Reflection of Gender in the Maxims of the English Language

Annotation: In this article highlights of reflection of gender in the maxims of the English language.

Key words: English language, gender, reflection, linguistic problems.

In light of the new trends in linguistics, a special place is occupied by gender linguistics, which studies the stereotypes of speech behavior of men and women fixed in the language. Gender linguistics deals with the problems of linguistic representation of social and cultural assessments attributed to men and women.[1] The purpose of this article is to study the gender-marked stylistic reception of the Maxim. As you know, the Maxim is an individual author's saying, characterized by the brevity of the form and the depth of the content. The Maxim in a brief, concise form conveys the author's vision of the picture of the world, his attitude to cultural universal and national-specific values.

A characteristic feature of the Maxim is its stylistic marking, which means emotionally evaluative, expressive, figurative components of the semantics of the Maxim. Considering the Maxim with the position of new areas of linguistics, such as cognitive linguistics and linguoculturology, we define the Maxim as one of the forms of conceptualization and methods of representation of knowledge structures, as a cultural model and a component of the individual author's picture of the world. In other words, the Maxim is one of the most important verbalizers of cultural concepts. The analysis of the language material showed that the concepts reflecting universal cultural values, such as love, friendship, beauty, freedom, work, sin, language, mind and others are widely presented in the Maxim. In terms of
representing gender as a sociocultural concept of "masculinity" and "femininity", the Maxim also plays a significant role. The analysis of the language material showed that all gender-marked maxims can be divided into 3 groups:

1) Maxims reflecting the concept of "woman".
2) Maxims reflecting the concept of "man".
3) Maxims reflecting the interaction of the concepts of "woman" and "man" in their comparison and opposition. Consider the concept of "woman", presented in our language material a significant number of examples of different authors, which confirms the cultural significance of this concept.

Key words – representatives of this concept are lexemes: woman, wife, mistress, feminine. A characteristic feature of the maxims representing the concept of "woman" is their emotional and evaluative marking and conceptualization of the features of appearance, character and behavior of women. In other words, the concept of a woman is considered by us in the aggregate of their moral and behavioral qualities, based on value orientations: good - bad, good-evil, beautiful – ugly. As a result of the analysis of language material, cognitive features aimed at aestheticization of her appearance and characterization of women in positive and negative evaluation plans were revealed. It should be noted that in creating the image of women in the English culture, much attention is paid to the description of the beauty of women: Beauty is a sort of bloom on a woman. If you have it, you don't need to have anything else; & if you don't have it, it doesn't much matter what else you have.

Language markers of "femininity" are language units that correlate with the concepts of beauty, tenderness, attractiveness. This is evidenced by the use of emotional and evaluative vocabulary, expressive means of language, stylistic techniques and convergence of stylistic techniques. It is interesting to note that the description of a woman's appearance is given in accordance with her character, and in most cases, a beautiful appearance hides negative traits, creates an opposition of
external beauty and internal ugliness. With the greatest brightness this contradiction is emphasized in Shakespeare's Maxim: Beautiful tyrant. Fiend angelical Dove – feathered raven Wolfish – ravening lamb. Despised substance of divinest show Just opposite to what you justly seem'st, A damned saint, an honorable villain. (Shakespeare) In this example, characterized by a high degree of emotional impact, the concept of "woman" is revealed by the convergence of stylistic techniques: oxymoron, metaphor, epithet, growth. Oxymoron, built on the opposition of lexical meanings, promotes the conceptualization of the external appearance and internal content of women as two directly opposite, incompatible, paradoxical entities (Dove – featured raven, Wolfish – ravening lamb, A damned saint, an honorable villain). The effect of incompatibility is also emphasized by the conceptual metaphors used in the Maxim: woman – dove & raven, woman - wolf & lamb, woman – fiend & angel, in which the images contain opposite concepts that represent the features of the concept in full. A significant place in the description of the image of a woman is given to the sign of sexual attractiveness. As shown by some studies, the sign of "sexuality" is a distinctive feature of Anglo-American culture and determines the national and cultural specificity of gender-marked maxims of the English language [1]: A king is always a king - and a woman is always a woman: his authority and her sex ever stand between them and rational converse. (M.Wollstonecraft); When a man says he had pleasure with a woman he does not mean conversation. (Samuel Johnson) Of the positive characteristics accentuated traits such as wisdom, gentleness, kindness, sacrifice, sensuality: Women are wiser than men because they know less and understand more. (James Stephen); A woman will always scarifies herself if you give her the opportunity. It is her favorite form of self-indulgence. (S.Maugham); With women the heart argues, not the mind.(M.Arnold) the Dignity of women is intuition and a rich emotional and spiritual world: woman's instinct is often truer than men's reasoning. (R.Kipling) it Should be noted that in the English language picture of
the world the concept of "woman" is presented mainly in a negative evaluation plan.

As some linguists note, the predominance of negative evaluation is explained by the peculiarity of the conceptualization of reality: "positive" is the norm and is not always fixed in the language, and "negative" is marked and reflected in the language more often as a sign of deviation from the ideal "positive" [2].

The maxims are emphasized such traits as female - revenge, spinelessness, vanity, callousness, talkativeness: Sweet is revenge - especially to women. (Byron); Most women have no characters at all. (A.Pope); Women are much more like each other than men; they have, in truth, but two passions, vanity and love; these are their universal characteristics. (Earl of Chesterfield); The souls of women are so small/That some believe they have none at all.(S.Butler); One tongue is sufficient for a woman.(J.Milton) it is Interesting to note, despite the fact that in the evaluation of the image of women is dominated by negative connotations, a number of English sentences reflect a condescending attitude towards the female vices: A woman who cannot make her mistakes charming, is only a female. (O.Wilde) This example is also of interest because it clearly shows the gender marking of the "woman " lexeme in contrast to the "female"lexeme. In this context, the lexeme "woman " appears in the complex of conceptual (generic) and socio –cultural characteristics (woman as a weak creature, not without flaws, woman as a beautiful sex, charming man). One of the characteristic features of gender-marked maxims is the expression of ironic attitude to gender in terms of the characterization of the female stereotype. In women ridiculed stupidity, talkativeness, grumpiness, debauchery: I expect that Woman will be the last thing civilized by Man. (G. Maredith); Listen to a woman when she looks at you, but not when she talks to you/ Women are wiser than men because they know less and understand more. (James Stephen); A woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle. (Gloria Steinem); A woman's tongue wags like a lamb's tail.(G.B.Shaw)
paradoxical statements based on the combination of the incompatible: The silliest woman can manage a clever man: but it needs a very clever woman to manage a fool greatly contribute to the Creation of an ironic effect in the maxims of the English language. (R. Kipling); A woman despises a man for loving her unless she returns his love. (D. Stoddart); Listen to a woman when she looks at you, but not when she talks to you. (James Stephen) the Use of paradox in describing the image of a woman is quite natural, since it reflects the essence of a woman's contradictory nature, which combines directly opposite qualities of character: A woman, especially if she has the misfortune of knowing anything, should concept it. (J. Addison) English maxims thus play a significant role in the representation of the concept of "woman".

A characteristic feature of these maxims is:

a) the predominance of negative emotional evaluation characteristics;

b) ironic and paradoxical assessment of gender.

References:

