

THE INFLUENCE OF GENDER FACTOR ON THE SPEECH BEHAVIOR OF COMMUNICANTS

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The article is devoted to the analysis of the influence of gender factor on the speech behavior of communicants. With the emergence of gender linguistics, the range of scientific interests in linguistics is significantly expanding. Stereotypes of femininity and masculinity, gender asymmetries, as well as peculiarities of speech and communication behavior of men and women are studied in more detail. In our research we are guided by the fact that gender is a general scientific category that explains the behavior of men and women based on biological sex and in relation to the social and cultural norms of a particular society. The main method of research is contrastive analysis, which makes it possible to compare and distinguish the differential features of male and female speech. The study of communicative behavior is carried out on the basis of discourse analysis. The heuristic method which involves the collection of previously recorded research material is also applied. The research material is the works of the modern English authors M. Dunn "Ex-Girlfriends United" and J. Kaplan "The Men I Didn't Marry".

The analysis of the characteristics of male and female speech behavior makes it possible to conclude that there are generally accepted typical characteristics of the speech behavior of men and women in every society based on moral and ethical norms, as well as cultural characteristics. They can vary depending on a number of other factors other than biological features: mental composition, character, profession, role in society, status, type of temperament, etc. Since society imposes certain rules and standards of behavior of men and women on individuals, it is necessary to be aware of these features and take them into account in the process of communication.

Key words: communicative behavior, female speech, gender, male speech, sociolinguistics.

Буренко Тетяна. Вплив гендерного чинника на мовленнєву поведінку комунікантів

Статтю присвячено аналізу впливу гендерного чинника на мовленнєву поведінку комунікантів. Із виникненням гендерної лінгвістики коло наукових інтересів у мовознавстві значно розширюється. Більш детально вивчаються стереотипи фемінінності і маскулінності, гендерні асиметрії, а також особливості мовленнєвої та загалом комунікативної поведінки чоловіків і жінок. У нашому дослідженні керуємося тим, що гендер є загальнонауковою категорією, яка дає пояснення поведінки чоловіків і жінок на основі біологічної статі та стосовно соціальних і культурних норм певного суспільства. Основним методом дослідження є контрастивний аналіз, який дає можливість порівняти та виокремити диференційні ознаки чоловічого та жіночого мовлення. Вивчення комунікативної поведінки здійснюється на основі дискурс-аналізу. Застосовано також евристичний метод, який передбачає збір раніше зафіксованого дослідницького матеріалу. Матеріалом дослідження є твори сучасних англійських авторів М. Данна "Ex-Girlfriends United" та Д. Каплан "The Men I Didn't Marry".

Проведений аналіз характеристик чоловічої та жіночої мовленнєвої поведінки дає можливість зробити висновок, що існують загальноприйняті типові характеристики мовленнєвої поведінки чоловіків і жінок у кожному суспільстві на основі моральних та етичних норм, а також культурних особливостей. Вони можуть варіюватися залежно від низки інших факторів, відмінних від біологічних особливостей: психічного складу, характеру, професії, ролі у соціумі, статусі, типу темпераменту та ін. Оскільки суспільство нав'язує індивіду певні правила та стандарти поведінки чоловіків та жінок, то необхідно знати про ці особливості та враховувати їх у процесі спілкування.

Ключові слова: комунікативна поведінка, жіноче мовлення, гендер, чоловіче мовлення, соціолінгвістика.

Introduction. Regular gender studies began to be conducted by linguists relatively recently. Increased interest in issues of the interaction of language and gender is associated with the formation and development of sociolinguistics as a branch of linguistics. Sociolinguistics is a scientific discipline that develops at the intersection of linguistics, sociology, social psychology and ethnography. It studies a wide range of problems related to the social nature of language, its social functions, the mechanism of social factors influence on language and the role that language plays in society [1, p. 738]. The interaction of language and gender is considered by scientists in the study of social variability of language – the difference in the use of language tools by representatives of different age, gender, social groups in one communicative situation [2; 3; 4; 5; 6].

