

Textbook: Focus on Students' National Identity

Language Androcentrism in British Textbooks in the 80s of the XXth century

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Abstract. The problem of gender and gender studies permeate all areas of human life, becoming more and more relevant every day. Gender correctness is becoming an integral part of the narrative, making new demands on communication. Language is a tool for constructing, reproduction and recreation of a gender worldview. At the moment, the gender picture of the world is undergoing drastic changes, revision and reflection. In this regard, it is important to look at the history of language androcentrism in order to avoid it in modern communication.

In this article, based on the material of British educational texts of the early 80s of the XX century, the linguistic methods of constructing gender are analyzed. Based on the A. Pauwel's methodology the signs of androcentrism are revealed. The signs of androcentrism include the following: derivatives of women's status from the male, the women's invisibility in language, and stereotypical image of both sexes. The study found that all the above-mentioned signs of gender asymmetry are fully reflected in authentic British educational texts. The patriarchal picture of the world is formed by means of the English language.

Keywords: androcentrism, educational texts, gender, pedagogical discourse.

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Introduction

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Anthropocentrism, or the study of man as the center of being, is becoming one of the main trends in modern science in general and linguistics in particular. The key ways of social stratification of the human personality are age, race, nationality and gender. These basic constructs are increasingly becoming objects of language research. Gender linguistics is a relatively young branch of linguistics that studies not only how men and women speak, but also how a society's ideas about masculinity and femininity are reflected in the language.

In modern science, the term "gender" is considered as a cultural and social construct, while at the same time being opposed to the biological sex. The term "sex" is used to refer to the physiological and biological characteristics of the subject. Gender is characterized by ideologicality and historicity that is why the gender worldview changes over time and under the influence of the dominant ideology of a particular society and the trends presented to various concepts. The language plays a fundamental role in the formation, construction and (re)production of the worldview in general and specifically the gender worldview. (Gritsenko, 2019). The language system has the whole social experience in it, so it has a great influence on a person's worldview and the perception of all phenomena surrounding them (Lakoff, 1973).

It is necessary to mention that the degree of androcentrism differs in different cultures but the principle ideas of men and women's behavior, appearance and other characteristics are almost the same in all European cultures which still remain traditional and patriarchal in some ways (Jule, 2018).

The pedagogical discourse contains various information about the phonetic, grammatical, and lexical structure of the language. At the same time, the textbook is one of the main sources of information about the cultural life of the society. Therefore, educational texts contain relevant information about the public point of view on various issues and, obviously, they have the most updated understanding of what it means to "be a man" and "be a woman". (Karasik, 2002). In this article, the emphasis is put on the gender aspect and its representation in educational texts. According to V. I. Karasik, educational texts, being one of the types of precedent texts in pedagogical discourse, in addition to the educational function, act as a tool for forming the worldview of students (Karasik, 2002). Due to the fact that the main purpose of pedagogical discourse is the socialization of a new member of society and the explanation of generally accepted rules of behavior, in this type of discourse, the norms and requirements for the manifestation of masculinity and femininity that have developed in a particular society are inherently constructed, formed and fixed. Also, pedagogical discourse is a source of formation of gender identity and gender correctness.

Purpose and objectives of the study

The key purpose of this work is to find out if the traditional picture of the world, based on the androcentrism principles, is reflected in the analyzed segment of British pedagogical discourse in the 80s of the XXth century. It is necessary to discover the main ideas about masculinity and femininity to draw a conclusion about the gender worldview of the above-mentioned period in Great Britain. The work is based on the material presented in the textbook "Gallery", published in 1982 (Fassman, Tavares, 1982). Further comparison with modern situation in British educational discourse is planned to be conducted.

Literature review

Gender as a socio-cultural construct has already been the subject of scientific study in various types of discourse: political discourse, during election campaigning (E. S. Gritsenko), in the Soviet and Russian media (A.V. Kirilina), lexicography (M. V. Sergeeva), lifestyle magazines (A. O. Laletina), films (A. A. Bodrova).

