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On the problem of gender and gender identity in various linguocultures

This article discusses the problems of gender and gender identity. Theoretical and practical aspects of gender identity formation are considered in particular such directions as sociolinguistic, linguoculturological, communicative-discursive and psycholinguistic. The necessity of a detailed study of the problems of masculinity and femininity from the perspective of person and language is revealed and justified. The article provides examples from various linguistic cultures that clearly demonstrate the differences and similarities in the cognitive perception of a person, taking into account his/her sex. It is revealed that the problem of gender and gender identity originates from ancient times, vividly reflected in oral folk art, in particular in proverbs and sayings. Gender identity in this perspective is a portrait of the person himself, his stereotypical ideas about his/her sex, taking into account culture, language and society. Based on the analysis carried out by the authors, it is shown that language does not just fix gender identity, characteristics or personality qualities related to gender, it constructs and creates them.

Keywords: gender, gender identity, masculinity, femininity, discourse, language, culture, sex.

Introduction

The development of gender studies in linguistics begins at the end of the XX century with the advent of postmodern philosophy. A new understanding of human activity has led to a revision of such basic categories as personality, sex, age, ethnicity, etc. These categories were considered biological for some time, however, new approaches to categorization, the development of new disciplines led to the formation of new terminology. The concept of “gender” appeared which, from a linguistic point of view, was supposed to describe the mechanisms of its manifestation in language and communication [1]. The modern interpretation of the concept affects various aspects of gender issues, including research not only in the field of masculinity and femininity, as well as the consideration of personality from the standpoint of individuality, identity, both national and gender. The range of issues expands to the study of gender within the framework of a person's cultural worldview and the reflection of his position in language, traditions, creativity, literature, etc. Fiction and creativity have become a storehouse of the history of the development of gender, gender relations and stereotypes, which from word of mouth, from an early age; subconsciously teach every person the question of gender and his gender identity.

Methods and materials

The research methodology was based on the theoretical and practical research material of such linguists as E. Goroshko, J. Mann, S. Vul, A. Kirilina and others. The research methodology is interdisciplinary in nature, which includes a continuous sampling method and comparative analysis. Using the research methods, the analysis of proverbs and sayings of Russian and English linguistic cultures was carried out, and lexical and semantic means reflecting masculinity and femininity were studied.

Results and discussion

In 1955, the American psychologist and sexologist John Money first identified the term “gender”, previously used in the lexical and grammatical category. Initially, this term referred to people whose sex was difficult to determine due to their special self-image. According to Money's conclusion, the differences between the sexes are the difference between their physiological belonging to masculinity or femininity, as well as to what processes occur in the head of the person himself. Money's ideas became a revolution that led to completely new research about man.

According to John Money, any person can be programmed, that is, taught to be a boy or a girl. In our time, this idea has found a great response, especially in Western culture. Up to 7 years old, the child is asex-

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ual. Over time, he must decide on his own which gender he wants to belong to. Accordingly, the form of addressing children, the manner of presenting information, cultural aspects of upbringing, perception and integrity of the organization of life activity are changing [2].

Moreover, John Money formulated the theory of “Adam's principle”, which is that at all critical stages of development, if the body does not receive any additional signals or commands, sexual differentiation automatically proceeds according to the female type, in order to create a male at each stage of development, it is necessary to “add” something that suppresses the feminine [3].

For example, in psychoanalysis, the role of mother and father in the upbringing of children is often discussed. The opinion that a child needs a mother first of all is not always true. At the very beginning of the child's development, the mother teaches him the ability to empathize, love, appreciate, respect. But normally, the father should take no less active part in the development of the boy, being a model of masculinity. The culture of education is directly reflected in the speech of parents in relation to their children, instilling in them from birth the traits of muscularity and femininity: “boys don't cry”, “you're a girl”, “you're a kid”, “man!”, “princess” and others.

