

**INTERPRETATIONS ON THE EXPRESSION OF GENDER-SPECIFIC STEREOTYPES
IN THE SPEECH BEHAVIOR OF INTERNET USERS**

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Abstract: This article analyzes some considerations on the manifestation of gender stereotypes in the speech behavior of Internet users. These views emphasize the importance of the role of men in overcoming stereotypes and the importance of involving men in the process of change, overcoming gender stereotypes is a global problem, and international cooperation, exchange of successful practices, coordinated actions of different countries, and taking into account cultural characteristics are of great importance.

Keywords: gender, speech, stereotype, attitudinal results, global problem, interpretation.

**ИНТЕРПРЕТАЦИИ ВЫРАЖЕНИЯ ГЕНДЕРНО-СПЕЦИФИЧЕСКИХ
СТЕРЕОТИПОВ В РЕЧЕВОМ ПОВЕДЕНИИ ИНТЕРНЕТ-ПОЛЬЗОВАТЕЛЕЙ**

Аннотация: В данной статье анализируются некоторые соображения относительно проявления гендерных стереотипов в речевом поведении интернет-пользователей. Эти взгляды подчеркивают важность роли мужчин в преодолении стереотипов и важность вовлечения мужчин в процесс изменений, а также то, что преодоление гендерных стереотипов является глобальной проблемой, и что международное сотрудничество, обмен передовым опытом, скоординированные действия разных стран и учет культурных особенностей имеют большое значение.

Ключевые слова: гендер, речь, стереотип, результаты, выраженные в поведении, глобальная проблема, интерпретация.

INTRODUCTION

One possible explanation for the dual nature of gender stereotypes is that, unlike many other social stereotypes, they relate to two distinct groups, namely men and women [1]. A number of studies demonstrate that this binary structure forms the basis for understanding gender differences. Therefore, if a man does not fully correspond to traditional male stereotypes, this does not lead to the denial of his masculinity; rather, it results in his being perceived as possessing female characteristics. However, it should be noted that studies conducted using alternative methodologies, in which respondents evaluated the presence of certain qualities in both men and women, show that although the content of gender stereotypes is confirmed, the characteristics attributed to men and women are not strictly polarized.

Gender stereotypes also influence personality traits associated with interpersonal interaction. Women are often characterized by such qualities as self-sacrifice, gentleness, care, friendliness, politeness, emotional sensitivity, expressiveness, tenderness, modesty, shyness, humility, and love for children. In contrast, negative traits traditionally attributed to women originate from medieval perceptions and include instability, insecurity, cunning, talkativeness, nervousness, an excessive focus on family life, timidity, fear, and anxiety. The stereotype of masculinity encompasses both carelessness and

rudeness, as well as toughness, lack of sentimentality, egoism, aggressiveness, and cruelty. At the same time, the notions of “masculinity” and “femininity” do not fully cover the entire range of these concepts. For instance, qualities such as accuracy, attention to appearance, religiosity, and dreaminess are often associated with women, whereas men may be characterized by a reluctance to start a family or by boastfulness.

In addition, social roles themselves function as stereotypes: masculinity is usually associated with the public sphere and social engagement, while femininity is linked to the private sphere, including family, home, and parenthood. Men are primarily perceived as workers and breadwinners, whereas women are viewed as wives and mothers [2].

LITERATURE REVIEW

Many scholars discuss both the positive and negative influence of the Internet on communication, cognitive abilities, and language use [3]. This information revolution can be examined through four main perspectives: technological, social, informational-quantitative, and linguistic. The second perspective is particularly significant, as the Internet increasingly affects the evolution of languages functioning within this virtual space [4].