O. Yu. Chernykh (Chernykh, 2012) analyzes the gender relevant material of educational texts for the 1st grade of Russian schools. The author also identifies verbal and non-verbal means of constructing the image of men and women and reveals the peculiarities of the formation of the gender worldview of primary school children.

Dissertation research of A.A. Maali Shadi is devoted to the gender stereotypes of Russian culture presented in advertisements (Maali Shadi, 2016). The author analyses linguistic representation of gender stereotypes based on the material of gender-oriented advertising texts. The specifics of masculine and feminine stereotypes are determined, and some thematic groups of "male" advertising texts are described in the research.

The work of M.V. Pronyakina deals with the problem of the reflection gender in speech and especially the gender specific of interviews in English magazines (Pronyakina, 2016). The author finds out masculine and feminine speech strategies, explores the phenomenon of linguistic masculinization of female speech and vice versa.

Despite the problems related to this article, the above-mentioned studies do not address the issues of the linguistic construction of gender in authentic English textbooks in the 80s of the XX century. In this regard, we have made an attempt to fill the existing gap.

Methodology

Androcentrism is used by feminists to criticize the existing world of culture and nature, in which men and women are viewed differently, have different weight in society, and their roles are hierarchically structured. Started in the 60-70s of the XXth century, the feminist critique of the language demands to reduce androcentrism in all spheres of life, especially its reflection in the language which fixes the male superiority (Lakoff, 1973). Androcentrism brings universal subjectivities to a single male norm, represented as universal objectivity. The world is perceived through the prism of the male worldview, where everything female is regarded as something different and often simply ignored (Gritsenko, 2019). In modern culture, androcentrism is based on the universalist discourse of European science, which represents itself in a gender-neutral way.

The methodological basis of this study is the signs of androcentrism of the English language, formulated by Ann Pauwels (Pauwels, 1998). In her study, she formulates the recommendations on gender-correct language usage for the main European languages and concludes that the patriarchal gender ideology finds the following linguistic expression:

1. *the invisibility of women in language;*
2. *the portrayal of women's status in reference to that of men;*
3. *the stereotyped portrayal of the sexes;*
4. *the portrayal of women as inferior to men* (Pauwels, 1998).

M. V. Sergeeva (Sergeeva, 2007) analyzed the dynamics of gender representations in British explanatory lexicography and narrowed this classification, combining the second and the fourth characteristics as related. For the purposes of this study, such reduction also seems appropriate.

These features must inevitably be reflected in the pedagogical discourse, since each educational text reflects the worldview of society and is the product of a certain era and the corresponding ideology.

Results

The invisibility of women in the language. This point of classification of signs of androcentrism is achieved due to the fact that the pronoun *he* is used as a metagender, so it can replace the representatives of any gender, although, from the context, it follows that this neutral pronoun refers to a man only. In addition, the lexemes *human* and *man* are equated and parts of the word *man/ - man* are used in a gender-unmarked meaning (Zimman, 2017). Gender neutrality is also implemented when masculine nouns are used in relation to women. The statistical superiority of male referents and the use of a large number of proper names denoting men also emphasizes the male superiority and invisibility of women.

Due to the fact that in the ideology of androcentrism, the world is perceived through the prism of a male worldview, it seems that a man has more weight in society. This is achieved by equaling lexemes "*person / people*" and "*man / men*": *The man had only laughed in his face. // I've never seen that man before in my life. // This man doesn't know anything about exotic food. // What kind of experience has this man had?*

The names of professions often contain the *-man/ -men* element and it seems that only men can perform this work: *firemen, fisherman, mailman, milkman, policeman, salesman. When firemen answered a call to Harvest Street last night, they couldn't believe what they saw.. A salesman was at the door.*

Gender unmarked lexeme *person* can refer to both a man and a woman. It is used when it is impossible to find out a person's gender from the context.: *A famous person from the past and some of his / her habits.* But, in fact, this gender-unmarked lexeme in most cases means a man. It becomes clear from the subsequent context: *If you found a person unconscious, would you... give him a glass of water to drink?*

