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Gender-sensitive creations in Russian language¹

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This article examines the problem of gender-sensitive changes in the Russian language in their socio-political and linguistic aspects. Particular attention is paid to highlighting the theoretical and methodological aspects of Russian gender linguistics in order to present a brief history of the formation and development of this science, its research interests and current scientific agenda. The issue of the possibility of gender changes in the Russian language is understood within the framework of the Russian political context related to the issue of rights and freedoms of representatives of gender minorities in Russia. The article presents a description of the main trends in the current discussion of a potential gender-oriented reform of the Russian language. The methods of language transformation aimed at achieving inclusiveness of the language and its gender neutralization are considered. The main difficulties in the implementation of gender changes in the Russian language are indicated, related both to directly linguistic features and to the socio-political context in the modern Russian linguocultural space.

Gender linguistics, gender-sensitive language reform, inclusive language, gender-neutral language, feminization of language.

1. Introduction

The issue of gender-sensitive (gender-neutral, inclusive) language, widely discussed in the European and global context, certainly did not go unnoticed in the post-Soviet countries. First of all, we are talking about discussions about the gender-sensitive reform of the Russian language as a lingua franca in this region. The nature of such discussions, their intensity, content and the possibility of potential changes in the Russian language are directly influenced by the policy in the field of rights and freedoms of gender minorities, pursued by the official Russian authorities. In this regard, the issue of gender-sensitive changes in the Russian language lies not only and not so much in the social, cultural or linguistic plane – the political component is also important. Therefore, it seems appropriate to consider the issue of gender-sensitive changes in the Russian language through the prism of the peculiarities of the development of gender linguistics in Russian (Russian-language) linguistics and in the context of the socio-political atmosphere in modern Rus-

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sia. The discussion of these issues serves as a kind of introduction to the topic of gender-oriented reform of the Russian language, which is the primary focus of this article. The aim of the present study is to identify and describe the main approaches to implementing gender-sensitive changes in language that currently prevail in the Russian-speaking sociocultural space. Special attention is given to outlining specific methods of linguistic transformation within the frameworks of gender inclusivity and gender neutralization of the Russian language, including an assessment of their advantages and limitations. In line with this research objective, discourse analysis was chosen as the primary methodology – specifically, the analysis of texts addressing the issue of gender-related language change and texts produced according to the principles of gender-sensitive language.

2. Gender studies in Russian linguistics

The beginning of intensive gender studies in Russian linguistics is related to the mid-90s of the twentieth century. It was during this period that the theoretical and methodological foundations of this scientific discipline were formed and the main directions of gender studies in Russian linguistic science were determined. Particular attention is paid to understanding the concept of *gender* and the ways of manifestation of this category in language. Russian gender linguistics in its formation went through several stages, which largely determined the main directions of gender-oriented research in the Russian-speaking scientific community at the present stage. Traditionally, a period of pre-gender and proper gender studies is distinguished:²

1) During pre-gender studies, the problem of the relationship between language and gender was considered within the framework of various linguistic disciplines without any connection with the theory of social constructivism. Most of the studies were psycho- and sociolinguistic, aimed at identifying the characteristics of the speech of men and women;³ studying the category of gender and the problems of reference associated with it.⁴

2) Since the mid-1990s, gender studies in Russian linguistics have acquired a systematic character. General principles of scientific research are formulated, based on the idea of the conventionality of the category of gender, which manifests itself differently in different linguocultural communities. Pragmatic and semantic studies of the category of gender are conducted; the concept of *gender* as a natural and conventional phenomenon is understood; a terminological base for linguistic genderology is developed⁵ and the main directions of research in Russian gender linguistics are determined: socio- and psycholinguistic, linguocultural and communicative-discursive.⁶

Socio- and psycholinguistic research within the framework of Russian gender linguistics is aimed at studying the natural and social origins in the issue of the relationship between language

² See, for example, Кирилина, А. В. – Томская, М. В.: Лингвистические гендерные исследования. In: Отечественные записки, 2005, № 2 (23), с. 112-132. Available at: <https://strana-oz.ru/2005/2/lingvisticheskie-gendernye-issledovaniya>, cit. 25. 8. 2024.