In the XX century, several approaches to understanding gender and gender identity appeared. First of all, it is believed that gender is about sex. This means that human anatomy is primary and most important, since it determines the psychological state of a person and the manifestation of male and female traits. At the same time, gender is a cultural product with femininity and masculinity. The concepts that include “femininity” and “masculinity” are culturally defined, culturally formed and can vary quite a lot and change depending on the country, culture or era.

Western and Eastern cultures can serve as the most vivid examples of masculinity and femininity. The image of a woman carries a different understanding, meaning and values. The meaning-oriented values of Eastern culture create the image of a mother, the keeper of the hearth, and at the same time, endow her with fewer rights and opportunities than in Western culture. For a long time, a woman did not have the right to be on an equal footing with men. The values of Western culture are built primarily on the idea of equality and freedom, where every woman is on the same level as men and has all the possibilities as representatives of the stronger sex. For example, in Western culture, women and men can sit at the same table, while in Eastern culture, men and women sit separately. Nonverbal communication between the sexes is just as great in different cultures. In the West, looking a man in the eye is considered the norm, while in many Asian countries, women are not only not supposed to look a man in the eye, but also walk in front of him. Gestures and facial expressions of women are scarce, which defines them as modest, quiet and submissive representatives of the weaker sex. However, recently, within the framework of intercultural communication, Western women have noted that the position of the East has its advantages, creating protection, support and social guarantee in the person of a man.

If we turn to Chinese linguoculture, we can give such an example of masculinity and femininity as “Yin” and “Yang”, that is, “male” and “female”. According to ancient Chinese mythology, these two forces are interpreted as polar cosmic forces, the interaction of which gives life to the Universe. The word “Yin” symbolizes darkness, cold, humidity, softness, passivity, pliability, and “yang” — light, dryness, hardness, activity, etc. The union of a man with a woman resembles the cosmic marriage of Heaven with Earth during a thunderstorm. In most mythologies, the moon, earth and water are treated as feminine, and the sun, fire and heat are treated as masculine, etc. [3].

These examples of the opposition of male and female speak of a binary opposition, with the help of which human consciousness tries to order the world. The most striking examples of such an antonymy are the following: happiness — misfortune, white — black, man — woman, life — death, right — left, etc.

The perception of a linguistic personality, including a gender linguistic personality, is based on a system of subject meanings and stereotypes. Gender stereotypes are considered as coded images, represented in behavioral models and expressed in the language of the gender personality [4].

We have used metaphors, proverbs and sayings as examples, since they are, in our opinion, particularly informative material reflecting the problems of masculinity and femininity in a diachronic aspect.

Metaphors about “male” and “female” in different linguistic cultures are quite different, but the general idea is the same. It all boils down to the fact that everything good in a woman comes from a man, and everything bad in a man comes from a woman. For example, in Russian creativity there is a strong polarization of the properties of masculine and feminine, and everything masculine has a positive coloring. “Courageous” — patient, brave, invincible”. Endowing a woman with masculine traits elevates her, and female traits humiliate a man. If a woman has a “man's heart”, this is good, whereas a man with a woman's heart is a weakling, a coward. Cowardly voivodes are called “Scopians with a woman's heart”. The following words and expres-

sions with different emotional coloring are recorded in the language: flirtatious, narcissistic, narcissist, bitch, hysterical, masculine character, cunning, emotionality and so on.

Also relevant are such stable combinations as: «все бабы — дуры», «волос долгий, ум короткий», «муж — глава семьи», «бабы умы разоряют дома», «женщина хитрее черта», «где баба, там не надобен черт», «где сатана не сможет, туда бабу пошлет», «Women are wacky, women are vain; they'd rather be pretty than have a good brain», «A man without ambition is like a woman without looks», «When an ass climbs a ladder, we may find wisdom in a woman», «Women have nine measures of talk», «A woman's hair is long; her tongue is longer», «Any woman can keep a secret, but she generally needs one other woman to help her».