David Crystal notes the growth of virtual language identity, while O. L. Kamenskaya emphasizes differences in the linguistic identity of women and men. According to A. V. Kirilina, the application of a gender perspective not only makes it possible to describe the anthropocentric nature of language but also facilitates the study of the concepts of “masculinity” and “femininity.” These concepts are cognitively and culturally recognized, which allows their investigation to be expanded within linguoculturology as well as in other fields related to culture and society. Kirilina also points out that the focus has shifted to understanding how gender influences communicative behavior and language use, how language constructs gender identity, including communicative contexts and types of discourse in which this construction occurs, as well as its intensity.

It is essential to understand how virtual reality influences processes of gender-related linguistic construction and their evolution, as well as how gender constructs change depending on the format of online communication. A number of studies have been devoted to the impact of gender in virtual environments, with English-language online communication being the most actively researched area. The study of gender dynamics in the Russian-speaking Internet is reflected in the works of researchers such as L. F. Kompantseva and E. I. Goroshko. In her analysis, Kompantseva examines gender aspects of the Russian-language Internet through the prism of discursive practices. Using data from associative thesaurus studies based on online sources, she explores the gender component of virtual linguistic identifiers. One of her key findings indicates the emergence of a new communicative community characterized not by a clash of male and female speech types, but by tolerance and cooperation [5].

Kompantseva’s analysis of Russian-language online conversations shows that women’s communication is dominated by features such as empathy and subtle forms of praise. In addition, she argues that both women and men behave in online communication in ways that may not reflect their true nature, but rather represent what they aspire to be in real life. Factors such as self-doubt, dissatisfaction with oneself, low self-esteem, and the desire to escape existential and social isolation contribute to the development of new online images and behavioral patterns [6].

In E. I. Goroshko’s research, primary attention is paid to the structure of online messages in personal correspondence, which can be regarded as a form of electronic everyday speech. Her analysis of

studies on gender characteristics in email communication demonstrates that men's language tends to be more lexically diverse and their utterances are generally longer. In contrast, women use verbs more frequently, construct shorter sentences, display less lexical diversity, and are more inclined to replace nouns with pronouns in their speech.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Online communication is primarily indirect and occurs without face-to-face interaction. As a result, impressions of a new interlocutor are formed solely on the basis of information that a person deliberately or unintentionally decides to share. In some cases, individuals may choose to alter or conceal certain personal details, including their actual gender identity, for various reasons. Experimental studies show that the absence of clear gender identification often leads to communication breakdowns, as different norms exist for interaction with men and women. What may be considered acceptable in communication with a person of one gender may be inappropriate for a person of the opposite gender, and vice versa. Such uncertainty regarding the interlocutor's personal information may cause communicators to feel insecure about how to conduct the conversation, which in turn leads to difficulties in online interaction or even to a reluctance to continue communication. Research in gender linguistics helps identify an interlocutor's actual gender during indirect communication, especially in online environments, even when personal information is intentionally concealed or altered [7].

The studies conducted covered all levels of language. Experimental designs were developed to assess the influence of various socio-psychological factors on participants' speech behavior.

One of the most extensively studied topics in the analysis of quantitative aspects of speech behavior among representatives of different genders has been the examination of male and female discursive practices.

Over the past decade, there has been a noticeable increase in research within cognitive science aimed at understanding the social aspects of gender and its interaction with linguistic structures, as well as differences in male and female verbal behavior and their relationship with speech and cognitive processes. Moreover, some scholars suggest that the field is entering a new stage of linguistic gender studies by moving toward a more comprehensive theoretical and methodological understanding of issues raised by gender linguistics.

Well-known sociolinguistic studies are reflected in the works of J. Fisher (1958), W. Labov (1966), P. Trudgill (1974), P. Nichols (1979), S. Gal (1979), L. Milroy (1980), and S. Herring (2004). These studies demonstrate the relationship between speech and factors such as the speaker's gender, social group, personality, emotional state, and degree of formality in communication, which is essential for reassessing the characteristics of male and female speech. Previously, differences between male and female speech were often attributed solely to biological factors.