³ Земская, Е. А. – Китайгородская, М. А. – Розанова, Н. Н.: Особенности мужской и женской речи. In Земская, Е. А. – Шмелев, Д. Н. (ред.): Русский язык в его функционировании. Москва: Русский язык, 1993, с. 90-136; Горошко, Е. И.: Особенности мужского и женского стиля письма. In Халеева, И. И. (ред.): Гендерный фактор в языке и коммуникации. Москва: МГЛУ, 1999, с. 44-60.

⁴ Янко-Триницкая, Н. А.: Наименования лиц женского пола существительными женского и мужского рода. In Земская, Е. Д. – Шмелев, Д. Н. (ed.): Развитие словообразования современного русского языка. Москва: Наука, 1966, с. 153-167; Кронгауз, М. А.: Sexus, или Проблема пола в русском языке. In Гиппиус, А. А. – Топоров, А. А. (ред.): Русистика. Славистика. Индоевропеистика. Москва: Индрик, 1996, с. 510-525; Шахмайкин, А. М.: Проблема лингвистического статуса категории рода. In Горшкова, К. В. – Ремнева, М. Л. (ред.): Актуальные проблемы современной русистики. Диахрония и синхрония. Москва: МГУ, 1996, с. 226-273.

⁵ Денисова, А. А. (ред.): Словарь гендерных терминов. Москва: Информация XXI век, 2002. 256 с. Available at: <http://www.owl.ru/gender/>, cit. 20. 8. 2024.

⁶ Кирилина, А. В. – Томская, М. В.: Лингвистические гендерные исследования, с. d.

and gender. Special attention is paid to the study of the characteristics of female and male speech, due to the functional asymmetry of the brain.⁷

Within the framework of the linguocultural direction, the specifics of Russian stereotypes of femininity and masculinity, the peculiarities of reflecting the concepts of masculinity and femininity in the Russian language, the gender metaphor and its role in intercultural communication are studied.⁸ The problem of gender stereotypes and asymmetries is of scientific interest, which is revealed through the study of the Russian phraseological fund and national precedent texts.⁹ Contrastive linguocultural studies of gender allowed us to draw conclusions about the unequal degree of androcentrism of different languages and cultures, the dynamic nature of the linguistic construction of gender and its dependence on the type of discourse and social parameters of communication.¹⁰

Within the framework of the communicative-discursive direction, the linguistic construction of gender in the communicative interaction of individuals in various types of discourse, the speech behavior of men and women is studied from the standpoint of theories of social identity, communicative adaptation and interactionism. The multiplicity and variability of the concepts of masculinity and femininity makes it possible to manipulate these concepts in media, advertising and political discourses.¹¹ The processes of constructing gender identity can also be traced in the material of artistic discourse texts.¹²

⁷ Горошко, Е. И.: Особенности мужского и женского стиля письма, с. d.; Горошко, Е. И.: Функциональная асимметрия мозга, язык, пол: Аналитический обзор. Москва – Харьков: ИД „ИНЖЭК“, 2005. 280 с. Available at: <https://www.textology.ru/article.aspx?ald=250>, cit. 20. 8. 2024; Горошко, Е. И.: Особенности мужских и женских вербальных ассоциаций (Опыт качественной интерпретации). In Халеева, И. И. et al. (ред.): Гендер: язык, культура, коммуникация: Доклады Второй Международной конференции. Москва: МГУ, 2002, с. 77-86.

⁸ Кирилина, А. В.: Женский голос в русской паремииологии. In: Женщина в российском обществе, 1997, № 3, с. 23-26; Кирилина, А. В.: „Мужественность“ и „женственность“ с точки зрения лингвиста. In: Женщина в российском обществе, 1998, № 2, с. 21-27.

