

**Approaches to the Translation of Gender-Related Concepts between English and
Russian**

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Abstract

The thesis research lies within the increasingly popular field of the study of language and gender. Since languages are commonly categorized into grammatical gender, natural gender, and genderless types, the translation between them is a source of some linguistic challenges as previous research has demonstrated. The study investigates the ways professional English-Russian translators adapt to the problematic gender-related aspects through examining their translations complemented by the semi-structured interviews. The focus was in the nouns indicating occupations, both standard and non-standard, as well as on the gender-neutral speech performed by the non-binary speaker whose presentation should be rendered with either masculine or feminine gender indicators according to the grammar standards of Russian. Specifically, the applied translation strategies are placed within the Acceptance-Resistance scale, which demonstrates whether translators follow the standard forms that conform standard gender norms or adopt some experimental units. The eight participants are further interviewed, showing multiple attitudes they hold in terms of gender-sensitive language. The results demonstrated a growing awareness of GFL among translators and interpreters and mostly positive attitudes on this type of sensitive language. It was also found that the language professionals try to use widely acceptable language to stay professional, but adapt their speech in accordance with the recommendations of the client. With this in mind, the strategy of gender-neutral rewording was recommended to apply when translating neutral English into Russian. The research emphasizes ethical implications of the chosen translation strategies and helps to understand the way languages mediate gender aspects of the referents. It contributes to the study of language and gender with its outcomes being practical to both editorial and translation fields.

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Keywords: translation, gender, gender-sensitive language, feminization of language, gender-neutral language, language attitudes

Аңдатпа

Бұл жұмыс гендерлік лингвистика сияқты жаңа және танымал болып келе жатқан бағытқа жатады. Дәстүрлі түрде тұқымның грамматикалық категориясы бар, тұқымның табиғи категориясы бар және тұқым категориясы жоқ тілдер ерекшеленетіндіктен, алдыңғы зерттеулер көрсеткендей, әртүрлі типтегі тілдер арасындағы аударма қосымша мәселелердің көзі бола алады. Бұл зерттеу орыс және ағылшын жұмыс тілдері бар кәсіби аудармашылардың аудармаларын талдау және жартылай құрылымдық сұхбаттар арқылы проблемалық гендерлік құрылымдарды аудару кезінде сөйлеуін қалай бейімдейтінін зерттейді. Мамандықтардың ресми және бейресми атауларына, сондай-ақ екілік емес спикердің гендерлік бейтарап сөйлеуіне ерекше назар аударылды, олардың сөздері орыс тілінің өзекті ережелеріне сәйкес еркек немесе әйел грамматикалық түрде берілуі керек. Атап айтқанда, алынған аударма стратегиялары қабылдау-қарсылық шкаласы арқылы талданады, бұл аудармашылардың аударма тілі мәдениетінде қалыптасқан тәсілдерді ұстанатынын немесе эксперименттік нұсқаларды бейімдейтінін көрсетеді. Сегіз қатысушымен сұхбат жүргізілді, олар тілдердегі гендерлік сезімтал тенденциялар туралы түсініктерін ашады. Нәтижелер аудармашылар арасында гендерлік сезімтал тіл туралы хабардарлықтың артып келе жатқанын және жалпы мұндай тенденцияларға оң көзқарасты көрсетеді. Сондай-ақ, аудармашылар аударма тілі мәдениетінің нормаларына сәйкес келетін тілді қолдануға тырысатыны анықталды. Сонымен қатар, қатысушылар клиенттің қалауына бейімделуге дайын екендіктерін атап өтті. Осыны ескере отырып, бейтарап сөйлеуді орыс тіліне аудару кезінде гендерлік бейтарап қайта құру стратегиясын ұсынуға болады. Жұмыс сонымен қатар таңдалған аударма стратегияларының этикалық жақтарын көрсетеді, сонымен қатар тілдердің

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референттердің гендерлік сәйкестігін қалай білдіретінін көрсетеді. Гендерлік лингвистика бойынша зерттеулерге үлес қоса отырып, жұмыс нәтижелері аударма және редакторлық жұмыс тәжірибесінде де пайдалы болуы мүмкін.

Түйін сөздер: аударма, гендер, гендерге сезімтал тіл, тіл феминизациясы, гендерлік бейтарап тіл, тілдік қатынастар

Аннотация

Настоящая работа относится к такому новому, и набирающему популярность направлению, как гендерная лингвистика. Поскольку традиционно выделяют языки с грамматической категорией рода, с естественной категорией рода, и без категории рода, перевод между языками разных типов, как показывают предыдущие исследования, может быть источником дополнительных проблем. В данном исследовании изучается то, как профессиональные переводчики с русским и английским рабочими языками адаптируют свою речь при переводе проблематичных гендерных конструкций посредством анализа их переводов и полуструктурированных интервью. Особенное внимание было сосредоточено на официальных и неофициальных наименованиях профессий, а также на гендерно-нейтральной речи небинарного спикера, чьи слова должны быть переданы в мужском или женском грамматическом роде согласно актуальным правилам русского языка. В частности, полученные переводческие стратегии проанализированы через шкалу принятия-сопротивления, что показывает, следуют ли переводчики подходам, устоявшимся в культуре языка перевода или адаптируют экспериментальные варианты. С восемью участниками также проведены интервью, которые раскрывают их восприятие гендерно-чувствительных тенденций в языках. Результаты показывают растущую осведомленность о гендерно-чувствительном языке среди переводчиков и в целом позитивное отношение к подобным тенденциям. Также было выявлено, что переводчики стараются использовать язык, соответствующий нормам культуры языка перевода. Вместе с этим, участники отметили готовность подстраиваться под предпочтения клиента. С учетом сказанного, можно рекомендовать стратегию гендерно-нейтральной переформулировки при переводе нейтральной речи на русский

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язык. Работа также подчеркивает этические стороны выбранных переводческих стратегий, а также раскрывает то, как языки выражают гендерную идентичность референтов. Внося вклад в исследования по гендерной лингвистике, результаты работы также могут быть полезны в практике перевода и редакторской работе.

Ключевые слова: перевод, гендер, гендерно-чувствительный язык, феминизация языка, гендерно-нейтральный язык, языковые установки

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Introduction

Introduction

This chapter introduces the basic concepts that will be discussed and analysed in the study. Specifically, it provides the background information, research purpose and questions, as well as, the significance of the study.

Currently, much attention is paid to politically correct speech which includes being sensitive towards gender concepts in language. This research relates to the Study of Language and Gender, which is a part of a broader sociolinguistic field. That said, this study will view the issue of gender and language as a problem in the translation studies field.

Background of the study

The research is based on the problem that I, as a translator, encountered myself: when interpreting the speech of a person who specified their non-binary identity, I have found myself lost, as, apparently, Russian language does not have the same, commonly utilized tools to express this kind of identity. For instance, consider: “when I first started getting connected...”, and “Когда я только начал узнавать о..”, “Когда я только начала узнавать о...”. Past tense verbs are always gender marked in Russian, hence, it is impossible to conceal or neutralise gender identity if the referent. Similarly, it was interesting to examine how feminine forms of Russian nouns indicating professions are translated into English, as a number of news websites based in Kazakhstan utilize them in their articles (for example consider, the Village, 2023). Similar problems were discussed based on Czech, English, Spanish, and German languages (Wehle, 2020; Paolucci et al., 2023; Lardelli, 2023; Yeaton, 2023). Still, the search for the studies based in English and Russian has not shown any results.