The process of communication of an individual with other people produces a complex and extensive network of relationships. Communicators can, in addition to other sources of information, judge each other based on speech actions. That is why it is quite natural to consider such expressions as thanks, apologies, congratulations, reprimands, threats, etc. as action elements. These actions in combination with non-verbal ones regulate the interpersonal relations of communicators – the one who speaks and the other who listens.

In order to find out who, with whom and under what circumstances comes into contact, it is worth paying attention to society as a whole with its social institutions, family, national, cultural and ethnic traditions and norms. At this level, there is the interweaving of psychological and sociological problems. This refers to the rules of behavior,

social and individual relationships, age characteristics, development of various abilities. In this regard, the concept of communicative behavior which allows analyzing human activity in the process of exchanging information becomes important. The term “communicative behavior” is understood as the process of implementing a set of lingual and extralingual means of communication and goals, the choice of which depends on the communication situation, as well as status characteristics of communication participants and their roles. The communicative nature of speech aims to investigate how verbal and non-verbal means of communication are used to achieve a successful exchange of information [4].

The analysis of speech activity as a part of activity is generally impossible without studying the communicative behavior of communication participants. Men and women try to speak the language that society and they consider typical for their gender. There is no concept of “male” or “female” language, attention is focused on two main styles of communication associated with male or female speech behavior – masculine and feminine, and the choice of one of them is determined not by gender, but by gender self-identification of the individual.

Therefore, when studying speech and generally communicative behavior, the gender factor is taken into account. It is considered as one of the main parameters by which the social identity of the interlocutor is constructed in communication. Today, it is studied in interaction with other parameters – status, age, social group, etc., but a single concept or methodology for studying this phenomenon in communication does not yet exist. Gender is a continuous process of society producing differences in male and female roles, mental and emotional characteristics, and speech behavior. Taking into account the demands that society places on men and women, **it is quite relevant** to study the socialization of persons of different sexes, the analysis of communicative successes and failures in communication, motives and types of behavior, strategies and tactics of communication.

Materials and methods. The main method of research is contrastive analysis, which makes it possible to compare and distinguish the differential features of male and female speech. The study of communicative behavior is carried out on the basis of discourse analysis. The heuristic method which involves the collection of previously recorded research material is also applied. The research material is the works of the modern English authors M. Dunn “Ex-Girlfriends United” and J. Kaplan “The Men I Didn’t Marry”.

Discussion. The study of the problem of gender communicative behavior requires separate consideration. This is due to the fact that communicative behavior, firstly, is considered as a product of the process of socialization, and, secondly, since socialization is a continuous process, gender communicative behavior in itself is the process of creating the gender identity of an individual.

The term “speech behavior” is introduced in American behavioral psychology to denote a type of social behavior determined by external, including social, conditions (circumstances). First of all, attention is paid to the structure

of speech, in connection with which the speech behavior or the speaker’s choice of one of the elements of the language variable system refers to external, non-speech factors represented by the components of the act of communication, and the language system is left aside [4].

Examining the speech behavior of the man, we have found out that he aims to achieve and maintain independence and high status. In contrast to men’s, women’s speech behavior is usually characterized by non-conflict, yielding, high emotionality. These features lead to differences in the goals of communication and in the interpretation of statements, because the same statement can be interpreted differently by men and women from the position of status or from the point of view of maintaining a relationship, solidarity or help. For example, Hallie responds to Eric’s question:

I’m not sure of our time frame here. Does he mean since I got out of Tom’s car or since the last time I saw him? (J. Kaplan, The Men I Didn’t Marry)

When Eric, the ex-boyfriend of the main character Hallie, tells her that no other woman could charm him as much as she did, she replies:

“Is that a compliment? Were they five foot with wavy brown hair? Greenish gray eyes? Or is it that they were all nineteen – like I was when we were together?” (J. Kaplan, The Men I Didn’t Marry)