⁹ Кирилина, А. В.: Русская фразеология с точки зрения гендерной лингвистики. In: Гендерные отношения в России: История, современное состояние, перспективы. Иваново: Юнона, 1999, с. 70-73; Слышкин, Г. Г.: Гендерная концептосфера современного русского анекдота. In Потапов, В. В. (ред.): Гендер как интрига познания. Гендерные исследования в лингвистике, литературоведении и теории коммуникации. Москва: Рудомино, 2002, с. 66-73; Тимофеев, М. Ю.: Ржевский, Чапаев, Штирлиц: национальные и гендерные характеристики военных в советских анекдотах. In Халеева, И. И. (ред.): Гендер: язык, культура, коммуникация: Доклады Первой Международной конференции. Москва: МГЛУ, 2001, с. 321-328; Тимофеев, М. Ю.: „Новый русский мужчина“: знаки этнокультурной идентичности в журнале „Медведь“. In Хасбулатова, О. А. (ред.): Гендерные исследования и гендерное образование в высшей школе: Материалы Международной научной конференции. Иваново: Ивановский гос. ун-т, 2002, с. 124-125.

¹⁰ Кирилина, А. В.: Современное состояние гендерных исследований в российской лингвистике. In: *Beitragedes Gender-Blocksum XIII. Internationalen Slavistenkongress in Ljubljana 15–21 August 2003. Specimina Philologiae Slavicae*, 2003, s. 113-127.

¹¹ Городникова, М. Д.: Гендер в коммуникативной интеракции. In Халеева, И. И. et al. (ред.): Гендер: язык, культура, коммуникация: Доклады второй международной конференции. Москва: МГЛУ, 2002, с. 70-76; Гриценко, Е. С.: Гендерные аспекты национальной идентичности в российском предвыборном дискурсе. In: *Journal of Eurasian research*, 2003, vol. 3, nr. 3, p. 71-79; Гусейнова, И. А.: Проблема гендерной асимметрии в видеоряде коммерческих дескриптивных рекламных текстов (на материале русскоязычной прессы). In Халеева, И. И. et al. (ред.): Доклады Второй Международной конференции. Москва: МГЛУ, 2002, с. 107-112; Иванченко, Г. В.: Гендерная атрибуция поэтических текстов: реконструкция или проекция. In Халеева, И. И. et al. (ред.): Гендер: язык, культура, коммуникация: Доклады второй международной конференции. Москва: МГЛУ, 2002, с. 160-168; Кирилина, А. В.: Гендерные аспекты массовой коммуникации. In Кирилина А. В. (ред.): Гендер как интрига познания. Москва: Рудомино, 2000, с. 47-80. Available at: <http://www.owl.ru/win/books/articles/kirilina.htm>, cit. 21. 8. 2024; Томская, М. В.: Гендерный аспект социального рекламного дискурса. In Халеева, И. И. et al. (ред.): Гендер: язык, культура, коммуникация: Доклады Первой Международной конференции. Москва: МГЛУ, 2001, с. 328-333.

¹² Фатеева, Н. А.: Языковые особенности современной женской прозы. Подступы к теме. In Крысин, Л. П. (ред.): Русский язык сегодня. Вып. 1. Москва: Азбуковник, 2000, с. 573-586; Фатеева, Н. А.: Способы вербальной самоидентификации в современной русской „женской“ прозе (женское и мужское). In Халеева, И. И. et al. (ред.):

In the last decade, in connection with the intensive discussion in the global context of the problem of the discriminatory nature of language and ways to overcome it, works devoted to the issue of the feminization of language began to appear in Russian gender linguistics.¹³ The problem of gender neutrality of language is mostly covered using the material of foreign languages or, at best, in a comparative key, without focusing directly on the Russian language.¹⁴ Such a cautious handling of the problem of inclusive language in Russian gender-oriented linguistic studies is due to the general socio-political context in modern Russia and directly the state position in relation to gender minorities.

