

Characteristics of the Manifestation of Gender Stereotypes in Conceptual Metaphors

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Abstract. *This article explores how language, specifically through conceptual metaphors, encodes and reinforces gender stereotypes within society. Conceptual metaphors serve as linguistic devices that shape perceptions of gender by associating specific traits and behaviors with male and female identities. Research indicates that certain metaphorical source domains—such as BUILDING, COMPETITION, and WAR—are perceived as masculine, while others like JOURNEY and PLANT are viewed as feminine.*

This dichotomy reflects societal norms and expectations surrounding gender roles. Furthermore, studies reveal that the use of gender metaphors can significantly influence how individuals are perceived in various contexts, such as politics and business. For instance, women who adopt masculine metaphors often face criticism for being overly aggressive, while their male counterparts are not subjected to the same scrutiny.

The implications of these metaphorical associations extend to everyday language, where conventional metaphors perpetuate gender hierarchies and reinforce dominant ideologies regarding masculinity and femininity.

Overall, the examination of gender stereotypes in conceptual metaphors highlights the intricate relationship between language, culture, and social identity, suggesting that metaphors not only reflect but also shape societal attitudes towards gender.

Key words: gender stereotypes, conceptual metaphors, gender role, female, male, proverbs, gender metaphors, femininity, masculinity.

Introduction

Gender research has become widespread among all humanitarian sciences today, encompassing terminology specific to this field. The subject of gender education includes the existing differences between women and men in society and the unique characteristics of these two genders. These considerations are often referred to as "male" and "female," and sometimes the term "femininity"¹ (female,) is also encountered. Furthermore, the task of gender studies is to examine the various characteristics between representatives of both genders and to assess the subject of social research as a politically positive and democratic principle in a neutral and objective manner. Therefore, gender studies focus on the specific stereotypes of how people feel, interpersonal relationships, the stereotypes that shape their behavior, and the evaluation of these stereotypes, as well as the stereotypes related to creating an ideal human from a gender perspective.

¹ Thomas Eckes: Geschlechterstereotype: Mann und Frau in sozialpsychologischer Sicht. Centaurus-Veriagsgesellschaft Pfaffenweiler 1997.

Methodology

Gender stereotypes are ideas about the distinct characteristics that have been stable for society during a certain historical period regarding the differences between men and women. Gender stereotypes can be found among individuals as well as within society. For this reason, gender research primarily includes psychological (psychoanalytic), economic, and political theories. It is known that there are two stages in studying gender stereotypes: 1. Sexual identification, 2. Gender roles.

Gender stereotypes are cognitive structures that encompass social knowledge about the characteristics of "women" and "men."² This definition illustrates the dual nature of gender stereotypes: on one hand, they relate to "having individual knowledge," while on the other hand, they form the basis for "culturally shared understanding of typical characteristics of genders."³

Although gender stereotypes are knowledge-based, they involve the process of applying stereotype-based knowledge to specific individuals.⁴ The concepts of gender stereotype and gender role are intricately linked. According to Dorote Alfermann, the term "gender role" is often used inconsistently in literature.⁵ In this context, unlike gender stereotypes, the term "gender role" also generalizes. A distinctive feature of gender roles is their focus on socially directed behaviors due to the socially differentiated sex of individuals.

As we study gender linguistics, we aim to identify, explore, and analyze the gender characteristics of representatives from both nations by utilizing proverbs related to the concepts of "woman" and "man" in both Uzbek and German languages.

Analysis and discussion

For example, the Uzbek people have historically shown great respect and reverence for women. A woman is regarded as a respected mother, wife, and homemaker. Proverbs such as "A woman's care is the angel of household," "Mother tree bears fruit," "Mother is the pride of the world," "A wife is a mirror for her husband," and "A mother is kind—father is a nurturer,"⁶ highlight these values.

The Uzbek people have always described men as symbols of bravery, courage, loyalty, and the backbone of the household, serving as exemplary fathers to their children. Er bor erda zo'r bor; Erning ishin el bilar; Er yigit elga tortar; Ota g'ayratli bo'lsa, bola ibratli bo'lar; Erning otini el chiqarar; Eringga yoqding, elingga yoqding.⁷ Proverbs such as Erdan sadoqat, xotindan itoat; Er-xotin qo'sh qanot; Er avra, xotin astar; Er quyosh yo'ldoshi, xotin umr yo'ldoshi; Ota aql, ona idrok; Xotin bo'yin, er bosh; Onangni quyosh bilsang, onangni oy bil; Ona kulfatin ona bilar, ota kulfatin ota; Er daladan, xotin uydan; Onaga o'xshab qiz tug'ilmas, otaga o'xshab o'g'il; Onalik uyning ori bor, otalik uyning zari⁸ .highlight these qualities. Other sayings emphasize the community's respect for men, indicating that a man's reputation is tied to his actions and character.