In the same way, the word *friend* can act be used in a metagender meaning if there is no direct indication of the gender of the referent (Jones, Mullany, 2019). However, all the examples found in the educational texts make it obvious that they are talking exclusively about a man: *One day your friend doesn't come to school. You go to see him, and find him in bed. What do you ask him? // My friend studies French at his school.*

The quantitative superiority of male contexts is shown primarily in the names of professions (Weatherall, 2019). While, in the analyzed passage of the British pedagogical discourse, there are only 15 names of female professions, the number of male professions exceeds them by three times. The unimportance of women is also emphasized with the help of the professions which they choose. As a rule, they take a subordinate position in relation to a man: *secretary, typewriter* or devote themselves to creative work: *actress, ballet dancer, model* and caring for children and people: *babysitter, hostess, nurse, stewardess, waitress.*

Only a single example is recorded in which a woman acts as an active subject, occupies a leadership position, which goes against the established stereotypes, according to which a woman has a subordinate status, a passive attitude to life: *She is the executive director of a company and she has to make a lot of important decisions. // She works 12 hours a day.* However, despite this, she does all the housework and takes care of the child herself: *She still finds time to make dinner and clean the house.*

Male surnames with a previous position or social title are very diverse – *Dr. Brent, Mr. Lockhart, Mayor Cloud, Mr. Snodgrass,, Dr. Mendes, Professor Collins. Mr. Davis, Mr. Wilson, Judge Dubcek, Officer Russell.* The most common is the social title *Mister* and the professional title *Doctor*, less commonly used categories are *Mayor, Officer and Chef.*

The female social title *Miss* is used only once in the address to the conductor. Female surnames rarely appear independently in educational texts: *Mrs. Dubcek, Mrs. Snodgrass, Mrs. Lockhart, Mrs. Hopper*– it was spoken about their husbands before.

The portrayal of women's status in reference to that of men / the portrayal of women as inferior to men.

Traditional word order where the man's name precedes the woman's name is another way to fix gender asymmetry in the language. The representatives of feminist linguistics regularly draw attention to the fact that there are languages in which gender is recorded at the level of the language system. (Coffey-Glover, 2019). In British educational texts, such an example of androcentrism in the language occurs regularly: *Mr. and Mrs. McMaster, Jack and Martha, Mr. and Mrs. Wilson, Mr. and Mrs. Dubcek etc.*

When it is pointed out that a woman is someone's daughter or a wife it becomes clear that the 'weaker sex' has a passive role in the society and subordinate status to their husbands.: *Mr. Austin Kent, a 650-pound pharmacist was lying on the ground surrounded by his wife and children. // He chose a beautiful dress for his wife, and also to their fathers: The owner's daughter.*

Before getting married a girl must ask her father's approval: *Father: you don't have my permission to marry a man you hardly know.* If the girl does not obey the will of the father, he can kick her out of the house: *...he told her to leave.*

The stereotyped portrayal of the sexes. Gender stereotypes fully reflect the ideas about men and women that have developed in the public consciousness. They help navigate the world and categorize person's social environment. Masculine and feminine social roles are regulated by the society as people usually treat one another's deeds as right or wrong. In this way the people's expectations to men and women are constructed (Zablotskaya, Sorokina, 2016). Traditionally, women are given a passive role, while men are given an active role (Maali Shadi, 2016). Gender stereotypes are firmly rooted in the minds of the society representatives and are difficult to change over a long time. Such stereotypes are assimilated through the main institutions of socialization - the family, educational organizations and the media (Baxter, 2018). Stereotypes prescribe and reinforce the social and professional roles of men and women, make demands on their personality and character traits. Textbooks are obviously full of these social prescriptions as they are written by the representatives of a particular society. That is why educational discourse has a power to reflect, form and fix social expectations and the behavioral norms of both men and women.