3. Gender issue in Russia: political aspect

When speaking about the possibility of gender-oriented reform of the Russian language, it is necessary to consider the socio-political context, which largely determines the vector of development of discussions about gender-sensitive language. Since the issue of inclusive modernization of the language is primarily associated with the initiative to eliminate linguistic discrimination of persons on the basis of gender (in this case, we are primarily talking about representatives of the LGBT community), the very possibility of reforming the language is conditioned by state policy towards representatives of gender minorities.

In Russia, back in 2013, a law was passed at the federal level establishing liability for disseminating information about “non-traditional sexual relations” among minors.¹⁵ According to the text of the draft law, it is about the distribution of «information aimed at the formation of non-traditional sexual attitudes among minors, attractiveness of non-traditional sexual relations, distorted representation of the social equality of traditional and non-traditional sexual relations». Also, by bill “imposition is prohibited information about non-traditional sexual relationships that cause interest in such relations”. In 2022 new Law 478-FZ prohibited spreading any information that “propagandizes unconventional sexual relationships, pedophilia or shift gender” among people all ages.¹⁶ The aforementioned legislative initiatives do not specify what information can be regarded as propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations, which has significantly limited the Russian-language information space related to issues of gender minorities, including the problem of gender-sensitive language.¹⁷ Since 2023, gender transition has been prohibited in Russia,

Гендер: язык, культура, коммуникация: Доклады второй международной конференции. Москва: МГЛУ, 2002, 312-320. Available at: <https://www.rastko.rs/filologija/stil/2002/26Fatejeva.pdf>, cit. 20. 8. 2024.

¹³ See, for example Баданина, И. В.: Функционирование феминативов в языке интернета. In Должикова, В. В. – Барабаш, В. В.: Русский язык в интернете: личность, общество, коммуникация, культура. Москва: РУДН, 2017, с. 89-94; Ульяницкая, Л. А.: Феминизация языка в социально-политическом пространстве России и Франции. In: Дискурс, 2020, № 6 (3), с.140-159; Ильясова, С. – Пугачева, Е.: Феминизация феминитивов. In: Филология и культура, 2021, № 3 (65), с. 12-17.

¹⁴ Боженко, Ю. С. – Калиновская, Е. А.: Языковые признаки гендерной нейтральности в английском и русском языках (на примере интернет-публикаций). In: Филологические науки. Вопросы теории и практики, 2022, том 15, вып. 5, с. 1543-1547; Ковалева, Е. Д. – Кошмина, А. С. – Власенко, Н. И.: Гендерная нейтральность языка и ее влияние на языковые нормы. In: Известия Юго-Западного государственного университета. Серия: Лингвистика и педагогика, 2022, № 12 (3), с. 68-76; Коноплева, Т. О. – Новикова, А. С.: Гендерно-нейтральный язык как средство политики гендерного равенства (на примере шведского языка). In: Фундаментальные и прикладные науки сегодня. Материалы XII международной научно-практической конференции. НИЦ „Академический“. North Charleston: CreateSpace, 2017, с. 103-106. Available at: https://elibrary.ru/download/elibrary_29797613_68830087.pdf, cit. 21. 8. 2024; Кошелева, О. Н. – Маслова, А. Н.: Гендерно-нейтральный или гиндерно-ориентированный язык: современные языковые реалии в немецкоязычном пространстве. In: Russian Linguistic Bulletin, 2003, vol. 43, nr. 7, 2023.

¹⁵ Available at: https://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_34661/, cit. 15. 8. 2024.

¹⁶ Available at: <http://publication.pravo.gov.ru/Document/View/0001202212050019?index=9>, cit. 15. 8. 2024.