According to the concept of the French anthropologist and writer Nicole-Claude Mathieu, who was engaged in gender studies and materialistic feminism, gender and sex are practically unrelated. Moreover, gender constructs gender. In other words, the concept that exists in culture, i.e. biological differences that are in demand in culture, acquire the character of super-valuable.

Robert Stoller wrote in 1992 that gender identity is a complex system of beliefs about oneself [2]. In his opinion, in order to have a certain gender identity, sex is not important, since it does not say anything about the person himself. Much more important are the ideas of the person himself, formed by culture, society and individual experience. According to R. Stoller, the gender identity of an individual is formed throughout life. And it is impossible to guess at what stage of formation it will stop.

According to the popular Russian psychotherapist Isaev D., gender identity should give awareness of one's gender identity, that is, "I am aware, I understand who I am". In the understanding of ordinary people, such ideas as "male identity" and "female identity" have become entrenched. In fact, there is only the concept of "gender identity", which includes all the features of carriers and their definitions of a particular gender group.

In his work "Man in a Changing World", Kon I. writes that gender identity is a basic, fundamental sense of belonging to a certain gender, awareness of oneself as a man, a woman or a being of some other, "intermediate" or "third" sex [3]. A person can have more than one personality. There is one person at home, a second at work, and a third in society. And each of these identities is authentic. This makes it difficult to unambiguously define "male" and "female" and suggests certain ideological conclusions: if the gender division of labor and the norms of male and female behavior are not universal, but historically changeable, then they can and should be treated critically, that is, they should be "deconstructed". This also applies to the content of the categories of masculinity and femininity.

Since the 90s of the XX century, the term "gender" has appeared in domestic scientific publications; gender issues have become available to a wide range of readers. A.V. Kirilina conducted an analysis of the works, as a result of which several areas of gender research in the field of linguistics were identified.

Firstly, sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic teachings, in which the features of written and oral texts generated by men and women were studied. This direction has found a wide response not only among linguists, but also in forensic examination. An interesting fact is that male and female speeches have their own identification features. Scientists also actively worked with the signs of the text reflecting falsification.

Secondly, the study of the names of female and male persons, the category of gender and related problems of reference.

The above directions became the methodological basis of gender studies that emerged in the late 90s. To date, gender linguistics deals with the problems of gender research. It includes the study of such areas as socio- and psycholinguistic, linguoculturological and communicative-discursive.

Goroshko E.I. within the framework of the socio- and psycholinguistic direction conducted a number of experiments in which the analysis of texts, a free associative experiment was carried out [5]. Goroshko E.I. showed the influence on speech behavior not only of gender, but also of age, level of education and the nature of social activity of the subjects. Experiments have shown that the smallest differences are found in persons with higher education engaged in intellectual activity [6].

The sex of the speaker is one of the most important parameters in the study of phonetic aspects of speech: experimental studies are devoted to differences in the pronunciation of men and women.

It is impossible not to mention the studies of foreign scientists who highlight the lexical features of the manifestation of femininity and masculinity. For example, the expression "young man". In this context, "man" implies a male person, while lexically "man" is neutral. The same phenomenon is also carried by the English word person- man, which originally meant both the concept of "person" and the concept of "man".

After the surge of the feminist movement, this word secured only the concept of “man”. Although in modern jargon, the context of “man”, “dude”, etc. can still occur.

Despite the fact that the understanding of gender as a factor in the study of sociolinguistic and pragmatic problems is the most common, “gender is considered not only as a category of sociolinguistics and not so much as such, and it is this view that allows us to avoid essentialism and overcome the biodeterministic approach” [7].