The example illustrates that in the process of communication, persons of different sexes cannot always accurately understand the interlocutor’s line, because it depends on the biological characteristics, mental potential, character, ethics and upbringing of each individual. Another confirmation of this is the situation when, in response to the greeting of her ex-husband, who left Hally a week ago, she greets him with the words: “Hello, Bill”, with no intention of further communication, his response is as follows:

BILL: Hallie, I’m glad you’re finally talking to me (J. Kaplan, The Men I Didn’t Marry)

However, the misunderstanding that arises between them after that is evidenced by the following words of a woman:

HALLIE: Does ‘hello’ really count as talking to him? Maybe saying ‘Bill’ was a little too intimate (J. Kaplan, The Men I Didn’t Marry)

The specified features of male and female speech are defined as usage trends. However, there are many cases when certain phenomena observed in the language of men and women are related to the peculiarities of their mental composition, character, profession, role in society, and not to the difference by gender.

L.M. Korneva singles out the following characteristics of male speech behavior: 1) male conversation primarily concerns the topics of technology, cars, hobbies, sports, politics, the economic situation, and women (appearance, behavior, and sex); 2) men are characterized by communication monolinearity and psychological deafness – when talking, they do not pay attention to what is happening around them and may not respond to remarks that are not related to the topic of the conversation; 3) men express their thoughts briefly, succinctly, directly, logically

and without hints; 4) their communicative behavior is characterized by the use of dominance strategies, which is especially evident in communication with women to confirm their independence and masculinity, social status; 5) men like to “listen to themselves”, try in every possible way to demonstrate their own competence, give advice, therefore their communication style is more conflictual and aggressive; 6) typical male speech is characterized by a lower level of the main tone, a wider vocal range, less ability to freely change the voice register, greater voice power, labialization and nasalization; 7) they pay more attention to naming accuracy (with the exception of the names of colors and their shades), often use professional terminology; 8) usually use vulgarisms, taboo vocabulary, invectives. This is explained by the fact that men want to conform to stereotypes of masculinity, to be rougher [6, p. 107–112].

According to our data, the main characteristics of men’s speech behavior are:

- the use of obscene language and its uniformity: *piss off, fuck me, shut up, dummy etc.*:

“Fuck. I put my head in my hands in disbelief. ‘Er...’ Fuck fuck fuck. Fuck shit bollocks fuck, in fact” (M. Dunn, Ex-Girlfriends United);

- the main topics of men’s conversation are cars, sports, politics, economy and women:

“In the car, Eric tells me all about his various business deals, which seem to include commodity trades and international financing” (J. Kaplan, The Men I Didn’t Marry);

- unilinearity of communication and psychological deafness:

“He doesn’t reply, so to fill in the space, I keep talking” (J. Kaplan, The Men I Didn’t Marry);

- expressing thoughts briefly, directly and without hints:

“I’m leaving, – Bill says without breaking stride” (J. Kaplan, The Men I Didn’t Marry);

- use of dominance strategy, confirmation of their independence, masculinity, social status:

ERIC: Check this out (he says, pulling out a laminated copy of the Forbes magazine article that he just happens to have in the backseat (J. Kaplan, The Men I Didn’t Marry);

- demonstration of own competence:

ERIC: The big headline is I’m 277 on the list...Number one is Bill Gates. Or maybe some Saudi prince. I’ve done well, but I’m not competing with them yet (J. Kaplan, The Men I Didn’t Marry)

Gender differences are revealed not only in verbal communication, but also in non-verbal communication, as gestures, facial expressions, postures, movements, etc. are significant for social interaction. For example, Bill is incredibly surprised by Hallie’s question:

(Bill doesn’t answer, but his mouth is set and his brow is clenched so tightly that his two eyebrows join in a solid line)

HALLIE: One thing I still know about my husband – the caterpillar brow means something’s up (J. Kaplan, The Men I Didn’t Marry)

Male non-verbal communication can most often be manifested by scratching the back of the head, rubbing the hands or chin, hitting the table with a fist. Men try to take up as much space as possible, to demonstrate his

importance, strength and looseness, he stands with his legs wide apart and his head held high, he can keep his hands in his pockets, he sits sprawled in an arm-chair, and on a chair he spreads his knees and leans towards the interlocutor. Men’s communicative behavior is characterized by less emotionality, brevity, restraint in statements, however, it contains a lot of invective, vulgar vocabulary, is rude and aggressive. Men try to demonstrate their importance, status, and sometimes – impudence and emancipation. Their language is the language of domination.