¹⁷ For example, in connection with the adopted law, the question of recognizing feminism as an extremist ideology

and the international LGBT public movement has been declared an extremist organization, as a result of which the movement itself and its symbols have been banned in Russia. These legislative initiatives have undoubtedly had a negative impact on both the legal status of representatives of gender minorities in Russia and their social position in society.

It is natural that in such a socio-political context, the discussion of the issue of gender-sensitive language reform is significantly limited not only in linguistic research, but also in open public debate. Some “window of opportunity” for discussing this issue remained until the adoption of the law in 2022, but even then, the discussion was primarily about isolated initiatives, unsystematic studies that were presented in the Russian-language segment of the Internet.¹⁸ However, it should be noted that the issue of gender-sensitive reform of the Russian language has been and remains on the agenda of representatives of gender minorities, who, for example, are implementing an initiative to create a *Gender-Neutral Language Dictionary*,¹⁹ organizing discussions,²⁰ and conducting sociological surveys.²¹

In the next chapter we will present an overview of the discussed methods of gender-sensitive reform of the Russian language, which have received the greatest public resonance in the Russian-speaking environment.

4. Inclusive or Gender Neutral Language? Initiatives for Gender-Sensitive Reform of the Russian Language

Today, in the Russian socio-cultural space, two main trends in the potential implementation of gender-oriented language reform can be traced: 1) to make the language more inclusive, implying the presence of methods of linguistic nomination (inclusion) of all gender groups; 2) to make the language more neutral, not focusing on gender, not tampering with this category in the language. Each of the indicated paths presupposes its own methods of language transformation, which we will consider below.

4.1 Techniques for achieving language inclusivity

The problem of non-inclusiveness of language was initially considered in the Russian linguocultural space in close connection with the feminist agenda, which presupposes overcoming discrimination against women, including through the feminization of language. It should be noted that in Russian, as in many other languages with the grammatical category of gender, the masculine gender is considered gender-neutral. For example, the masculine plural form is used to designate a group of people of different sexes (*актеры, студенты, учителя* / *actors, students, teachers*, etc.). A similar situation is typical for designating people by professional characteristics, when the masculine form is considered gender-neutral (*врач, юрист, библиотекарь* / *doctor, lawyer, librarian*, etc.). Only some names of professions have a lexicographically fixed

has arisen, and along with it, feminitives. See, for example: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/5914178>, cit. 20.8.2024; <https://moskvichmag.ru/lyudi/novaya-reaktsiya-pochemu-feminizm-v-rossii-vyglyadit-kak-ekstremizm/>, cit. 20.8.2024; <https://ona.org.ru/post/739974475279482880/feminitives-extremism>, cit. 20.8.2024.

¹⁸ See, for example: How to speak gender-sensitive language. Available at: <https://theothersby.org/ru/yak-razmaulyats-gendarna-chullivaj-movaj/>, cit. 23.8.2024; Gender-sensitive language shapes our reality. Available at: <https://www.damigra.de/ru/meldungen/gendersensible-sprache-gestaltet-unsere-realitaet/>, 23.8.2024; More about gender-sensitive language: expert commentary. Available at: <https://lashevchenko.livejournal.com/493281.html>, cit. 23.8.2024.

¹⁹ Available at: <https://ru.pronouns.page/dictionary>, cit. 23.8.2024.

²⁰ Gender-neutral language and non-binary identities: how to reform language? Available at: <https://makeout.space/2017/02/27/genderno-neytralnyy-yazyk.html>

²¹ https://www.academia.edu/38001337/Отношение_к_феминитивам_и_гендерно_нейтральным_формам_в_русском_языке

feminine form (*teacher, educator, actress*, etc.) or are officially used only in the feminine form, denoting traditionally female professions (*учительница, воспитательница, актриса / nanny, laundress, seamstress*, etc.). However, in some cases, the name of a profession in the feminine gender carries a derogatory connotation (*няня, прачка, швея / female doctor, female hairdresser, female grandmaster*, etc.) or has the meaning of ‘the spouse of a person of the corresponding profession’ (*докторша / female doctor – ‘doctor’s wife’, генеральша / female general – ‘general’s wife’, etc.*).