British educational texts reinforce the stereotype that a man should be physically strong, persistent and athletic, it is also important for them to gain their goals: *A big muscular man. // Fred: I've played in forty tournaments so far and I've won all of them.* The active status of men is closely related to cars and high speed: *He broke his arm during in the automobile racing.*

As noted above, society traditionally gives men such a quality as activity, which, first of all, is understood as professional self-realization. Career is put on the first place for men: *Mr. Smith: Yes, I have been working hard at least 11 hours a day since July. // I'm a busy man.* Of course, social status and income level are vital. Lexically, this is achieved by using the lexeme *money* exclusively in masculine contexts: *He earns a lot of money.*

It is necessary to say that the active position of men can be sometimes used in a negative context. Men are inclined to violence, gambling and breaking the law: *He stole 2 wallets yesterday. // He had 3 car accidents last year. // ... he spent 10 years in prison.* Bad habits complement and complete the image of a 'true man' *Mr. Smith: I have been smoking about 3 packs of cigarettes a day.* It should be noted that there is no negative assessment of the actions of a man, despite the fact that it is customary to condemn illegal behavior in society. Despite this, male referents are evaluated negatively if they do not know the norms of

etiquette and the rules of behavior and behave in an inappropriate way in public: *He began to eat it with his fingers.*

Following the masculinity stereotypes, femininity stereotypes are consistently (re)produced in the British pedagogical discourse of the corresponding period.

A woman is considered as a passive subject. She has to find herself and reach her aims only in the microcosm of the family and the household: *She is worried about her child. // Sally cooked dinner.* Consequently, women's contexts regularly appear in such semantic spheres as *family, motherhood and household* as she brings up the children: *Anne made her daughter pick up her toys* and does all the household duties, especially cooking, cleaning and washing: *Then she went to the kitchen to prepare dinner.*

Weakness, emotional instability, and health problems are attributed only to female referents: *Her eyes are red. She has been crying lately. // Mrs. Philip Jennings began complaining to her husband about some severe pains.* Regular emphasis is placed on the typical feminine qualities - talkativeness, extravagance and forgetfulness: *How many times has she missed the train this month? // This woman has been talking on the phone for the whole morning.* The authors of the textbook laugh at women's excessive expenses and exaggerated attention to their appearance: *She spent 200 dollars last week. // She has been on a diet twice this month.*

The passive role of women also implies the need to find financial and social support and successfully get married. This necessity even pushes a woman to marry an unloved person: *She married a rich man, even though she didn't love him.* Speaking about herself a woman can mention only her marital status and say nothing of her profession: *I am divorced. // I'm in love with a man. // I am a widow. I have five children.*

Discussions

Language androcentrism should be studied in different spheres of life. The requirements of gender-correct narrative, put forward by representatives of feminist criticism in the 60-70s of the XX century, do not lose their relevance, but also become more and more popular in modern communication. Gender is directly or indirectly an integral part of authentic educational texts. Despite the fact that not all the textbook material is gender-relevant, or directly related to men and women, it is necessary to pay attention to the general set of educational texts in order to draw a conclusion about what ideas about masculinity and femininity are constructed in educational texts.

Nowadays there is a steady tendency in British educational texts to follow the main recommendations on the politically correct language usage. They were developed within the framework of feminist linguistics, whose representatives call for rethinking and changing existing language norms and consider the conscious rationing of language and changing language policy as their main goal.

Conclusion

Thus, based on the conducted research, it can be concluded that the signs of androcentrism of the English language, indicated by A. Pauwels, are fully reflected in the British pedagogical discourse of the 80s of the XXth century. The invisibility of women in the language is consistently achieved by using the pronoun *he* and the lexeme *man* in relation to everyone whose gender is unknown or not important in the situation. Gender-neutral lexemes, designed to reduce gender-marking, on the contrary, only strengthen it, since in the vast majority of cases they replace male referents. The male superiority and subordinate

status of women is emphasized due to the numerical diversity of male contexts presented in the textbook. Traditionally, when referring to men and women together, the male social status the word Mister is put on the first place. Stereotypes about men and women also reinforce the patriarchal view that women's primary function is to devote themselves to family and children, while men need to pursue professional self-realization. Further comparison with the current state of the gender picture of the world, formed in the British pedagogical discourse, will allow us to consider the trends of gender asymmetry.

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