

GENDER MARKERS IN A DIDACTICALLY ORIENTED SPEECH ACT IN ENGLISH

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Abstract: The article focuses on the manifestation of the phenomenon of gender and its markers as found in didactically oriented speech acts. The findings discussed reflect a sample study of modern International Certificate materials in English with reference to gender characteristics as revealed therein.

Keywords: Gender markers, didactic speech acts, effectiveness, male discourse, female discourse

1. Introduction

Though the category of gender has a long tradition of grammar study it remains the focus of modern academic interest for those mastering English as a second language (McDowell, L., 2015; Ladegaard, H., 2011; Franceschina, F., 2005; Sabourin, L., 2003, Dewaele, J.-M., Véronique, D., 2001; Bartning, I., 2000; Bruhn de Garavito J. & White L., 2000). An in-depth study has proven the validity of the thesis regarding mutual compatibility/incompatibility of speaker's L1 and L2 as a reliable factor governing similar/different representation of gender characteristics in the material.

The majority of editions of TOEFL materials are aimed at those who master English as a second language, many of them as adult learners. Some of the authors mention the so called *critical period* hypothesis, according to which the learner may be influenced by the maturational constraints on those grammatical fea-

tures which are not part of the speaker's L1 (Hawkins R. & Chan C.Y.H., 1997).

In the process of acquiring the second language learners may face positive or negative gender acquisition (Herschensohn J. (2009) and Hopp H. (2010)). The literature on the subject notes that an L1 that already has a gender system can prepare the ground for gender in the L2, even more so if the first language is similar to the second (Foucart A. & Frenck-Mestre C. (2011); Sabourin, L., Stowe, L. & de Hann J. (2006). However, negative gender acquisition manifests itself when learners attempt to process L2 in terms of L1, arriving at the wrong results where the systems differ (Ganushchak, L., Verdonschot, R., & Schiller, N., 2011; Sabourin, L. & Stowe, L., 2008; Tokowicz, N. & MacWhinney, B., 2005).

When it comes to professional training of interpreters and the full range of sociocultural competences to be formed in the process, the mechanism of transfer from the first to the second language appear to tell on the average success in gender acquisition. The research has proven transfer effects can be positive, if the gender system of L1 lays the foundation for the counterpart system of L2, or negative, if the learner fails to rely on the system of L1, it being different from the target L2 system, the latter proving impossible to proceed on the basis of the former.

2. Purpose of the study

It follows from what has just been said that cross-culturally involved process of L2 acquisition involves the creation of didactic materials that would adequately reflect gender characteristics revealed by modern communicative acts in English. These materials, be them texts, recordings or scripts, naturally find their way into the didactic materials targeting the broadest readership of L2 learners. The purpose of the study is to lay the groundwork for further research of gender markers as present in didactically oriented speech acts in English.

3. Methodology

Since speech events in didactic register are expected to be transparent in terms of their content plane and be marked by high level of effectiveness in so far as their structure and format characteristics, both of the whole piece and of its constituent parts, features of speech manipulation come to the fore. Thus, within the format of the present publication it is the latter feature that is taken into consideration and followed on the basis of the material of effective speech events in the above mentioned didactic register.

The literature on the subject (Gronskaya, N., 2005; Kucherenko, K., 2013; Bocharova, E., 2013) deals with cases of speech manipulation found in sample materials created in different national languages in such a way that a variety of stylistically marked registers and forms of speech appear to be manifested by them. As it has been mentioned above, the results of the present research focus of gender characteristics of modern English speaking didactic speech events appearing in professional sources in the format of texts and scripts.

4. Findings

What has been said about is true of TOEFL International Certificate materials. Thus, we allow ourselves to take into analysis texts of those assignments which introduce materials in the format of gender-marked scripts – where it is plainly said which words are pronounced by the male speaker and which by the female speaker. In what follows we are offering excerpts from two passages from male and female lecture scripts correspondingly, which became parts of the Reading Section in the cited didactic source (<https://magoosh.com/toefl/2015/toefl-reading-sample-pdf/>: 5, p. 20, 22). The users are encouraged to acquaint themselves with these materials and answers the questions adduced below. Even a cursory glance reveals the fact that both texts are structured and arranged both lexically and phonologically differently. Our hypothesis being that the above mentioned features of

difference are gender related, as their manifestation correlates with the indication «male professor» / «female professor».