First, the discussions on gender-related issues in language demand clarification of what gender is. In terms of this study ‘gender’ designates the “cultural trappings that

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accompany biological sexual difference: the behaviours, dress codes, views, belief systems and treatments that are part of being male or female in any particular place, time, and group – and the linguistic representations of these trappings” (Baker & Saldanha, 2009, p.122).

Referring to grammar, gender will be defined as “a subclass within a grammatical class (such as noun, pronoun, adjective, or verb) of a language that is partly arbitrary but also partly based on distinguishable characteristics and that determines agreement with and selection of other words or grammatical forms” (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). In the first sense, gender is different from the notion of sex as it refers to something not biological, but rather a self-identification in a society. Gender asymmetries in languages became topical in 1960-1970s, being tightly connected to the second wave of feminism in Europe. At the time, women noticed that language systems take masculine concepts as central (commonly referred to as androcentrism). For instance, the fact that masculine nouns indicating professions in some languages can mean both female and male professionals. This is not the case for feminine nouns: *лаборант* can mean both female and male laboratory assistant, however *лаборантка* can be used only referring to a woman. In English debates have usually been around pronouns that one uses. Previously, it was acceptable to use the masculine pronoun *he* as generic. i.e. referring to all genders: A student should mind *his* own time. Robin Lakoff’s *Language and Woman’s Place* (Lakoff, 1973) has become a starting point in studies of language and gender. In her work, Lakoff (1973) underlines the connection between gender inequality and language, by analyzing how society prescribes women to use language and how language treats women.

Furthermore, the studies on the topic divide languages into *grammatical gender languages*, *natural gender languages* and *genderless languages*, depending on a degree to which their structures express gender (Stahlberg et al., 2007; Prewitt-Freilino et al., 2012; Sczesny et al., 2016). I will dwell on this classification in detail in the following chapters.

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In order to find a solution to the problem of this kind of gender asymmetries, it was suggested using *gender-fair language* (hereinafter GFL). The concept suggests equal linguistic representation and equal linguistic treatment of people regardless of their gender. Some studies specify that gender-fair language is “equal or symmetric linguistic treatment of women and men” (Formanowicz et al., 2013). While Ivanová and Kysel’ová (2022) use gender-fair, gender-inclusive, gender-sensitive and non-sexist language synonymously.

A number of translation agencies (Commit global, n.d.; Circle translations, n.d.; Hideg, 2022; Eriksen Translations Inc, 2022) pay attention to gender-fair language, specifying common trends in gender-fairness in both languages. This demonstrates that there is a concern about gender-fairness in the translation studies field.

Overall, this research focuses on the description and analysis of the strategies that translators employ for the translation of gender-neutral language into gender-inclusive one and vice versa. Besides, the attitudes on gender-sensitive communication of translators will be analysed as well. Therefore, the study argues that different features on how languages express gender should be carefully considered and adapted in a way that is understandable for target language speakers.

Problem statement

Thus, based on the above-mentioned classification, it is seen that if the source and target language belong to different types, it may pose additional problems in translation. The researchers as Stroinska et al. (2013) stated that “the last challenge connected with the general nature of grammatical gender is the translation between languages whose grammatical gender systems differ in a considerable way” (p.201). The study (Stroinska et al., 2013) revealed that gender misalignment may be the source of confusion for the target audience, especially in legal contexts. Therefore, the problem of mismatching structures concerning gender influences translators as it poses difficulties and causes mistakes. Besides,

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it concerns the target audience too, which can misunderstand the important details. It is also worth noting that in cases with gender minorities, the mistakes may affect the authors of the source texts/speeches, as their ideas may be rendered in a wrong way, or, offend their feelings.

Researchers have made some attempts to overcome the problem, such as rewording, applying target language neosystems, and so forth (Schunack & Binanzer, 2022; Paolucci et al., 2023). Still, the search for materials on this topic did not yield much empirical studies based on the English and Russian translation pair. Therefore, it remains unclear how this issue is dealt with based on these languages.

Thus, despite the increasing interest in gender concepts in translation research, it remains unclear how professionals approach the mismatches in concepts and grammatical structures of English and Russian language. By researching this problem, I intend to fill in this gap.

Research purpose

The study aims to both explore the particular tactics of translation between languages with different structures towards gender, specifically English and Russian. Furthermore, the attitudes towards gender-sensitive language of professional translators themselves will be described. Therefore, the purpose of the research is to trace and interpret translators' construction of the concept of gender in the process of their work by conducting a content analysis of target texts and interviewing the participants.

Based on this, the following research question was identified:

How do translators approach the concept of gender in translation between English and Russian?

Specifically, the following subquestions will guide this study:

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What kind of strategies do English Russian translators employ in translation of gender-related concepts?

What are the attitudes of translators towards gender-sensitive language?

Significance of the study

The translators and interpreters may benefit from the findings, as they will be aware of the possible solutions, and may consider using some strategies in their practice. As both Russian and English are the working languages of the United Nations, the study may potentially be useful for a wider audience, that, journalists, editors, copywriters. Besides, it may have an impact on those language experts who prefer to ignore the problem and use discriminatory practices. Concerning the theoretical significance, it is possible that linguist researchers may benefit from the study's findings by enlarging the theoretical part of their research, as the study examines the concept of gender-neutral language translation from English to Russian, a language that has not developed or adapted reasonable strategies for gender neutrality.

Considering current debates on language policies such as gender-neutrality and gender-inclusiveness the study may add some useful ideas contributing to the research on linguistic discrimination and translation theory.

Summary

This chapter outlined the key concepts, problems, and the background information about the research. The following parts of the paper will have the following structure:

The literature review chapter defines the main concepts related to the topic, reports and analyses the findings of previous studies and compares the existing points of view on the aforementioned problem.

The Methodology chapter presents the way this research is designed including the instrument, methods of analysis, sampling, and the relevant procedures.

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The findings chapter describes the key results based on the translations and the interviews, while the Discussion part analyses these findings through the lens of the previous literature. It also delves into the most interesting and unexpected outcomes. The answers to the research question, as well as practical recommendations, and suggestions may be found in the conclusion chapter.

Literature Review

Introduction

There are multiple considerations for language professionals as they work predominantly in intercultural situations. At a first glance, it may not seem so, yet, translation studies are connected with a certain tradition of considering gender related problems (Paolucci et al., 2023; Simon, 2003; Stroinska et al., 2013). In this regard, the work *Translation and Gender* underlines that “Feminist experiments with language have raised another set of problems for the translator” (Von Flotow & Von Flotow-Evans, 1997, p.22).

As the study aims to research possible translation strategies towards gender-related concepts based on English and Russian, it would be rational to view what research has already been done based on other parameters (working languages). In this section I will dwell on the existing classification of languages, gender-fair and gender-biased language, the relevant debates, as well as the approaches on analysing language attitudes.