The study of women’s speech is connected with the development of the feminist trend in linguistics in 1970–1980. The beginning of active gender research in modern linguistics was laid by R. Lakoff. In her work, she first identified several distinctive features of the female language: a specialized vocabulary related to the spheres of exclusively female activity; peculiarities in the designation of colors (more precise designation of color and its shades); the use of affective adjectives and intensifier words, punctuation, words and phrases that soften the categorical nature of statements; super politeness; tendency to euphemisms; hypercorrectness, etc. [7].

Typical features that belong to the stereotype of female speech behavior are distinguished by L.M. Korneva: the habit of speaking by hints and about secondary things; expression of emotions through intonation, various actions or hyperbolic statements; pliability; use of invective vocabulary mainly in a stressful state or demonstrating ease of communication and psychological relaxation, etc. [6, p. 111–112].

So, based on the studied material, we distinguish the following characteristics of speech behavior inherent in women:

- tendency to talkativeness:

HALLIE: Worried about me? Why would anyone worry about me? I’ve lost my husband to someone named Ashlee, I’ve been lying here so long I’m probably getting bedsores, and my only source of nutrition comes from Nabisco (J. Kaplan, The Men I Didn’t Marry);

- use of evaluative statements with deictic lexemes instead of naming a person by name:

If somebody had told me that twenty years later I’d end up alone at the Brasserie on a Saturday night, would I still have picked – Bill the double-dealing, self-absorbed Knicks-ticket-demanding idiot who left me for Ashlee with two Es? (M. Dunn, Ex-Girlfriends United);

- imagery of language when describing feelings, variety of invective and their emphasis with the help of intensifiers:

“Hallie, I heard about you and Bill”, – she hollers so shrilly that Rosalie’s golden retriever, lying in the corner, yaps in pain. I wish Darlie really would die for those abs” (J. Kaplan, The Men I Didn’t Marry);

- expression of emotions through various actions:

“I’m so happy, I could jump up and down” (J. Kaplan, The Men I Didn’t Marry);

- or hyperbolic statements:

“How is it that he happened to call me ten minutes after I left Eric? Did he pick up some electricity in the cosmos?” (J. Kaplan, The Men I Didn’t Marry);

- the use of invective vocabulary mainly in a stressful state. For example:

“Ashlee. Ashlee, with her two fucking Es” (J. Kaplan, *The Men I Didn't Marry*);

– more precise designation of colors in comparison with men:

“...clamping her hand on me so firmly that her crimson-colored talons dug into the flesh of my upper arm” (J. Kaplan, *The Men I Didn't Marry*);

– use of words and phrases that soften the categorical statements:

“Bill's upset about Emily's going off to college and he doesn't know how to react. In fact, he's a guy. He doesn't even know that he is reacting. It's my job to reassure him” (J. Kaplan, *The Men I Didn't Marry*)

As for the non-verbal aspects, since women tend to express their feelings more freely, their facial expressions are richer and their language is the language of submission.

Results. In general, at the intercultural level, the stereotypical characteristics of male and female speech

behavior established by different nations in many cases overlap with each other. Analyzing the communicative behavior of a certain gender of any country, we can use the generalized features of the speech behavior of a man or woman, because we are within the same linguistic picture of the world. To explain the differences, it is necessary to take into account the cultural characteristics and mentality of each country in particular. Thus, in modern society, taking into account the social roles of men and women, the difference in linguistic behavior is erased. The language of women has become somewhat coarser, more technical and harsher. Women of the older generation adhere to conservative language behavior, unlike men, so in their speech there is less profanity, rude statements. In their communicative behavior, women tend to look “more feminine”, while men, on the contrary, try to emphasize “masculinity” with their speech behavior.

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