

Concept and Universal Gender Stereotypes

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Abstract:

In this article we discuss the issue of genderology, how this concept has entered the modern linguistic paradigm. Issues related to the development of a methodology for the linguistic study of gender, an explanation of the many concepts of the concept of "gender", with regard to the current state of gender studies in the West, what can be said today about the existence of gender studies proper that study both sexes, or rather, the process of social construction of differences between the sexes, gender specificity of speech, representation of male and female in the language.

Keywords: gender, linguistic research, gender studies, male and female, "masculine" and "feminine".

Introduction

The concept of "gender" entered the modern linguistic paradigm much later than in other humanities, namely in the second half of the 20th century. Issues related to the development of a methodology for the linguistic study of gender, the creation of tools for gender studies, are now being put at the forefront in Russian linguistics. The main provision in considering this issue is the distinction between the concepts of sex and gender. Gender is an object of culture: it is correlated with social classification into "masculine" and "feminine". The constancy of gender must be recognized, but the diversity of gender must also be recognized" [1, 26].

The main part

Modern linguistics is characterized by the emergence of new research paradigms, which leads to the search for diverse and effective methods for analyzing linguistic material. The study of verbal associations has become one of the most popular and developed areas in psycholinguistic research. "The new associative paradigm of communicative-pragmatic linguistics allows us to explore the reflection of the concept sphere in the language picture of the world with a sufficient degree of completeness, to explicate various fragments and levels of the linguistic personality, in particular, to reconstruct the structure of concepts" [2, 36].

In the scientific literature, the belief gradually formed that considering the category of sex solely as a biological phenomenon impoverishes and simplifies the essence of this phenomenon, since masculinity and femininity are not only phylogenetically determined properties of the psyche, but also sociocultural formations that develop in ontogenesis. In this regard, along with the term "gender", a special term "gender" was introduced into scientific use [3, el. resource].

At the present stage, a number of works have already appeared, such as E.I. Goroshko "Linguistic Consciousness: Gender Paradigm" (2003); E.S. Gritsenko "Language. Discourse. Gender (2005); monograph by A.V. Kirilina "Gender: Linguistic Aspects" (1999); G.E. Kreidlin, "Men and Women in Nonverbal Communication" (2005). They are an attempt to systematically comprehend and describe the language in connection with the phenomenon of gender, where a theoretical model of gender is created and methodological approaches to the study of the problem of gender in linguistics are systematized.

Researchers were mainly interested in two questions: how a man and a woman speak (gender-specific speech) and how they talk about a man and a woman (representation of male and female in language). As for domestic linguistics, the first regular research in this area began to be carried out only in the late 80s - early 90s. The interest of domestic scientists in gender issues is often associated with the openness of Russian society in the post-Soviet period or with the influence of feminist ideas. Given that gender relations permeate most areas of human activity, the study of gender is interdisciplinary. But it is linguistics that has the necessary set of methods and techniques to study the manifestation of gender in language and speech, therefore, we can talk about joining forces and forming a new direction in the linguistic science of linguistic genderology. The inclusion of a gender parameter in linguistic research will significantly expand the understanding of language as a means of constructing the social world.

Despite the increased interest in the term "gender" in recent years, there are a number of difficulties in its use. On the one hand, these difficulties are due to the comparative novelty of this concept, and, on the other hand, the translation and interpretation of foreign literature on this issue. This, in turn, explains many concepts of gender. The term "gender" emphasizes "not a natural, but a socio-cultural reason for gender differences" [4, 54] and is used to denote the social roles assigned to people by society, as well as moral norms and rules, depending on their biological sex.

As for the current state of gender studies in the West, there are usually three main approaches [5, 12; Kolosova 1996: 12].

The first approach boils down to interpreting the exclusively social nature of the language of women and men and is aimed at identifying those linguistic differences that can be explained by the peculiarities of the redistribution of social roles in society. At the same time, "male" or "female" languages are defined as derivatives of the main language, used in cases where speech partners occupy an unequal position in society.

The second - sociopsycholinguistic approach - scientifically reduces the "female" and "male" language to the characteristics of the linguistic behavior of the sexes. For scientists working in this direction, statistical indicators or the determination of average parameters are of fundamental importance and form the framework for building psycholinguistic theories of male and female types of speech behavior.

Representatives of the third direction generally focus their attention on the cognitive aspect of differences in the linguistic behavior of the sexes. For them, it turns out to be more significant not only to determine the frequency of differences and operate with its indicators, but also to create holistic linguistic models of the cognitive foundations of language categories [5, 12; Kolosova 1996: 12].

In the modern scientific paradigm, all three approaches are considered complementary, and only in their totality do they have explanatory power.