Classification of languages

Linguists (Formanowicz et al., 2013, Paolucci et al., 2023; Stahlberg et al., 2007). distinguish three types of languages: grammatical gender languages (sometimes referred to as gender-based languages), natural gender languages (or notional gender languages), and genderless languages.

In grammatical gender languages “every noun has a grammatical gender and the gender of personal nouns tend to express the gender of the referent” (Sczesny et al., 2016, p.2). For instance, *учитель* (teacher, masculine), *учительница* (teacher, feminine), *стол* (table, masculine), *ручка* (a pen, feminine). For this group of languages it is also typical that personal pronouns are distinguished by gender: *он* (he), *она* (she). Moreover, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, articles and other grammatically dependent words have gender markings too: “*Женщина зашла в комнату и увидела сидящую на кровати кошку*” (A woman has

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entered (f) a room and saw (f) a cat (f) sitting (f) on her bed). One cannot avoid indicating sex when speaking of humans. Thus, most Slavic (e.g. Russian, Polish), Romance (e.g. French, Spanish, Italian) languages, Hindi, Hebrew, and German are a part of this category. Every noun is assigned either feminine, masculine or sometimes neuter grammatical gender. Stahlberg et al., (2007) in the fundamental work on the classification of languages based on gender, notes that thanks to this agreement references to sex in grammatical gender languages are frequent when talking about people. For instance, the example mentioned above contains five references to gender including the word “woman” itself. The latter was an interesting fact to note as there is a group of languages with the opposite features called genderless languages. The grammatical structure of this group does not indicate gender in any way, which is the case for Kazakh, Turkish (most Turkic languages), Korean, Chinese, Uralic family (e.g. Finish), Iranian family (e.g. Persian) and most indigenous American languages. No grammatical category is differentiated for gender: neither nouns nor personal pronouns. Stahlberg (2007) believes that in genderless languages it would be possible to tell a whole story without revealing the sex of the main character. However, gender identity can be indicated through the lexical means. For example: Kazakh *ana* - mother, *ata* - grandfather.

In these languages, gender can only be expressed lexically: *kız* (Kazakh: a girl), *ul* (Kazakh: a boy). Stahlberg et al. (2007) provides the following example in Turkish:

“Yeni bir iş arkadaşım var. Dün ona eşiyile alışveriş yaparken rastladım.

I have a new colleague. Yesterday I met her/him when [she/he was] shopping together with her/his spouse” (p.166).

The sentence may be easily translated into Kazakh as:

Менің жаңа әріптесім бар. Кеше мен оны жұбайымен бірге дүкен аралап жүргенде кездестірдім.

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Apparently, nothing in these sentences allows people to understand the gender of the persons mentioned neither in Turkish nor in Kazakh. Consequently, it would be less complicated to translate between Turkish and Kazakh and more difficult between Kazakh and English as the languages belong to different groups. Still, Jakobson (1959) believed that “if some grammatical category is absent in a given language, its meaning may be translated into this language by lexical means”, which is especially true for the translation between languages of different groups (p.116). This leads to the last category of the classification named natural gender languages. This type has only a pronominal expression of gender, which is true for English, Swedish, etc. The majority of the personal nouns are neutral, however, there are some exemptions in English: lion - lioness, wolf - she-wolf (speaking about animals), fiancé - fiancée (words borrowed from grammatical gender languages), prince - princess, actor-actress (jobs and titles).

Consequently, languages can be categorized into three groups based on their ability to express gender identity. This can be conveyed by the three linguistic forms: grammatical, lexical, and pronominal (Stahlberg et al., 2007). However due to their structures, these types of languages adapt different changes towards gender-related concepts. As this study is based on English and Russian languages, the characteristics of grammatical gender and natural gender languages will be taken into consideration.

Gender-Biased Language and Feminist Language Reform

Since the beginning of the second wave of women’s movement, a great attention has been paid to the study of language and gender, specifically, the place of women in it. Feminists started to observe certain linguistic characteristics that prioritize men in the center of the world (androcentrism). At first, the areas of concern included the language behavior of women and men, such as the study of interruptions by West & Zimmerman (1987) who found that in the mixed-sex conversations, men tend to interrupt significantly more (96% of all

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interruptions), thus expressing more power. However, the founding work that initiated the feminist language critique and launched the studies of language and gender was Robin Lakoff's *Language and Woman's place* (1973). Lakoff (1973) dwells on the ways women encounter linguistic discrimination. For instance, the fact that women used to be primarily called by the name of their husbands, e.g. Mrs. John Smith, implies that she is perceived by the lens of a man she relates to. Other examples include using masculine words and pronouns as generic, thus, making women invisible, as well as the fact that certain words (e.g. diminutives) are only reserved for women, and if a man uses them, he will be considered as "feminine" or homosexual. These tendencies remain relevant in the 21st century. Another pioneering work in this field named *Man-Made Language*, written by Dale Spender (1980), holds a rather radical feminist position. She analysed the way men tend to dominate in conversations with women by interrupting them more often, thus, making women *silenced*, and how terms for women acquire negative connotation (e.g. mistress). These works have laid the base of what is now known as Feminist Language Critique. Feminists in linguistics tried to find the ways to make languages more "symmetrical", by, at first, using feminine equivalents for the units designating professions, e.g. *translator - trasnlatrix, manager - manageress*. Though, with the rising popularity of postmodernist philosophy, where all binary concepts (including gender) are deconstructed, a tendency to gender-neutral English appeared.

The process of the development of gender-fair Russian is somehow different. Since the feminist movement was not as relevant for Russian (Soviet) politics in the 1960s, language and gender reforms were not a topic of concern. However, in the 1990s, Russian-speaking language researchers started to raise gender issues in the language in connection with the emerging directions of linguistics, such as sociolinguistics. The new direction is traditionally named Gender Linguistics (*Гендерная лингвистика*). The most prominent

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studies based on Russian were made by Kirilina (1998, 2000), who researched how feminine and masculine grammatical forms are used in language making comparisons with German and English. She described the gender asymmetry in Russian and advocated gender-fair language. Holistina and Maksimova (2022) analysed the impact of paired (gender-inclusive) and gender-neutral forms on people's worldviews. In this regard, Zinovyeva (2017, 2018) discovered another aspect and analysed how gender-marked forms (feminine and masculine forms) construct the concepts of femininity and masculinity. This is exactly how the term "gender fair language" was born in both linguistic cultures.

Similarly, Stahlberg et al. (2007) note that the fact of expressing or neutralizing gender in language is not sexist or non-sexist. The main reason why a language can be considered gender-biased or gender-unfair is, again, its asymmetry, which means that it treats people differently based on their gender. Concerning the lexical level, the fact that there is no corresponding masculine pair for *Miss* and *Mrs* in English, or *Madame - Mademoiselle* in French shows that the importance of marital status is much stronger among women than men. Moreover, Stahlberg et al., (2007) provides such examples as *virgin* and *career woman* which are only used when referring to women, and do not have male counterparts that only highlights stereotypes about women's (exclusively) chastity and unusualness of a woman with a career-orientation.

Regarding to grammatical level, the fact that feminine nouns can only be used to designate female concepts, but masculine ones are used to describe both is also generally considered sexist: *директор* (headmaster, director (m)), *директриса* (headmaster, director (f)).