Within the framework of the linguoculturological direction, such concepts as masculinity and femininity were identified. According to some scientists, these concepts have long acquired the form of concepts that differ from a number of factors, such as culture, country, way of life, etc. S.M. Vul in his work “The use of obscene language and the gender of the addressee” speaks about the gender difference in the use of obscene language [8]. There is an order of magnitude more obscene language addressed to a woman than to a man. From the point of view of gender, a greater number of swear words are associated with obscene behavior and sexual accessibility of women. For example, a loving man is a womanizer, but a woman is a slut. In general, the etymology of the word «материться» comes from the expression «по матери», that is, a person raised by his mother is so bad that he can afford to swear. Another vivid example of the use of swear words in relation to men is the word «блядь». In everyday speech, this word means “prostitute”, however, it is often used for maximum expressiveness of the utterance. This word is also used in the context of a man, especially a thief in law who has violated the thieves' law. Thus, the status of a man is pejoratively small and insignificant.

Moreover, during the formation of the gender conceptsphere, an asymmetry of the signs of gender-marked units was revealed: a man is a prototypical social figure for the Russian laugh culture, whereas “a woman often acts as an additional object in relation to a man that does not need additional identification” [9].

Gender as a cultural phenomenon is one of the parameters of human personality reflected in language and serving as a means of constructing identity. From the point of view of this approach, studies of the communicative-discursive direction are very promising, including the study of the linguistic construction of gender in the communicative interaction of individuals in various types of discourse, the speech behavior of men and women from the standpoint of theories of social identity and communicative adaptation.

Currently, gender studies in the field of political discourse are of particular relevance. By paying attention to the election campaign of modern politicians, it is possible to clearly trace the gender division, as well as ways to influence each of the categories. The methods of constructing “male” and “female” voices, the use of gender stereotypes and other tools for manipulation are based on psycholinguistic skills of influencing people.

Paradoxically, this direction has resulted in an entire branch of research called NLP (neuro-linguistic programming). It was focused primarily on those who wanted to develop certain communication skills to achieve their goals. For example, representatives of the network business actively introduce into their work the skills and techniques of speech influence on the cognitive perception of a partner in order to promote goods or services. At the end of the twentieth century, a huge amount of literature appeared describing in detail the gradual formation of communicative skills in human influence, manipulation and programming.

A huge amount of literature on NLP and public speech stirred up the Internet in early 2000. A lot of publications with a gender orientation for readers and their gender needs have appeared on the web. For example, the acclaimed bestselling book “Women from Venus, Men from Mars” is aimed at young women studying the art of seduction, manipulation and control. From a linguistic point of view, the analysis shows that the author, despite the external solidarity with the female sex, gently leads them to submission and respect for the male sex, allowing them to guide them, provide for them and protect them.

Modern researchers, linguists and psychologists say that there are processes of constructing gender identity in society, which can be traced on the materials of any texts, in particular on artistic ones.

Representatives of the Moscow School of Gender Studies claim that gender is a “floating” parameter, that is, a factor that manifests itself with unequal intensity, up to its complete disappearance in a number of communicative situations.

Consequently, “a communicative situation can have a profound impact on discourse, which confirms the interactive nature of identity construction” [2].

In 1990, Sandra Boehm formulated the theory of gender lenses, according to which lenses are embedded in cultural discourse. Traditional or cultural beliefs about men and women are as follows: the psychological and biological nature of men and women is different; men are the dominant sex; the differences between a man and a woman are innate, and therefore natural. Through these lenses of gender, we perceive the world

around us, they refract our consciousness, representation, view of others and ourselves, as a result of which we do not see reality, but what the binary model gives us. It turns out that the division into femininity and masculinity is artificial.

Conclusion

The gender approach in linguistics represents a further development of anthropo-oriented language learning and allows us to consider the human factor in language in more detail, as a result of which an increment of knowledge can be obtained both linguistic and interdisciplinary.

Language is the most important creative resource and without changing the language, it is impossible to change gender perceptions, so when we talk about the appearance of new words, it is always a new look, no matter what. When this view or this word acquires a certain kind of meanings, it expands the consciousness not only of a particular person, but also of the entire society.

Language does not just fix gender identity, characteristics or qualities related to gender, it constructs and creates them.

