

LEXICAL-SEMANTIC AND PRAGMATIC REPRESENTATION OF GENDER STEREOTYPES IN SPOKEN DISCOURSE

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Abstract This article provides a linguistic analysis of the lexical-semantic and pragmatic representation of gender stereotypes in spoken discourse. The main focus of the research is on how social perceptions and stereotypes regarding gender are expressed in oral speech through lexical units, semantic models, evaluative expressions, nominative tools, and pragmatic strategies. The features of gender stereotypes manifested in verbal units reflecting social views on masculinity and femininity, as well as their functions in evaluation, identification, defining social roles, and expressing dominance and subordination, are revealed. The article substantiates that gender stereotypes are represented not only through direct nominative units, but also through metaphors, metonymy, phraseological units, qualifications, irony, presupposition, implicature, address forms, and communicative strategies.

Keywords: Gender Stereotype, Spoken Discourse, Gender Linguistics, Lexical-Semantic Representation, Pragmatic Representation, Gender Marker, Evaluation, Stereotype, Communicative Strategy, Presupposition, Implicature, Discourse.

Introduction & Main Content In modern anthropocentric linguistics, studying language in close connection with human cognition, social experience, and communicative activity is one of the priority directions. From this perspective, researching the linguistic expression of the gender factor and the mechanisms of forming gender-related social representations in discourse is a key issue in gender linguistics. Human perceptions of masculinity and femininity do not exist solely within social consciousness; they are transmitted, reinforced, and in some cases, reprocessed across generations through language. Spoken discourse, in particular, holds significant importance as an active medium for the manifestation of gender stereotypes. This is because, in oral communication, communicants not only exchange information but also verbally express their views regarding the interlocutor's social status, gender, behavior, and role in society.

A gender stereotype is interpreted as a generalized social perception regarding the characteristics, behavior, abilities, and social roles of individuals belonging to a specific gender group. Such stereotypes are formed based on the historical, cultural, and social experience of society. They embody socially constructed answers to questions such as "How should a man be?", "What behavior should a woman display?", and "Which activities are specific to men or women?". However, gender stereotypes are not always expressed explicitly or directly. In everyday communication, they often implicitly manifest through seemingly simple lexical units, evaluative constructions, proverbs and idioms, metaphors, address forms, irony, and presuppositions.

Spoken discourse provides a particularly favorable communicative space for the representation of gender stereotypes. Unlike written text, the speaker's individual choices, intonation, pauses, pitch, speech rate, repetitions, and spontaneous constructions contribute to the formation of meaning in oral speech. Therefore, studying gender stereotypes solely through isolated words cannot fully reveal their discursive nature. Identifying the gendered meaning of a lexical unit requires considering the context, the target, the purpose, and the tone in which it is used.

The pragmatic representation of gender stereotypes reveals how they are formed in connection with communicative goals and situations. From a pragmatic standpoint, a gender stereotype is determined not only by "what is said" but also by "what purpose it serves" and "how it is understood by the listener". For example, while the utterance "If you are a man, you should do this task" is grammatically a conditional construction, pragmatically it serves as a tool to exert social pressure on the interlocutor. Here, the construction "if you are a man" leverages the individual's gender identity to demand a specific action.

Similarly, the phrase "A woman does not speak like that" is not merely an expression of opinion, but a tool for constraining communicative behavior based on gender norms. Through such an utterance, the speaker evaluates the interlocutor's verbal behavior according to the criteria of being "appropriate" or "inappropriate" for a woman. Consequently, the gender stereotype functions as a mechanism of communicative control.

Presupposition plays a vital role in the pragmatic expression of gender stereotypes. Presupposition refers to information that is not explicitly stated in the sentence's overt meaning but is pre-assumed to a certain extent by the communicants. For instance, in the statement "He has finally become responsible like a man," there is an underlying assumption that "men are responsible." The main meaning of the sentence is understood precisely on the basis of this presupposition. Likewise, a construction like "It is not easy for a woman to work in such a position" contains a stereotypical assumption regarding a woman's suitability or unsuitability for a specific activity.

Implicature also enables the implicit expression of gender stereotypes. In certain cases, a communicant does not state a gender stereotype directly, but allows the listener to draw an independent conclusion. For example, while the sentence "Even though she is a woman, she is very decisive" appears to carry a positive evaluation on the surface, its implicative meaning embeds the stereotypical view that "decisiveness is not usually characteristic of women." Thus, gender stereotypes sometimes manifest more strongly in what is implied rather than what is explicitly stated.

Forms of address can also serve as pragmatic markers of gender stereotypes. How a speaker addresses an interlocutor reflects their views on gender, age, social status, and communicative relationships. Certain forms of address express respect or intimacy, while others convey disregard or dominance. In particular, the choice of gendered address forms can become a tool for assigning social roles to the interlocutor. For example, addressing a woman based on her appearance rather than her professional or social status can demote her professional identity to a secondary level. Conversely, addressing a man primarily by his title or professional status prioritizes his social role.

Conclusion In conclusion, the representation of gender stereotypes in spoken discourse is a multilayered linguistic phenomenon formed through the interaction of lexical, semantic, and pragmatic tools. Gender-related nominations, evaluative units, qualifications, metaphors, phraseological units, and other lexical means constitute the verbal structure of stereotypes. Meanwhile, presupposition, implicature, speech acts, irony, address forms, and communicative strategies reveal their pragmatic content. Furthermore, gender stereotypes in discourse are not merely reproduced social views; they represent dynamic phenomena that can be reinterpreted, negated, or transformed by communicants.

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