What is more, some linguists find that (Stahlberg et al, 2007, Kleinman et al., 2021) the situation where feminine nouns are formed based on the masculine, as something rudimentary, only strengthens asymmetry in a language: *повар - повариха, учитель -*

учительница, le traducteur - la traductrice. The proponents of gender-neutralization in languages do not provide any other adequate options to eliminate this kind of asymmetry, but to use feminine nouns for women and masculine nouns exclusively for men. This will lead to the process called feminization or the use feminine forms of nouns referring to adult people on which I will dwell on the following section.

Finally, on the pronominal level gender asymmetries are connected with the masculine generics, that is, the situations where masculine nouns are used when speaking about women and men in general or when the gender of a person is unknown: *Every person should decide for himself*.

Therefore, there is a direction in linguistics that critiques traditional “man-centered” grammar and lexical structures in language. Some of the proposed changes to reform the language to make it “fairer” towards women have an impressive evidence base.

Gender-Neutrality and Gender-Specification

Two main strategies are traditionally distinguished in order to make languages more fair: gender-specification (also commonly referred to as gender-inclusiveness or feminization of the language) and gender-neutralization.

As the name suggests, gender-neutralization includes “strategies that conceal gender in language e.g., the use of gender-neutral units such as person, passive constructions, and indefinite pronouns” (Lardelli, 2023, p.1). For instance, according to United Nations Guidelines on gender-sensitive communication (UN, n.d.-c), it is preferable to use *chair* or *chairperson* instead of *chairman*, or to use plural (and singular) they: “Each participant must present *his* ID badge at the door - All participants must present *their* ID badges at the door” (United Nations, n.d., p.2). Singular they is used as a gender-neutral alternative to generic he, when the gender of a person is unknown (APA, 2020). American Psychological Association

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(2020), suggesting using singular they, provides the following example: “Each participant turned in *their* questionnaire” (p.121).

Furthermore, researchers distinguish the change of subject (Stroinska et al., 2013), or, Paolucci et al., (2023) refer to the same concept as gender-neutral rewording. This strategy is described as constructing the sentences in a way that avoids direct gender attribution, e.g. passive construction, participial forms, neutral pronouns, and using such words or word stems as *person*: *Я написала эту картину* (I painted(f) this picture) to *Картина была написана мной* (The picture was painted by me). Additionally, the same approach was described by Wehle (2020) as a *Degendering of language*.

Besides, Kirey-Sitnikova (2021) describes the use of neuter gender and gender gapping (e.g. *активисты_ки*), nevertheless, highlighting the deficiencies of these strategies. The disadvantage of using neuter gender to neutralise the concept is obvious: in Russian neuter grammatical gender is used to refer to inanimate objects exclusively, which may be offensive for some people, while the gapping can only be used in writing.

Concerning gender-inclusiveness, it is important to note that it may be used in a broad and in a specific sense. In a broad sense, the term includes both feminization and gender-neutralisation. That is why it is called *inclusive*: a language that does not discriminate based on sex, gender, or gender identity (Borito, 2023). In the second sense, it is used as a synonym for gender-specific language or feminization which aims to only explicitly include women in language (Sczesny et al., 2016). Thus, the use of paired forms such as *переводчики и переводчицы* (translators (m) and translators (f)) is the example of gender-inclusiveness in a specific sense. Whereas, *уважаемые учащиеся!* (distinguished learners (neutral)) is an example of gender-inclusiveness in a broad sense. In terms of this research, the concept will be used in a more specific sense, thus, as a synonym to gender-specification.

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Therefore, gender-specification is considered to take the opposite approach but with the same purpose: it aims to include women in language: *уважаемые участники и участницы!* (*Dear participants (m) and participants (f)* or *Bonjour à toutes* (French: feminine all) *et à tous* (French: masculine all), *a student should prepare his or her assignments on time*. Common gender-inclusive techniques include: paired forms, gender-marked endings and suffixes. Sczesny (2016), Ivanová and Kyseľová (2022) distinguish feminine-masculine word-pairs and abbreviated forms with slashes as gender-specific strategies. However, Sczesny (2016) admits that this could lead to complex structures and suggests using specification in pair with neutralisation to avoid the problem. In terms of the Russian language, it is also typical to use brackets, not only for nouns but also for pronouns, verbs, which are typically gender-marked. Examples include: *étudiant.e.s, étudiant-e-s* or *étudiant/e/s'* in French, and *он(а), работу выполнил(а), режиссер.ки*.

As can be seen, the preferred strategy is often connected to the type of a language: for grammatical gender languages it is typical to apply gender inclusiveness as they tend to have multiple suffixes and word endings for nouns, verbs, adjectives to express gender. Natural gender languages tend to apply neutrality. Even though they may also have suffixes and endings indicating gender, the category of grammatical gender is not that explicit due to the absence of the sentence agreement when all verbs, adjectives, and pronouns have the same grammatical gender as the referent: *В комнату вошла невысокая, стройная девушка с длинными волосами*: A short(f), fit(f), long-haired lady has entered(f) the room). In this regard, Ismagulova et al., (2016) similarly state that “the more intensive the syntactical aspect is expressed (articles, adjectives, pronouns, conjugation), the more significant is the position of the female gender in the language system” (p.248). Indeed, the French language, expressing gender both in nouns, adjectives and other connected forms (as in Russian), and the articles, has a greater gender distinction in language. For example, it is typical for a

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female translator to say *Je suis traductrice* (I am translator (f), rather than *Je suis traducteur* (I am translator (m)). Whilst in Russian, it is considered to be a standard language for women to use masculine forms: *Я - переводчик* (I am translator (m)), while *Я - переводчица* (I am translator(f) is considered to be less formal (Vinogradov Institute, n.d.).

Table 1 summarizes the common means of neutralisation and specification for both languages. Since Russian has a more developed gender expression system, it has more means of neutralisation and specification. Despite belonging to different groups, English and Russian have some means to both neutralise and specify gender identity. For instance, different English pronouns can be used to both neutralise and specify. Gaps are considered as neutralisation, while slashes and brackets are the specification methods in Russian. The table will also guide the research throughout the analysis of the texts translated by participants, and thus, helping to answer the first research subquestion: What kind of linguistic strategies do English-Russian translators employ in translation of gender-related content?

It is essential to point out that by gender-related content I understand the language units (pronouns, articles, titles) that convey gender implications or the absence of it.

Table 1.