The initiative to feminize the language is based on the idea of the need to overcome its masculinity and androcentrism, which presupposes the restructuring of the male-oriented structure of the language. In the Russian discourse on overcoming linguistic discrimination against women, several methods of feminizing the language are distinguished:

- actualization of existing feminines and their introduction into active usage. The point is that in the modern Russian language, even with the existence of a feminine form to designate a person by professional or social characteristics, preference is given to the masculine form, which leads to the displacement of existing feminines from active use;
- activation word-formation models, which is happening by means of introducing the: *Gender gap* feminine neologisms. It should be noted that in the Russian language there are a number of suffixes for the formation of the feminine form of a noun (-к-, -есс-, -ш-, -ин-, -ц-, -щиц-, -ниц-, etc.), which significantly complicates the unification of word-forming formants for neologisms. In addition, newly formed feminines such as *авторка, редакторка, директорка, блогерка / avtorka, redaktorka, direktorka, blogerka* remain on the linguistic periphery, often causing active discussions about their appropriateness;²²
- linguistic symmetry, which involves explicitly identifying female persons in speech by naming them: *студентки и студенты / female students and male students, учительницы и учителя / female teachers and male teachers*, etc.

Today, the issue of language feminization is considered in line with the general problem of gender discrimination in language. In the Russian linguocultural environment, to solve this problem, they propose borrowing methods of transforming the language that have already been developed in foreign practice in order to achieve its inclusiveness. In particular, for example, introducing into user circulation the so-called *gender gap* and /or Asterisk. The gender gap is intended to show that between male and female gender there is space for other gender identities. We are talking about the use of the underline symbol in written speech between the base of the word and the generic ending, for example: *эт_а персона не хотел_а тебе грубить; если он_а извинится, прости е_ё, пожалуйста*. Usage Asterisk (character asterisks) implies variation endings: *если человека ранить, он* обидится – особенно, если уже был* не в духе до этого / if human hurt, he * will be offended – especially if it already was * in a bad mood to of this*. Both of these techniques have their own difficulties in practical implementation. First of all, they are suitable only for written speech and cannot be used in the oral form of the language. Another difficulty is that in the Russian language, the ending of a certain gender has not only a noun, but also parts of speech that agree with it, which is The use of gender gaps and asterisk significantly complicates language constructions and complicates the perception of the text. In the case of using gender gaps (developed for the specifics of the German language), grammatically incorrect constructions often arise in Russian. For example, the form *императ_ца / of an empress* includes the masculine grammatically incorrect form *императп / of an empress*. Effective use

²² See, for example: <https://trends.rbc.ru/trends/social/616e90aa9a7947529df0b98b>, cit. 23. 8. 2024.

of gender gaps is also problematic from the point of view of the presence of a whole system of declension in the Russian language. For example, the question *Кто-нибудь хочет стать преподаватель_ницей?* / *Someone wants become teacher_female* in the male gender, it is read as *Кто-нибудь хочет стать преподавателем?* / *How Anyone? wants become teacher?*, what does not correspond to the rules of declension in Russian language.

To address the issue of expressing gender specificity in the oral form of language, even more innovative techniques are sometimes proposed: “the use of aspiration of the final consonant bases with the addition of -a or -i (singular or pl.). For example: *я/ты сказалха, активистхи, учителхи, союзникхи* / *I/you saidkha, activistkh, teacherkh, allieskh* etc. <...> And the point is that *X* not should be pronounced how separate sound, and how previous aspirated consonant”.²³ However, this method involves changing the phonological system of the language, which in itself is quite problematic.