Fig. 1 Gender marked TOEFL texts

<p>Male professor introducing his colleagues Professor Jones and the method and the method he used in his academic research.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think this will help you • your textbook is describing • I had a friend • he retired last year... • I remember . . . this was a few years ago . . . • I remember passing by a classroom • just as he was leaving • he looked terrible • his clothes were all rumped • he looked like he hadn't slept all night • I asked if he was OK • I was surprised • he said that he never felt better • he was totally happy • He had spent the entire night in the classroom • <u>He didn't stop to eat dinner</u> • <u>he didn't stop to sleep . . . or even rest</u> • He was that involved in solving the puzzle • his teaching or research • he had just come across this puzzle • I think in a mathematics journal • it just really interested him • he worked furiously all night 	<p>Female professor lecturing on the method chimpanzees learnt to use sticks as tools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • animals that <u>use tools</u> • other animals <u>use tools</u> as well • can we say that <u>an object is a tool</u> • it depends on your <u>definition of a tool</u> • <u>a tool is an object</u> • but not just <u>any object</u> • <u>To be a tool...</u> • the <u>object's</u> gotta be purposefully changed • Wild chimpanzees use <u>sticks</u> to dig insects • but most <u>sticks</u> lying around won't do the job . . . • the <u>sticks</u> have to be sharpened • chews the <u>stick</u> and trims it down • doesn't just find the <u>stick</u> . . . • you could say it makes it in a way • an <u>object</u> doesn't have to be modified <u>to be considered a tool</u> • <u>a tool is any object</u> that's used to perform a specific task
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Fig. 2 Gender marked TOEFL texts: optimized analysis results

MARKERS	TYPOGRAPHIC MEANS USED	MALE SPEAKER	FEMALE SPEAKER
Pronominal subjectivisation: - first person - second person - third person	Blackening	7 0 15	1 2 0
Lexical repetition	Underlining	1	19

In what follows we would like to introduce one more example of a similar didactically oriented material – a sample script from TOEFL examination materials (TOEFL 2015, CD A, Track 9, Track 10 in Cliffs test prep. p. 392-394) meant for the Listening Section. Here again a clear indication of the gender characteristics of the speaker is made.

Fig. 3 Gender marked TOEFL scripts

<p>Man—speaker introducing the author Steven Crane and his literary method.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we continue our discussion • two <i>extremely important</i> works • He lived only until age 28 • <i>well respected</i> as <u>many more</u> prolific authors • with <u>many more</u> years of experience • for his ability • in a <i>unique</i> manner • he wasted his genius by living hard • including <u>too many</u> unhealthy ones • He seemed to believe • he had to experience • what he wrote about • He risked his life • He described himself as lazy • he wrote only when he had to • He was driven to write, he said • When the muse hit him • he would rapidly <u>write</u> an entire story 	<p>Woman-speaker introducing termites and the features of their habitat.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they're actually not closely related to ants • is <i>very similar</i> to that of ants • their native habitats • They are transported in wooden articles • and thus <i>can survive</i> for a long time • <u>because they help convert plant cellulose into substances</u> • <i>can be recycled</i> into the ecosystem • <i>very destructive</i> • <u>they feed upon and damage wooden objects and crops</u> • are even <i>more dangerous</i> • <u>because they're not as able to eat the trees</u> • that grow in their new environment • <u>Therefore, they live in and eat man-made wooden structures and crops</u> • <u>because treatment methods differ</u>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>he would use</u> with something else in the future • he wrote a story about a sea voyage • he experienced the shipwreck • <u>because no magazine would take it.</u> • shipwreck he <u>actually experienced</u> • <u>actual facts</u> • to describe his experience after the shipwreck • None of them knew the colour of the sky • gave him immediate fame • after the war about which he wrote • <u>because the description is so realistic</u> • The short stories that <u>you'll read</u> • <u>Look</u> for symbolism and realism • We will discuss them <i>in more detail</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nest in the wood and eat it • They are difficult to control • <u>because they enter the wood from the air</u> • Some protection <i>can be achieved</i> by using chemically treated wood
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Fig. 4 Gender marked TOEFL scripts: optimized analysis results

MARKERS	TYPOGRAPHIC MEANS USED	MALE SPEAKER	FEMALE SPEAKER
Pronominal subjectivisation	Blackening	23	11
Past habits/states modality	Wavy underlining	3	0
Objectivised probability	Blackened italicizing	1	4
Graded qualitative assessment	Italicizing	4	3
Repetitive assessment	Underlining	5	0
Imperative assessment	Double underlining	2	0
Rhematic indication of reason and result	Spaced underlining	2	6

5. Discussion

As could be seen the material studied is presented by two sample issues: two texts (Fig. 1) and two scripts (Fig. 3). Concerning the texts we have got to say that both passages are lecture episodes in which the speaker introduces the facts and gives their interpretation in terms of these facts' didactic relevance. In the left hand passage recommended to the learners by the subtitle Male professor we find a sample of subjective first-person narration, as the speaker shares his impression of an encounter with a colleague, an academician completely deeply fascinated by his research. The speaker lays stress on the fact that when the subject appears in the very center of a person's individual interest it is devoted the unlimited amount of time and every effort intellectual and emotional, none of which can be subjected to formal structuring and limitation. In terms of lexical arrangement this passage is rich in the use of first-person personal pronouns in the nominative case (7) and abounds in third-person pronouns in the nominative case (15). Though possessive pronouns of the third-person singular are used twice and there are singular cases of the use of second-person personal pronouns, their use does not attract the attention the way the above mentioned forms «I» and «he» do. In the adduced sample texts these pronouns are blackened. The general impression is that the speaker deliberately exceeds the number of personal pronouns in order to accentuate his closeness to the character thus allowing himself the use of a certain manipulative technique – the Male speaker insists that the type of selfless and whole heartedly devoted behavior characteristic of the personage discussed is fully ethical and desirable in every member of the audience. The device of lexical repetition is adhered to only once. This case is underlined in the text.