Strategies of neutralisation and specification

	Gender-Neutralisation	Gender-Specification
English	<p>Singular they <i>Each person has to bring at least one of their books</i></p> <p>Changing the word stems <i>The paper was signed by the chairperson of the Managing Board</i></p> <p>Using the Passive Voice <i>The student must submit his assignment by Monday - Assignments must be</i></p>	<p>Paired forms of pronouns (he/she) <i>Each person has to bring at least one of his/her books</i></p> <p>Complex nouns <i>She was the first female skater to land a triple axel.</i></p>

	Gender-Neutralisation	Gender-Specification
	<i>submitted by Monday (Gender inclusive language guidelines)</i>	
	Plural Forms	
	<i>A representative must listen to his supporters – Representatives must listen to their supporters. (UN, n.d.)</i>	
Russian	Gender-neutral rewording <i>Я работал (I worked (m) - У меня была работа (I had (neutral) a job)</i>	Paired forms (nouns, pronouns, verbs, etc.) <i>Приглашаем писателей и писательниц к сотрудничеству (We invite writers (m) and writers (f) to collaboration)</i>
	Gender gap <i>Закон Салтанат: казахстан_ки отправили более 5 000 писем в Сенат с требованием криминализовать насилие (Batyr Jamal, 2024).</i>	Slashes and brackets <i>Мы находимся в поиске лаборанта/ки (We are searching for the laboratory assistant/(feminine gender ending)</i>
	Plural forms <i>Мы [one person] приехали из небольшого города на севере страны. (We [one person] came from a small town in the north of the country.)</i>	<i>Как только министр вступает в должность, он(а) дает присягу (As soon as a minister takes office, (s)he should take the oath)</i>
	Replacing future tenses with present <i>Я пошла в магазин - Я сейчас пойду в магазин (Kirey-Sitnikova, 2013) (I went (f) to the store - I'm going (n) to the store now)</i>	Gender-marked suffixes and endings (i.e. feminine forms) <i>Марин Ле Пен — дважды кандидатка в президенты от скандально известной партии «Национальное Собрание» (в прошлом, «Национальный Фронт») (Tsoy, 2023).</i> Marine Le Pen is a two-time presidential candidate from the controversial National Rally party.
		Complex nouns <i>Валентина Терешкова - первая женщина космонавт</i> Valentina Tereshkova is the first female astronaut

In Table 2, I summarized the usage of the three types of languages of mentioned ways to express gender category.

Table 2

Gender Strategies Across Language Types

Expressions of gender	Grammatical Gender Languages	Natural Gender Languages	Genderless Languages
Grammatical	+	-	-
Pronominal	+	+	-
Lexical	+	+	+

Gender-Fair Language Debates

Generally, gender-fair language is closely tight to political correctness which is also aimed at making the language less offensive and more inclusive. The supporters claim that this kind of sensitive language is important to consider because of its potential impact. In other words, they appeal to the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis that states (the weaker version) that language impacts thinking, i.e. the worldview (Sapir, 1921). For instance, the use of paired forms in job advertisements may increase the response from women. In the study by Formanowicz & Sczesny (2014), the authors found that women experience less negative emotions and more motivation to apply for the job if the vacancy advertisement uses gender-inclusive language. A similar study, conducted in the 1980s (Cole et al., 1983) was also based on the job titles, where the participants rated several job advertisements according to Sex Stereotype Scale. The authors found that such occupations as flight attendant were primarily associated with women, while chemical engineer was associated with men. The attention for the occupational sector is reasonable as it has been found that women were less motivated to apply for a job when masculine generic forms were used in advertisements (e.g. *она - преподаватель, она - переводчик*) (Bem & Bem 1973) as mentioned earlier. The study by

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Vervecken & Hannover (2012) viewed this issue from the other point, and found out that the use of inclusive paired forms increased the chances of applicants on getting hired.

Another kind of work proved that masculine generics, i.e. the cases when masculine categories were used including both men and women, to have a male bias. The study of Stahlberg & Sczesny (2001) based on German, revealed that people tend to mention more women when they are asked a question using paired forms. For instance, in one of the experiments participants had to name some famous musicians, politicians, etc. Whenever asked using paired forms, more women representatives were mentioned than in the questions with masculine generics. However, in some cases, feminine biases may emerge. Similarly, Kidd (1971) revealed that the pronoun *he* used as generic was predominantly associated with male concepts with the exception of the traditionally feminine roles. That is why, the usage of singular *they* or *she/he* pair should be considered.

Legal domain represents probably the most significant issues. Hamilton et al. (1992) put an experiment where 72 participants acting as jury members had to decide whether a woman was acting in self-defense or not. They were presented with the three versions of the definition of self-defense: first, where the generic *he* pronoun was used, second, using inclusive *he/she* form, and the third version that included only *she* pronoun. The researchers found that jury members are less likely to claim self-defense when the generic *he* was used, and highly likely to do so with the inclusive version used. Therefore, when it comes to decision on a person's destiny and further life, gender-fair language issues do not seem as trivial as opponents may claim it to be.

Furthermore, Blaubergs (1980) believes that sexism in languages should be eliminated only because it is sexist and all other arguments, including references to the Sapir-Worf hypothesis are irrelevant.

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Apart from that, the use of gender-fair language is recommended by such reputable organizations as American Psychological Association (2020), European Parliament (2018), UNDP (2018), which led to the publication of a number of guidelines on GFL.

On the other hand, opponents are afraid that these recommendations will have a prescriptive nature and that GFL is itself an ideological instrument, which may lead to censorship and freedom of speech issues (Parks & Robertson, 1998). By saying “ideological” feminism movement is often meant. Other researchers are sure that the means of gender-fairness are way too complicated. For instance, the usage of paired forms make speeches longer and texts less readable (Ivanová & Kyseľová, 2022). Moreover, the same study based on Slovak, Czech and Polish speakers (Ivanová & Kyseľová, 2022) has shown that people may also think of GFL as something without naturalness, incomprehensible, and, with a certain ideology as mentioned previously.

Probably the most important in this opponent position is that sometimes even the female speakers avoid using feminine forms of job names because they are associated with lower status than the corresponding masculine forms (Merkel et al., 2012) or lesser competence (McConnell & Fazio, 1996). Similar tendencies can be observed among the speakers of Russian. Moreover, some claim that “language is a trivial concern” in gender inequality and people should be more focused on resolving disproportions of men and women in the economic sectors, social inequality and equal opportunities problems (Parks & Robertson, 1998). In other words, the opponents believe that the issue of gender inequality is deeply rooted in societal beliefs, prejudices, and historical factors, rather than just in the way people speak. By saying that, they commonly believe that grammatical gender and sex of the referent are not connected and can contradict each other: e.g. in German the word *girl* is neuter. However, this is simply explained by the etymology of the word: in *mädchen*, the

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suffix -chen indicates something or someone small, consequently all words with this suffix are neuter by rule.

For some people gender-exclusive language, specifically masculine generics, is simply something they are used to and they do not want to change their linguistic habits (Jacobs et al., 2001). The findings of these researchers agree with Parks and Robertson's (1998) in the fact that this linguistic issue is not important enough to be seriously taken into consideration. Some participants declared GFL, specifically paired forms, to be "inelegant" (Parks & Robertson, 1998).

Table 3 summarizes the points stated by advocates and critics of GFL. It characterizes the kinds of opinions and principles that people have towards the new tendencies of inclusiveness of women and non-binary people in language. Based on that, I will be able to define if translators try to support the new approaches, stick to the traditional ones or something in the middle, thus, answering the second research subquestion:

What are the attitudes of translators towards gender-sensitive language?