The so-called gender differences are the result of our ideas about them. They are sewn into gender lenses, and do not reflect their actual existence at all. We think of these differences because it seems to us that they should be. Even when they are not there, we look for them and find them. And we rely on them as if they really exist.

At the individual level, gender identity is a unique portrait of a person. In this perspective, it has three components: morphological identity associated with consciousness and acceptance or rejection of one's gender identity, or anatomical sexual identity; gender role behavior, or polotypic "masculine" and "feminine" behavior, which in each culture may have its own characteristics; sexual orientation, preference for a sexual partner or choice of a sexual object. These three components are formed sequentially and contribute to the formation of gender identity.

The analysis of scientific works of recent years indicates an increase in interest in gender studies and their intensive institutionalization and allows us to state the study of some fragments of the language system, while the study of speech communication is still at an initial stage. The question of masculinity and femininity also plays a significant role in the study of gender identity, which contains not only the problem of gender as such, but also the whole mental acceptance of oneself as a person.

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Әр түрлі лингвомәдениеттердегі гендерлік және гендерлік сәйкестілік мәселесіне

Мақалада гендерлік және гендерлік сәйкестілік мәселелері қарастырылған. Гендерлік сәйкестікті қалыптастырудың теориялық және практикалық аспектілері, атап айтқанда әлеуметтік лингвистикалық, лингвомәдениеттану, коммуникативті-дискурсивті және психолингвистикалық бағыттар бойынша зерттелген. Маскуллиндік және феминистік қасиеттер мәселесінің адам мен тілдік тұрғыдан егжей-тегжейлі зерттеу қажеттілігі анықталған. Сонымен қатар мақалада әр түрлі лингвомәдениеттану саласынан мысалдар келтірілген, олар адамның жыныс «қатыстылығын» ескере отырып, оның танымдық қабылдауындағы айырмашылықтар мен ұқсастықтарды коммуникативті түрде көрсетеді. Гендерлік және гендерлік сәйкестілік мәселесі ежелгі дәуірден бастау алады және халық ауыз әдебиетінде, негізінен мақал-мәтелдерде айқын көрініс табады. Осы сипаттағы гендерлік сәйкестік адамның бейнесі, мәдениет, тіл және қоғам туралы стереотиптік ойлары ретінде алға шығады. Авторлар жүргізген талдауларға сүйене отырып, тіл тек гендерлік сәйкестікті, сипаттамаларды немесе гендерге байланысты жеке қасиеттерді түзіп қана қоймайды, оларды жасап береді деп көрсетеді.

Кілт сөздер: гендер, гендерлік сәйкестік, маскуллиндік, феминистік, дискурс, тіл, мәдениет, жыныс.

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К вопросу о гендере и гендерной идентичности в различных лингвокультурах

В статье рассмотрены проблемы гендера и гендерной идентичности. Изучены теоретические и практические аспекты формирования гендерной идентичности, в частности, такие направления, как социолингвистическое, лингвокультурологическое, коммуникативно-дискурсивное и психолингвистическое. Выявлена и обоснована необходимость детального изучения проблем маскулинности и фемининности с позиции человека и языка. Авторами приведены примеры из различных лингвокультур, которые коммуникативно наглядно демонстрируют отличия и сходства в когнитивном восприятии человека с учетом его половой принадлежности. Выявлено, что проблема гендера и гендерной идентичности берет свое начало издревле, ярко отразившись в устном народном творчестве, в частности, в пословицах и поговорках. Гендерная идентичность в таком ракурсе выступает портретом самого человека, его стереотипных представлений о своем поле с учетом культуры, языка и общества. На основе проведенного анализа авторами показано, что язык не просто фиксирует гендерную идентичность, характеристики или качества личности, связанные с гендером, но и конструирует и создает их.

Ключевые слова: гендер, гендерная идентичность, маскулинность, фемининность, дискурс, язык, культура, пол.

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