS20 in particular may be considered a false-positive search result that should be excluded from the final thematic synthesis.

The systematic review of 41 studies shows that taboo language is a **multidimensional form of communication shaped by gender, social context, culture, identity, power, digital environments, and cognitive processes**. The findings suggest that gender differences are not fixed, as taboo-language use varies according to social relationships, cultural background, and communicative settings. Taboo language can also express emotions, build solidarity, construct identity, negotiate power, and challenge social expectations. Overall, the review shows that taboo language should be understood beyond simple male–female differences and examined through social, cultural, digital, and cognitive factors. Future research should explore more diverse cultures, languages, and social contexts to provide a broader understanding of how gender influences the use and meaning of taboo language.

The findings from Theme 1 indicate that although men generally use taboo expressions more frequently, women also use and understand taboo language actively, challenging traditional gender stereotypes (Eid, 2021; de Klerk, 1992; Defina et al., 2024; Love, 2021). Importantly, Shakiba and Stapleton (2024), Khaghaninejad et al. (2020), and Alzubaidi and Hatoss (2025) show that language choice is also influenced by multilingualism, cultural background, proficiency, and emotional attachment to language. Taboo language further functions as a resource for identity construction, power negotiation, resistance, and gender performance (Gottesfeld, 2014; Furman, 2018; Tian & Deng, 2017; Rahmat et al., 2025). In digital contexts, Sutarsih et al. (2024), Kapoor (2022), and Kwarteng et al. (2022) demonstrate that gendered impoliteness and hate speech are influenced by platform norms, social identities, and technological limitations. Meanwhile, studies on censorship and language reform show that taboo meanings are regulated according to cultural values, politeness, gender ideologies, and institutional power (Chiaro, 2007; Maazallahi & Hajibagheri, 2022; Balikienė et al., 2022; Lomotey, 2018). Cognitive studies further confirm that taboo words can attract attention, increase emotional arousal, and influence memory and language processing (Shafto et al., 2024; Stephens & Zile, 2017; Reilly et al., 2020).

These findings have important implications for understanding gendered language without treating men and women as fixed or uniform categories. In line with Community of Practice Theory and Gender Performativity Theory, taboo-language use should be examined according to specific communities, relationships, cultural settings, and communicative purposes rather than gender alone. Future research should therefore include **more diverse cultures, languages, age groups, and digital platforms**, particularly because the current review shows considerable variation across social and cultural contexts. Further studies could also investigate the intersection of gender with ethnicity, social position, multilingualism, and online identity, while examining how artificial intelligence and automated moderation handle subtle forms of gendered and intersectional hate speech. Longitudinal and interdisciplinary research combining sociolinguistic, cultural, digital, and cognitive approaches would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how taboo language changes over time and how its meanings are produced, interpreted, and regulated.

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