Along with the study of discrimination against women in language, other areas of research emerged: sociolinguistic, psycholinguistic, linguoculturological study of gender. Of particular interest are men's studies, designed to answer questions about how masculinity is constructed by society, what types of masculinity exist in a given culture at a given time, how this affects people's behavior, what are the norms and requirements for men, etc.

All these directions, with the exception of the last one, which arose somewhat later, developed almost at the same time, influencing each other. For example, the sociolinguistic works of V. Labov in the 1970s provided important evidence of the social nature of gender differences in language use. V. Labov's conclusion was of great importance, since it refutes the hypothesis of the

natural conditioning of differences in speech and language use in men and women. V. Labov showed that the differences in pronunciation are not absolute. There is only a higher chance that women will choose one option and men will prefer the other. At the same time, preference depends on the social group, social expectations and other social rather than natural factors.

Today we can talk about the existence of actual gender studies that study both sexes, or rather, the process of social construction of differences between the sexes. Gender is considered an institutionalized and ritualized socio-cultural construct - one of the parameters of an individual's social identity. Gender as a product of culture reflects people's ideas about femininity and masculinity, recorded in folklore, fairy tales, and traditions and, of course, in language. In the collective consciousness there are gender stereotypes - simplified ideas about the properties and qualities of persons of one sex or another [6, 36].

There are a number of works that explore the image of a woman in the linguocultural aspect.

A.A. Aminova and A.N. Makhmutova in the article "Axiological features of the concept "woman" in Russian, English and Tatar" outlined the stereotypical ideas about a woman on the basis of her sexual, family, social and other qualities and properties, and thereby determined the specifics of the national-cultural community in comparing three languages .

In the work "Gender stereotypes according to the data of the language", A. Kirilina studied the gender aspects of Russian and German phraseology by describing vocabulary samples dedicated to the reflection of the cultural concept "woman" in Russian phraseology. She gave a number of parameters for the classification of phraseological units in the lexical-semantic field of the concept "woman" and other related concepts.

In the article by O.V. Patyanina "The external beauty of a woman in the image of A.S. Pushkin" revealed the characteristic in the depiction of Pushkin's ideal of the external beauty of a woman, considered questions about the ideal of a woman in the Russian national consciousness, about her manifestations in everyday life, reflected in proverbs and sayings, about the embodiment of the external appearance of a woman in a naive language picture of the world, etc. This analysis gives grounds for judgments about the features of the representation of appearance both in the national-linguistic picture of the world and in artistic creativity [7, 124].

In the study of T.A. Denisova "Representation of the concepts man and woman in the linguistic consciousness of the Russian people" analyzes the representation of the concepts "man" and "woman" by a system of texts (fiction and proverbs) in a diachronic aspect. The author demonstrates modern cognitive approaches to the study of linguistic consciousness, which make it possible to reveal the structural content of concepts.

In the work of L.Kh. Dzasezheva "The lexico-semantic field "woman" in different cultural communities (on the material of English, Russian and Kabardino-Circassian languages)" analyzes the lexical-semantic field "woman" in Russian, examines the nouns and substantive phraseological units that nominate a woman in Russian according to such semantic features as a female person, age, appearance, internal qualities and behavior.

N.A. Paskova's research is devoted to the study of lexical means of representing the concept "woman" in the texts of the Middle English period (from the 12th to the 15th centuries). Based on the analysis of vocabulary and textual material, the author of the work carried out the reconstruction of the concept of "woman" and identified such parameters as "names of female persons", "age", "occupation", etc., according to which a woman was categorized in the culture of the British XII - XV centuries.

Chinese scientists also showed interest in the concept of “woman”.

In Chinese scientific literature on sociology, sociolinguistics, literary criticism and cultural studies, the content of the concept “woman” is defined as “the most important part of humanity”.

For example, scholars Lu Zin and Hu Zhiqing revealed the phenomenon of asymmetry in the language, noted the gender discrimination presented in the language, examining female characteristics in the aspect of hieroglyphics and sociology. Linguistic gender discrimination, expressed in proverbs, was analyzed by scholar Yang Yongling.

Gender stereotypes have two planes of existence: on the one hand, it is a sociological entity associated with the general problem of a person belonging to a certain gender, and on the other, it is a cognitive phenomenon associated with mental representations and stereotyping mechanisms.

Conclusion

And so, the main, core part of gender stereotypes is easily explicated when analyzing the results of associative experiments. Moreover, the use of data from sociological, ethnographic and cross-cultural studies makes it possible to verify the conclusions of psycholinguistic research. At the same time, the results of associative experiments reveal not only archetypal gender stereotypes that conceptualize masculine and feminine images, but also a zone of prototypical representations.

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