Table 3

Arguments on Gender-Fair Language Debates

Supporters	Opponents
Language impacts thinking, thus, using masculine concepts as generics makes women invisible, especially in professional life.	Proposed solutions on GFL may be too complicated to adopt and to get used to for some people.
Using masculine generics in the legal field may make people involved subconsciously take decisions in favor of men.	GFL is unnatural, it is a human intervention into a language, which should only be changed naturally.
Sexist language should be eradicated simply because it is sexist.	Even the groups that may benefit from the GFL (women) are sometimes opposed to using it.
Gender-fair language prevents ambiguity in grammatical gender languages.	But creates ambiguity in natural gender languages

Reputable organisations encourage its employees and participants to use GFL.

Extreme policies may impact freedom of speech and give stimulus to censorship in this field.

Language is a trivial concern: there are other, more important problems to be solved in connection with gender issues, such as economical and social inequality, unequal opportunities, violence.

Linguistic attitudes

The dictionary of sociolinguistics (2004) defines the attitudes towards language as “the views and opinions people have about language and language variation. These may be directed at evaluating the relationship between a *standard language* and *non-standard varieties*” (p.17). The definition reflects exactly what the research is aimed at: to record the views of translators and interpreters on standard and non-standard forms of gender-fair language. The definition of Thurstone (1931) of the attitude says: “affect for or against a psychological object” (as cited in Garrett, 2010, p.19). It seems that the attitudes are generally associated with either acceptance of a notion or resistance towards it. Normally, researchers (Garrett, 2010, Dragojevic, 2016, Sloboda, 2017) consider linguistic attitudes as a triad of cognitive, affective, and behavioral components. Cognitive aspect reflects the conceptualisation. i.e. the set of beliefs on a certain object (GFL in case of this study). Then, the affective component describes the feelings that a person has towards the object. Finally, the behavioral aspect reflects “readiness to act as a reaction to the attitude” (Sloboda, 2017 as cited in Ivanová & Kysel'ová, 2022). Thus, the linguistic attitudes refer to the “set of beliefs, feelings, and behavioral intentions towards different language varieties” according to Dragojevic (2016, as cited in Li & Wei, 2022). Previously, the triad was used to analyse the attitudes of the students towards their local languages or dialects in China (Li & Wei, 2022).

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For this purpose, the authors developed a LASS (Language Attitudes Scale Student Form) based on the aforementioned triad. Furthermore, the study of attitudes was conducted on the members of the speech communities in Russia based on the languages as Karelian, Kalmyk, and Yakut (Kirilenko, 2024). The author (Kirilenko, 2024) notes that the study of the attitudes towards the new forms of language or new grammar standards is a promising area in the research. It is generally important to examine the sets of beliefs as they can contribute to the shifts in society, being a reflection of important social tendencies.

Regarding gender-fair language, several researchers examined the opinions that various groups of people have towards it. Remigio & Talosa (2021) analysed the attitudes of students non-specialists in linguistics in one of the universities in the Philippines. They revealed the general openness and willingness to use the inclusive English language, and no statistical correlation between this kind of openness and sex of participants. Concerning the students-specialists in linguistics, Myla & Corbita (2024) found that the transition to GFL may be difficult but necessary. The study considered the importance of social contexts when using non-sexist language. Similarly, a research based on speakers of English from Japan demonstrated that sexist attitudes have an impact on the acceptance of gender-fair language, while academic direction or age do not (Sugiyama, 2025). It has also found that men holding sexist views are more opposed to GFL than women of the same views. Turning into the attitudes of speakers of the Slavic group of languages, Ivanová & Kysel'ová (2022) divided the resulting attitudes of speakers of Slovak, Polish, and Czech into eight categories including representations, offensiveness, language economy, language naturalness, tradition, and ideological markedness. The research showed that Polish speakers are more frequently opposed to paired feminine forms. People denying GFL often refer to language tradition, a matter of economy, and the absence of necessity. Still, the opponents believe that language can make a social change: "Language forms are believed to bear the traces of the social

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structure that they both express and help to reproduce” (Ivanová & Kyseřová, 2022).

Generally, the acceptance of GFL, especially its newly proposed forms, depends on socio-cultural factors as Lukač and Bradley’s (2024) study demonstrates. Therefore, the previous research statistically demonstrates the general openness to use and promote gender-fair English language. Speakers of grammatical gender language realise the importance of GFL too, still, are more opposed to the restructuring of their languages referring to the linguistics traditions and the absence of the need to introduce GFL.

GFL in Translation Studies

Languages evolve and change and the language experts, i.e. translators, interpreters, editors, journalists, teachers, etc., should stay aware of these changes. One of these is the shift to the inclusive language (Jacobs et al., 2001).

Since the 1980s the popularity of gender issues in translation studies has been rising in connection with feminist manifestations as per Gambier and van Doorslaer (2010). The first researchers were concerned about the fact that “women and other gender minorities” have essentially been excluded from or presented negatively in the linguistic and literary histories of the world’s cultures” (von Flotow, 2010). Some researchers indicate the variety of research questions that covered both translation studies field and gender issues. For instance, the interconnections between the gender of an author and a translator, gender identity of literary characters in original and translated texts, feminist interventionist translation, as well as the misrepresentation of gender minorities in translated texts. In connection with that, the first topics of interest included the investigation of work of women translators of the past and translation of works written by female authors.

Time has shown that the field keeps attracting the attention of linguists, and in addition to the representation of women in languages with different structures, the problem of visibility of other gender minorities has become topical as well. For instance, Lardelli (2024)

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in the research based on German stated that “due to differences in grammatical structures and language-specific strategies to represent non-binary genders, translation from notional gender languages into grammatical gender languages is extremely challenging” (p.1146). Paolucci et al. (2023) support this point, admitting that “translation from notional to grammatical gender languages can require choices that are not natural” (p.3). Apart from that, Paolucci et al. (2023) study discovers the translators’ preferences on which gender-neutral technique is the best in translation from notional to grammatical gender language by using rating scales.

Apart from the linguistic side of the issue, there is a matter which Drugan and Tipton (2017) name as social responsibility of translators and interpreters: “social responsibility means ‘extending our concern’ to actors who are often neglected”(p.122). These researchers consider translating and interpreting as a social work, where professionals are the actors who contribute to the change in social attitudes. Due to the aforementioned debates on GFL, this point of view is highly significant. By putting the effort to adapt the language according to the changes in society, language professionals can, indeed, set an example for the target culture. The adaptation implies the strategies that seek to oppose the cultural and linguistic norms of such target culture, which will be described further in detail.

Concerning the research based on Russian, Shurupova et al. (2018) studied the challenges and strategies to translate politically correct linguistic norms. The authors (Shurupova et al., 2018) explained the relevance of their study by the fact that language professionals are required to follow a certain speech etiquette, referring to the definition of Nevezhina (2012) “a microsystem of nationally specific verbal units accepted and prescribed by the society for interlocutors’ contact establishing and desirable communication tone maintaining according to the rules of speech behavior” (p.344 as cited in Shurupova et al., 2018). Since the appropriate ways to speak about people are highly encouraged within the

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international community, gender-fair language may be considered as a part of the speech etiquette.