Feminist scholars emphasize the social significance of distinguishing between gender and biological differences when discussing the roles of men and women. Gender refers to the social and cultural definitions of femininity and masculinity, while biological differences pertain to the physical distinctions between sexes.⁹

For example, early feminist works, such as "The Rights of Woman,"¹⁰ address social inequalities and explain how these disparities manifest in educational systems. They argue that if women are to be recognized as living beings, they should not be viewed as slaves or domestic animals but rather as

² Thomas Eckes: Geschlechterstereotype: Mann und Frau in sozialpsychologischer Sicht. Centaurus-Verlagsgesellschaft Pfaffenweiler 1997.

³ Ruth Becker: Handbuch Frauen- und Geschlechterforschung: Theorie, Methoden, Empirie. 2008.

⁴ Ruth Becker: Handbuch Frauen- und Geschlechterforschung: Theorie, Methoden, Empirie. 2008.

⁵ Dorothee Alfermann: Geschlechterrollen und geschlechtstypisches Verhalten. Kohlhammer edition, Paperback in German / Deutsch - 1. Auflage. 1996.

⁶ Mirzaev T., Musoqulov B., Sarimsoqov., O'zbek xalq maqollari. 1987.

⁷ Mirzaev T., Musoqulov B., Sarimsoqov., O'zbek xalq maqollari.

⁸ Mirzaev T., Musoqulov B., Sarimsoqov., O'zbek xalq maqollari.

⁹ Hernsbey J. The Oxford Companion of Philosophy 305 b.

¹⁰ Воронина О.А. Введение в гендерные исследования

companions to humans. In German culture, women are often depicted in proverbs as symbols of beauty, grace, and delicacy. This representation can be seen in various sayings that reflect these attributes. Overall, this text illustrates how feminist theory critiques traditional views on gender roles and advocates for a recognition of women's rights and contributions within society.

The German people depict women as symbols of beauty, elegance, and delicacy in their folk sayings. This can also be observed in the following examples. Das Haar einer Frau ist ihre krönende Schönheit; Hübsche Frauen altern nicht, denn sie können nur bis dreißig zählen; Frauen haben langes Haar und kurzen Sinn; Die gut aussehende Frau braucht keine Schminke; Des blinden Mannes Frau braucht keine Schminke¹¹.

Men are typically depicted in proverbs in terms of intellect and physical appearance. For example: Der Mann ist was er isst; Ein hässlicher Mann findet eine schöne Frau; Ein Mann braucht nur so schön zu sein, dass sein Pferd nicht scheut; Frage einen alten Mann, wenn du einen guten Rat brauchst; Lieber einen Mann ohne Geld als das Geld ohne einen Mann;¹²

In Germany, it is also reflected in folk sayings that women tend to speak more than men. Ein Mann ein Wort, eine Frau ein Wörterbuch; Frauen sind großartige Erzählerinnen; Wer eine Frau hat, hat Streit; Ein Mann ist nur so weise, wie seine Frau meint; Der Mann ist Kopf, die Frau hingegen das Genick; Männer regieren aber Frauen beherrschen; Frauen und Elefanten vergessen niemals¹³.

Furthermore, in German proverbs, depictions of men's negative attitudes towards women are rarely found. As an example: Wer seine Frau schlägt, der schlägt mit seiner linken Hand die rechte;¹⁴ Weiber schlagen, gibt schlechte Ehre o'zbek tiliga Kimki o'z ayolini ursa, uning chap qo'li o'ng qo'lini uradi; yoki Xotinlarni urish behurmatlik demakdir. Yana bir misol nemis tilida: Wer Weib und Kind nicht regieren kann, ist nicht einmal ein halber Mann – in Uzbek, it conveys the meaning that a man who cannot manage his wife and children is not considered a real man.

In these proverbs, the concepts of Weib and Mann—woman and man—reflect the hidden aspects of women's submissiveness and respect for their husbands, while also expressing positive qualities associated with men, such as firmness, tolerance, and the ability to manage a family.