The text published on the right hand side of the page is subtitled Female professor. In this case the speaker is commenting at length on the terminological unit «tool» and gives examples of how chimpanzees use different sticks in order to turn them into tools. By comparison with the first passage almost complete ab-

sence of the pronouns of the first person singular in the nominative case and possessive pronouns of the second person are found. The few cases that are there (3), are blackened. The general impression is that the speaker deliberately aims at introducing the information in the general way as if distancing from it. At the same time the speaker does not establish close links with the audience and gives the latter the chance to independently visualize the characteristics of the situation described. One may think that the fact of manipulation is absent from this text. However, this is not exactly so. The statement abounds in lexical repetitions which were not found in the sample belonging to the Male speaker. In the Female presentation the lexical unit «tool» is used 6 times, «object» -- 6 times, «stick» -- 5 times. These items appear the core of multiple structural repetitions. In the texts they are underlined. The speaker, Female professor, seems to be leading the audiences along the maze of her narration to the logical conclusion – the definition the term «tool».

By way of making a preliminary conclusion it could be noted that gender characteristics of the speaker tell on the choice of logical notional constructions of the utterance as well as on the choice of lexical units at the expense of which the effectiveness of speech event is ensured. Since the examples adduced are recommended as part of language training program in view of taking TOEFL International Certificate examination, the target audience is expected to relate itself to the above mentioned gender related characteristics of the material as part of communicative competence and practical knowledge of English as the language of international communication.

With reference to the above adduced examples of scripts and their optimized characteristics (See: Fig. 4) we would like to offer the following commentary. The analyzed scripts are introduced as reflecting male and female speech. This means that in the TOEFL assignments the recordings of these very sample passages are meant to be listened to, fully understood and adequately reacted to by the target audience. In the course of the process the

users of the TOEFL materials would be naturally associating the recorded passages not only with the subject discussed and the professional qualification of the authoritative speakers – college professors, but also with the gender parameters of the material, evidently present in the recording and as such reflected by the script.

On the practical side, it is important to realize that social context is relevant in second language recognition and fluent use. The literature on the subject reveals the interest of the scholars in the fact that if a woman teacher unconsciously teaches 'women's language' to her male students, they may be in difficulties when they try to function in another country. Language learning thus goes beyond phonology, syntax, and semantics: but it takes a perceptive teacher to notice the pitfalls and identify them correctly for students (Lakoff, R., 1973: 76).

Thus, by comparison with the first example the number of gender markers that we have taken into account grows for a good reason. Since the target audience is set the task of assessing the idea of the narrative after listening to the recording, a greater number of individual, hypothetically, gender characteristics of the material catch their ear. Eventually, the number of markers we managed to single out grew from 2 in the first example (See: Fig. 1) to 7 in the second example (See: Fig. 2).

As has been proven by the linguistic research of the recent decades, gender characteristics are revealed by materials/texts/scripts/speech events belonging to every sphere of human activity (Skoroletova, N., 2010). These very features of gender nature are revealed in various situations of didactic intercourse. The material analysed shows that a speaker tends to reveal gender features in the following characteristics of the speech event: 1) the utterance's logical structure; 2) the characteristics of the utterance's lexical arrangement; 3) features of phonological level on analysis. Thus, didactic materials enjoying international recognition and being recommended to the broadest readership of all those eager to acquire or brush up English as a language of

international communication, reveal gender characteristics which, as our analysis has proven, cater to the full realization in these materials the category of effectiveness.

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INTRODUCING LEXICAL ELEMENTS OF KOREAN CULTURE (LEXICAL GROUP FOOD) IN THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF HAN KANG’S NOVEL “THE VEGETARIAN”

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Abstract: The Korean government’s policy is to promote Korean culture and literature. The article describes factors that stimulate penetration of Korean cultural elements into British cultural space and, in particular, studies the role of the English translation of a famous novel in introducing Korean lexis to English readership.

Keywords: inter-cultural communication, Korean food lexis, English translation, culture introducing factors

1. Introduction

Intercultural communication always develops based on a certain socio-political situation, which dictates the nature of communication, such as, for example, direct physical contacts, or influence of a more powerful or (economically) developed culture. In the case of British-Korean communication, important is its distant, non-contact character. The two countries are not only geographically remote from each other, but also, there are dissimilar in the type of their culture, language, and race. Objectively speaking, they could easily exist without any communication, which, of course, is hardly possible in the world of globalism. With the predominance of Anglo-Saxon culture and the English