Apart from that, Démont (2018) described the ways to transfer queer identities in translation i.e. misrecognizing (concealing the initial identity), minoritizing, and queering translation (a fairer way to translate). These approaches are especially relatable for the part of this research that analyses the translation of gender-neutral speech of the non-binary speaker. Regarding, the women's speech, Youssef (2024) found that in order to reproduce the characteristics of women's speech defined by Lakoff (1973), translators may need to sacrifice the equivalence on lexical level "based on how the translator settles the conflict between formal and functional equivalences" (p.2661). In terms of the present study, I admit that translators may introduce some changes of the lexical units depending on the strategy they might choose.

The research on language and gender is becoming a topic of concern in Kazakhstan as well (Mustagaliyeva et al., 2024, Akimbekova & Konys, 2020, Iskarina & Kenzhekanova, Ismagulova, 2005). Mustagaliyeva et al. (2024) raised such a significant issue as the impact of proverbs about women and men on cultural stereotypes. A similar study was conducted by Akimbekova and Konys (2020) who analysed the existing stereotypes in English phraseological units comparing them with Russian equivalents. Ismagulova et al. (2016) compared possible strategies to achieve gender asymmetry in Kazakh, Russian with the strategies of German. They have also made a distinction between the the strategies of feminization and neutralisation and stated that "not any linguistic culture can use one of these strategies in pure form" meaning that a language can benefit from several strategies (Ismagulova et al, 2016, p.248).

Probably, the most topical concern for translators in this field is how to transfer gender concepts that do not exist in the target language culture, or that are represented in a

different manner? Wehle (2020) asked the very same research question analyzing the linguistic preferences of the Czech non-binary community based on the translation of a novel with a non-binary character. The results have shown the prevalence of the “Resistance” strategies, meaning that the participants preferred to sacrifice some traditional grammar rules for the sake of fair translation and proper linguistic representation.

In this research I examine how translators generally approach gender-neutral and gender-inclusive strategies between grammatical and notional languages, and explain their attitudes in a qualitative semi-structured interview.

Summary

Thus, the main issues that the researchers in the field are concerned with include the study of positive and negative outcomes of gender-fair language, which is rational as negative aspects help linguists to find the most optimal solution. The general attitudes of the public towards GFL are also as important as they can also reveal some inconsistencies on real-life use, not just in theory. The common trait is that grammatical gender languages attract the most attention of researchers compared to natural and genderless languages. This may be the case because these languages possess a wide variety of methods to express gender.

With all that variety of techniques, approaches and principles, GFL is a very complex concept for language professionals. Some of the approaches mentioned in this review are still experimental and further chapters will dwell on the possible strategies and opinions in detail.

Methodology

Introduction

This chapter explains the chosen research methodology to study the rendering of the concept of gender in English-Russian translation. I will describe and justify the sampling, data collection and analysis procedures, including the instrument, potential limitations and ethical considerations.

Research design

This section discusses the chosen approach, methods that are intended to be used, and outlines the research process.

In previous parts, I have set a research problem that is focused on the mismatches between gender concepts in Russian and English which may pose additional difficulties when translating between these languages due to the structural and conceptual differences. Based on the problem, I decided to research the ways that translators use to approach the concept of gender in translation between English and Russian. Specifically, what kind of strategies do translators employ in translation of gender-related content? What kind of attitudes do translators have towards gender-sensitive language?

The study uses multiple sources of data, specifically two Ted talks fragments, their translations made by eight translators based in Kazakhstan, and the interview answers. Both fragments of speeches were selected by myself in accordance with the research topic. The research findings may be beneficial for all experts working with language, that is, translators, interpreters, editors, copywriters, international journalists, and others. Such organizations as the United Nations (n.d.-a) and European Parliament (2018) strongly recommend their employees to follow sensitive language guidelines. Consequently, the research uses a basic qualitative approach, described by Creswell (2011) as “an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem”

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(p.41). The approach is justified by the aim, which is to interpret multiple strategies and patterns on rendering the concept of gender. The interpretative nature and exploration of participants' meanings and attitudes reconfirm the basic qualitative approach.

The research is both product and participant-based, meaning it is focused on both the analysis of translated texts and the interpretation of semi-structured interviews revealing language professionals' attitudes. It was conducted in two stages: first, I studied the translations applying content analysis, which is one of the qualitative methods, defined by Hsieh and Shannon (2005) as “subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns” (p.1278). Identifying this kind of strategies is relevant to the research question on finding out the translators' approaches. That is why the mentioned method was selected. Then, I conducted semi-structured interviews, consistent with the research sub-question concerning translators' attitudes. Interviews are commonly defined as “data collection method that relies on asking questions within a predetermined thematic framework” (George, 2023, para. 1). In this regard, Patten and Newhart (2018) note that “Semi-structured interviews combine this strength with the ability to deviate from the guide in order to collect the most useful information” (p.161). This kind of interviews is the most suitable for this research in case participants want some clarification or provide an unexpected answer. I have chosen the interview method for this study, as it will help to answer the research question concerning the interpretation of judgements and attitudes that translators hold.

Therefore, first, I have identified the research problem. After defining the research questions, I decided on the research methods that I intend to apply. Then, I developed a research instrument that consists of an Acceptance-Resistance model that will help to decide on the specific strategies, and a semi-structured 10-question interview that interprets the strategies by identifying translators' attitudes in the field.

Sampling

This section discusses the sampling strategy, criteria, and some details on sampling approach.

The sample consists of eight professional translators who were asked to translate two fragments of speeches containing gender-relevant information and then, they were interviewed. The participants are translators based in Kazakhstan who use English and Russian as their working languages. Two of them combine the work of conference interpreters and translators, two work with written translations only, and the rest four participants predominantly work as conference interpreters. Furthermore, six professionals work freelance, one is employed in the private sector, the other one is in the civil service. The main selection criteria for this study is at least bachelor's degree in Translation Studies, Foreign Philology or Applied Linguistics and an experience working as translator or interpreter. Therefore, as the study uses basic qualitative design aimed at the understanding of attitudes of eight translators, a non-probability purposive sampling was employed.

Participants were selected from my professional network, but in one case, snowball sampling was applied: one participant recommended the other one and shared their contacts with me.

Apart from that, a sample of texts for translation consists of two texts from the TED Talks platform. TED publishes the speeches on the "ideas worth spreading" raising such social issues as human rights, corruption, public health, parenting and so forth, which are commonly discussed in the international events. Both speakers implicitly or explicitly raise gender issues in their speeches. The use of gender-inclusive forms of nouns (i.e. feminine forms both official and experimental) by the Russian speaker, and the use of gender-neutral language by the English speaker were the main selection criteria. These forms of language are crucial for this research. Therefore, TED talks speeches were selected using the convenience sampling.

Data Collection

This section describes data collection methods and research instruments developed for the study.