It is evident that the characteristics of gender in proverbs arise from the expression of each gender's traits, lifestyle, and external influences, as well as the roles men and women occupy in social life. It is crucial to accurately assess the role of women within the family and among friends; that is, a woman is a mother, a partner, and a housekeeper.

In German folk proverbs, women are portrayed as objects with beautiful qualities that lack specific foundations for their predication. For example, the German sayings "Ein Weib ohne Tugend ist ein goldener Becher mit saurem Wein" or "Ein Weib ohne Tugend ist ein Buch ohne Register" can be translated into Uzbek as "Na'munaviy xulqi bo'Imagan ayol, bo'm-bo'sh kitobga o'xshaydi."

A woman should not only capture attention with her charm and beauty but also with her exemplary character. In proverbs, various objects and items are used as artistic motifs to reveal women's characteristics. For instance, in the previously mentioned proverbs, words related to themes such as wine (Wein), drink (Getränk), or container (Becher), and book (Buch) serve to illuminate gender characteristics through various artistic comparisons.

At this point, it is also worth mentioning proverbs in German that convey the idea of "quotations." For example:

1. "Eine kluge Frau macht den Mann vernünftig" – A wise woman makes her husband wise.
2. "Ohne Frauen und Wein kann niemand fröhlich sein" – Without women and wine, no one can be happy.

¹¹ Duden. Redewendungen. Band 11. 2000.

¹² Mieder W. Aphorismen, Sprichwörter, Zitate von Goethe und Schiller bis Kemperer. Sprichwörterforschung. 2000.

¹³ Mieder W. Aphorismen, Sprichwörter, Zitate von Goethe und Schiller bis Kemperer. Sprichwörterforschung. 2000.

¹⁴ Mieder W. Aphorismen, Sprichwörter, Zitate von Goethe und Schiller bis Kemperer. Sprichwörterforschung. 2000.

It is well known that the Uzbek people always describe men as symbols of bravery, courage, loyalty, the pillar of the home, and exemplary fathers. Some proverbs that reflect this include Er bor erda zo'r bor; Erning ishin el bilar; Er yigit elga tortar; Ota g'ayratli bo'lsa, bola ibratli bo'lar; Erning otini el chiqarar; Eringga yoqding, elingga yoqding¹⁵.

Using the proverbs, the gender characteristics of the concepts "woman" and "man" found in both German and Uzbek languages were compared. In this analysis, the usage styles and characteristics of both concepts in terms of gender were examined. Through proverbs, the feelings, interpersonal relationships, behaviors, and all traits related to the ethics and morals of representatives of both genders were analyzed in the context of gender studies.

It should be noted that the gender characteristics of the images of women and men found in the folk proverbs of both German and Uzbek languages, along with their features, similarities, and differences, are among the main tasks of contemporary gender linguistics. Since this area has not been extensively studied within German studies, our research aims to illuminate this topic.

The article examines and analyzes the similarities and differences in gender characteristics present in proverbs from both languages. During the research, the character of women and men, their roles in social life, feminine motifs, and gender stereotypes were studied from a gender perspective.

In gender linguistics, numerous views and perspectives have been presented regarding the mutual gender characteristics, similarities, and differences of the concepts "woman" and "man." However, there is still a need for extensive research in this area within both the Uzbek and German languages. Utilizing gender phraseological units, expressions, and folk proverbs found in both languages would contribute to the development of gender linguistics, which is a relatively new field in Uzbek and German linguistics.

Conclusion

Gender stereotypes generally refer to the characteristics, behaviors, and roles assigned to women and men. They are shaped within social and cultural contexts and influence how individuals behave and relate to others. For instance, stereotypes may portray women as nurturing, caring, and emotional, while depicting men as strong, aggressive, and self-confident. These stereotypes often hinder the development of personal attributes, professional careers, and decision-making in their lives. Additionally, gender stereotypes can lead to inequality and injustice in relationships, as they compel individuals into defined roles and deny their true abilities. For example, the stereotype that "women should be nurturing" often places the responsibility of child-rearing solely on women. Such stereotypes can also adversely affect certain groups, such as women from minority backgrounds, disabled women, or those from economically disadvantaged positions. Moreover, gender stereotypes can deny individuals their true characteristics by associating them with predetermined traits within social groups. Examples of such stereotypes include beliefs like "men must be strong" or "women are only suited for household chores." Overall, gender stereotypes reflect accepted general notions about how individuals should behave and interact with others, often leading to social injustice.

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