To date, in the Russian-language linguistic environment, only feminitives have received their scientific understanding. Borrowed methods of achieving language inclusiveness remain only in the sphere of interests of activists of gender minorities.

4.2 Techniques for neutralizing language

Gender-neutral, or gender-sensitive language, is intended to neutralize the linguistic expression of gender categories. In this regard, the methods of achieving neutrality in language are primarily associated with the search for ways of generalized nomination.

Using the pronoun *they* (including third-person plural verb forms) to avoid having to specify a specific gender. For example: *Они уже давно не появлялись на собраниях, Ты уже решил на какую тему будешь писать эссе?* / *They haven't shown up for meetings in a while, Have you decided what topic you're going to write your essay on yet?* or *Я точно так же совершали глупые ошибки и застревали в формулировках* / *I have made similarly stupid mistakes and gotten stuck in my wording*.²⁴

- Using Neutrals. Neutrals are neutral options words that People are used to talk about someone without references to pronouns and gender: *активистикс, журналисте, депутатът* / *activist, journalist, deputy*.²⁵
- Using expressions without gender markers (rephrasing). For example, instead of *родился/родилась* / *was born* use the expression *дата рождения* / *date of birth*; *мне надо* / *I have to* instead of *я должен/я должна* / *I must*; *вчера был отличный вечер в театре* / *yesterday was a great evening at the theatre* instead of *вчера я ходила в театр* / *yesterday I went to the theatre*.
- Use of collective nouns or plural nouns. This technique of neutralizing a statement is especially relevant for naming professional or social groups: *студенчество, сообщество, персонал, комиссия, полицейские, военные, судьи* / *students, community, staff, committee, police, military, judges*.
- Use of passive voice and impersonal constructions: *решено было сделать* / *it was decided to do* instead of *я решил/решила сделать* / *I decided to do*; instead of *той ситуации, которую он/она описывает* / *the situation he/she is describing*, use *в описываемой ситуации* / *in the situation being described*; *ужин готов* / *dinner is ready* instead of *я приготовил/*

²³ See here: <https://makeout.space/2017/02/27/genderno-neytralnyy-yazyk.html>, cit. 23. 8. 2024 .

²⁴ Available at: <https://www.transcoalition.net/how-to-use-gender-neutral-pronouns-in-russian/>, cit. 23. 8. 2024.

²⁵ Available at: <https://parniplus.com/avtorskie-kolonki/slovo-obshhego-roda/>, cit. 23. 8. 2024.

приготовила ужин / I cooked dinner; мне не доводилось испытывать это чувство / I have never experienced this feeling instead of я не испытывала это чувство / I have not experienced this feeling.

- Substitution of grammatical tense. This involves replacing the past tense of a verb with the present or future tense, which does not require an indication of gender: *иду я вчера / I am going yesterday* instead of *вчера я шла/шел / yesterday I was going/walking*; *я сейчас пойду в магазин / I am going to the store now* instead of *я пошла в магазин / I am going to the store*.
- Using impersonal forms to convey the past tense: *пришлось сделать, мне выпала возможность сделать / I had to do it, I had the opportunity to do it*.
- All the above methods of language transformation (both neutralization and changes aimed at achieving language inclusion) have their own difficulties in implementation, causing a number of questions among language users (not only opponents, but also supporters of gender language reform).²⁶ The main ones are related to the following aspects:
- weighting of language constructions. Including words of two (several) genders in a sentence simultaneously requires the introduction of variable endings, which unjustifiably complicates not only the writing, but also the perception of the text.
- redundant duplication, when information is repeated several times with modification of gender endings.
- complication of the graphic image of the text (for example, when using gender gap or asterisk), which often leads to the impossibility of identifying the target word.
- The possibility of word-formation variability of gender neologisms (for example, *блогерка, блогерша, блогиня / bloggerka, bloggersha, bloginya*), which leads to confusion in determining their semantic meaning.