Among Russian scholars in the field of gender linguistics, E. I. Goroshko, T. N. Zakharova, A. V. Kirilina, O. L. Kamenskaya, and L. F. Kompantseva are particularly well known. It should be noted that sociological analyses of the Internet conducted by foreign researchers began to emerge in the early 1990s. In the CIS countries, which started connecting to the Internet in the mid-1990s (for example, Russia in 1993, considerably later than Europe or North America), research on this topic began to appear only in the early 21st century.

Studies of communicators' verbal behavior within gender linguistics can be divided into two groups according to their analytical focus. One group examines language itself and the ways in which gender

is reflected in it, while the other analyzes the verbal behavior of communicators. These two areas largely overlap.

Gender stereotypes: social impact and ways of overcoming them. Gender stereotypes and their influence on society, as well as ways of overcoming them, remain highly relevant issues. Contemporary trends in addressing stereotypes demonstrate that the development of digital technologies creates new opportunities for overcoming gender stereotypes. In particular, remote work reduces the impact of bias in recruitment (1); online education increases access to knowledge (2); social media contributes to the dissemination of progressive views (3); and anonymity on the Internet allows individuals to be evaluated based on their actual qualities rather than stereotypical assumptions (4).

Corporate initiatives. Modern companies implement various programs aimed at ensuring gender diversity, including quotas to promote gender balance (1); training programs designed to address unconscious bias (2); mentoring programs for women leaders as tools for personal and professional development (3); flexible working hours for parents (4); and equal pay for equal work (5).

Future challenges include automation and its impact on gender equality; the transformation of traditional professions; the emergence of new forms of discrimination; and the need to balance tradition and progress.

Automation and gender equality. Digital technologies create new opportunities for women. For example, remote work opportunities in the IT sector allow women to balance professional activities with family responsibilities. However, automation may disproportionately affect sectors in which women are more frequently employed, such as retail and administrative services.

Transformation of traditional professions. Many fields traditionally considered “male professions” increasingly require intellectual capacity rather than physical strength due to technological development. For instance, advancements in 3D modeling and robotics in the construction sector create new opportunities for women. In the medical field, the number of male nurses is also increasing.

Some countries pursue gender equality while preserving traditional values. For example, in the United Arab Emirates, women actively participate in IT entrepreneurship while national traditions are maintained. In Japan, the “Womenomics” program [8] prioritizes increasing women’s employment.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Among the key future priorities are the modernization of the education system, encouraging girls’ participation in STEM disciplines, creating flexible working conditions, eliminating gender stereotypes from an early age, supporting women’s entrepreneurship, and ensuring gender equality in technological development. Addressing these issues requires coordinated efforts among the state, the private sector, and civil society institutions.

Thus, the issue of transforming gender stereotypes in the speech behavior of Internet users represents one of the most pressing topics of the present day. In the modern world, opinions, attitudes, and stereotypes formed within virtual environments increasingly influence everyday life.

Research indicates that the language of communication on social media often reinforces gender inequality. For example, reports on women’s professional achievements tend to emphasize secondary aspects such as appearance or family status, whereas reports about men primarily focus on their professional activities.

A number of effective approaches can be applied to reduce gender stereotypes in online environments. First, it is essential to promote gender-sensitive language use and communication culture among users. This can be achieved through specialized training programs, online courses, and social campaigns. Second, it is necessary to strengthen moderation on social media platforms and combat discriminatory content. Enhancing media literacy also plays a crucial role, as users must be able to recognize gender stereotypes and adopt a critical attitude toward them. As emphasized above, educational institutions, civil society organizations, and mass media should actively participate in this process.

Promoting the ideas of gender equality among young people is particularly important, as youth constitute the most active users of virtual environments and can serve as a driving force for changing stereotypes within society.

In conclusion, transforming gender stereotypes in the speech behavior of Internet users is a long-term and complex process that requires the joint efforts of all stakeholders. Achieving positive outcomes in this area demands a systematic approach, continuous monitoring, and regular analysis of existing practices. Most importantly, every Internet user should adhere to the principles of gender equality in their speech and encourage others to do the same.

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