And this, of course, is not a whole list of problematic issues related to the formation of a gender-neutral (inclusive) language. We are talking only about the most obvious difficulties that an ordinary language user faces. A much larger and more complex problem is the question of the expediency of artificial language transformations and their directive introduction into language practice. In the Russian linguocultural environment today, the gender-neutral language agenda is in the hands of so-called gender activists, whose activities are significantly limited. However, the very issue of gender-sensitive language reform certainly requires a broader public discussion with the direct participation of linguists.

5. Conclusion

In the last decade, the problem of gender-neutral, gender-sensitive or inclusive language has been discussed with varying intensity both in the European and global socio-political context, often acquiring a shade of tendencies and expressive political subtext. The issue of gender-sensitive language reform remains controversial, causing much discussion and provoking public resonance. In the Russian-speaking and specifically Russian linguocultural space, the problem of gender-oriented changes in language also has a pronounced political overtone, which significantly complicates its understanding both at the layman's and professional levels. In Russian gender linguistics today, there is an active discussion of methods for gender neutralization of vocabulary using the experience of French, English, German and other languages as an example, however,

²⁶ See, for example, Кирей-Ситникова, Я.: Отношение к феминитивам и гендерно-нейтральным формам в русском языке (2018). Available at: https://www.academia.edu/38001337/Отношение_к_феминитивам_и_гендерно_нейтральным_формам_в_русском_языке

consideration of the issue of the need/possibility of gender-sensitive reform of the Russian language is mostly limited to a description of its feminization techniques. Contemporary Russian gender linguistics within the framework of communicative-discursive studies has focused its attention on the interpretation of gender features of linguistic behavior, ignoring the problem of inclusive language. Within the framework of the contemporary Russian political context, the issue of gender-neutral language is essentially taboo and pushed to the periphery of public discussion, which is often limited to posts in social networks of individual gender activists. This situation not only leads to the polarization of society and the formation of inadequate xenodiscourse, but also limits the possibilities of linguistic understanding of potential gender-sensitive changes in the Russian language.

Гендерно-чувствительные креации в русском языке

Марина Кажарнович – Ольга Оргонёва

В статье рассматривается проблематика гендерно-чувствительных изменений в русском языке в их социально-политическом и лингвистическом аспекте. Особое внимание уделено освещению теоретико-методологических аспектов русской гендерной лингвистики с целью представления краткой истории становления и развития данной науки, ее исследовательских интересов и актуальной научной повестки. Кратко представлены основные направления в гендерно ориентированных исследованиях в русском языкознании: социолингвистическое, психолингвистическое, лингвокультурологическое и коммуникативно-дискурсивное. Вопрос возможности гендерных изменений в русском языке осмысливается в рамках актуального российского политического контекста, связанного с вопросом прав и свобод представителей гендерных меньшинств в России. В статье представлено описание основных тенденций в актуальной дискуссии о потенциальной гендерно ориентированной реформе русского языка. Рассмотрены приемы языковой трансформации, направленные на достижение инклюзивности языка и его гендерной нейтрализации. Указаны основные сложности в реализации гендерных изменений в русском языке, связанные как с непосредственно языковыми особенностями, так и с социально-политическим контекстом в современном русском лингвокультурном пространстве. Обращается внимание на то, что современная русская гендерная лингвистика в рамках коммуникативно-дискурсивных исследований сосредоточила свое внимание на интерпретации гендерных особенностей языкового поведения, игнорируя проблематику инклюзивного языка. В рамках актуального российского политического контекста вопрос гендерно-нейтрального языка по сути табуирован и вытеснен на периферию общественной дискуссии, которая зачастую ограничивается постами в социальных сетях отдельных гендерных активистов. Такая ситуация не только ведет к поляризации общества и формированию неадекватного ксенодискурса, но и ограничивает возможности лингвистического осмысления потенциальных гендерно-чувствительных изменений в русском языке.