First of all, I contacted the participants via messenger applications and invited them to participate in this study. They were offered a possibility to participate either in person or online via the Zoom platform. In case of offline sessions, the data collection was conducted in MNU Library Space (Team Talk Rooms were booked in advance for a specific time range for two people only) in order not to interrupt people around and keep a quiet atmosphere. Online sessions were based on a Zoom platform, which went trouble-free. In total, three interviewees wished to participate in the offline mode, while remaining five professionals were contacted online. At the assigned place or online meeting, I presented them with the research purpose, reminded them of their rights and the prohibition to use any additional resources. Having obtained their signatures in the consent form, I started the data collection process, which consists of two steps. As a first step, I asked participants to translate two short fragments, one hundred and thirty-three and two hundred and thirteen word-texts, respectively (Appendix B). The first fragment called “Decolonization is inclusive. It is important to accept different practices” is performed by Nargiz Shukenova, a producer from Kazakhstan who made a speech in Russian (TED, 2023). The speaker uses gender-inclusive language, including unofficial and official feminine forms, which are potentially problematic for translation into English (Stroinska et al., 2013). The second speech has somewhat opposite peculiarities: “Language around gender and identity evolves (and always has)” is performed by Archie Crowley, a sociolinguist from the United States of America (TED, 2021). The speaker is also a non-binary person, that is, there are a lot of gender-neutral phrases that should be rendered with either masculine or feminine gender indicators in Russian.

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The translators had to translate both of them at once. However, using the Internet may mislead them, as there is a risk of using some other translator's strategies. That is why, the participants were instructed to avoid using any additional resources, except for the dictionaries. All of that is to be done in order to record their personal approaches. Besides, there was no time limit, but it took them approximately twenty to fifty minutes to translate the texts. The offline translations were written by the participants by hand. This approach allowed me, as a researcher, to analyze the strategies, and thus, answer the first research sub-question.

As the interview is semi-structured, I have introduced some clarifications and minor changes. For example, I excluded question 8 in the interview with Participant 2 as she had already answered it in previous ones. The interview duration ranged from ten to twenty-five minutes.

The strategies of translation were further analyzed using the Acceptance-Resistance continuum model (Figure 1), developed by Wehle (2020) based on the article of Drugan and Tipton (2017) on social responsibility of language professionals. In this study Acceptance refers to "implementing strategies that are in compliance with the well-established language and social norms of the target culture" (Drugan & Tipton, 2017, p. 122), while Resistance implies "implementing strategies that will challenge the well-established language and social norms of the target culture" (Drugan & Tipton, 2017, p. 122). Translating into Russian these will include feminine gender forms of nouns that have been recently proposed by feminists, i.e. the agent nouns for which historically, there is no officially recognized forms to designate a female agent: *deputat* (deputy), *psykholog* (psychologist), *producer*, *president*, and so on. The respective feminine forms, yet unofficial, are now commonly in use, specially in the media sphere (Batyra Jamal, 2024, the Village, 2023) to raise representativeness of women in occupational domains. In this regard, (Mills, 1999) notes that

While such forms are inconceivable in the standard language when addressing women in influential and high prestige positions, e.g. bankir "banker," but not feminine bankirša. By contrast, feminine forms, such as avtorša "author," bankirša "banker," [...] are encountered in the colloquial language, although they are often concomitant with pejorative connotations (p.171).

By saying “not officially recognized” I mean that these forms do not appear in major standard dictionaries of Russian language such as the Ozhegov’s Dictionary (2017) and a media source Gramota.ru operating under Vinogradov Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Vinogradov Institute, n.d.). Specifically, I have verified the forms as *produserka*, *psikhologinya*, *avtorka*, *kollezhanka*, *doktorka*, and *kandidatka* which, in the result, were absent in the aforementioned sources. However, the Dictionary of New Words and Meanings developed under Russian Academy of Sciences (Zaliznyak, 2022) includes such units as *bisnesmensha*, *bisnesvumensha*, *bankirsha*, *avtoritsa*, and *didzheika*. All of these units were marked either as colloquial, colloquial derogatory, or ironic. Thus, “non-standard” or “non-official” forms in this research refer to lexical units that are either not fixed in reputable dictionaries or that are recorded therein with colloquial, derogatory, or ironic labels.

Furthermore, since participants are asked to translate the speech of a non-binary speaker who says that they prefer traditionally plural pronoun *they*, translators may prefer to follow the same strategy in Russian as an option. However, due to the greater importance of gender in Russian, this approach demands the agreement of all plural nouns and pronouns with adjectives and verbs. According to normative Russian grammar it is not acceptable to refer to one person in plural.

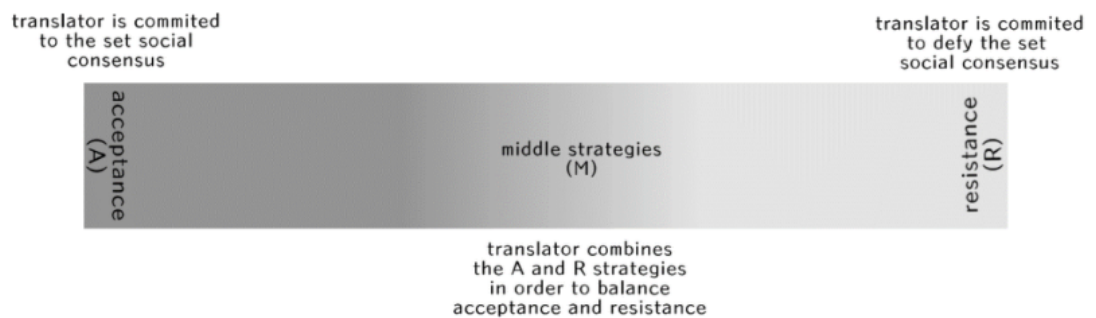
Next, Resistance strategies in the English language included the usage suffixes indicating women in the units that historically have been in use without them: *translator* -

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translatrix, *manager* - *manageress*. Similarly, the form *manageress* is recorded in the Cambridge Dictionary (Cambridge University Press, n.d.) with the old-fashioned label, while *translatrix* form is absent.

Figure 1

The acceptance-resistance continuum



Note. From “Breaking the Silence: Translating Non-binary Identities in Literary Texts from English to Czech” by T. Wehle, 2020, Master’s thesis, p.56.

The Acceptance - Resistance model has also been used in previous research on translating non-binary identities between English and Czech, and allowed the author to conduct a comprehensive analysis (Wehle, 2020). Moreover, Czech and Russian languages share grammatical structure concerning gender. The model ranges from the Acceptance end, that presupposes the use of traditional standard language to render atypical or complex concepts, to the Resistance end. The latter, in contrast, implies non-standard linguistic adaptations. Since the model is a continuum, there is a point in the middle designating the strategies that balance between the two ends.

Data Analysis

In the section above I described the methods I used to collect data. In this section I will dwell on the methods that are to be used to analyze the data, specify certain criteria, and describe the interview procedure.

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First, as soon as the translations were ready, they were analyzed using a content analysis approach. According to Patton (2002), the content analysis is “any qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings” (p.453). This method is relevant to the study as it helps to reveal the differences in communication in different languages, and find out how certain concepts are communicated (Luo, 2023). What is more, Luo (2023) notes that content analysis is a transparent and replicable approach, which is important for this study. Therefore, applying content analysis, I will be able to answer the research questions mentioned above.

Second, in the Acceptance - Resistance scale, the following strategies were identified as **Acceptance**:

the usage of gender assigned at birth (Eng-Rus);

the usage of standard gender-neutral language (linguistic units without gender indicator) (Rus-Eng);

The following strategies will be considered as **Resistance**:

the usage of new grammatical structures: plural verb, adjective endings (Eng-Rus);

the usage of new grammatical structures: pronouns (Eng-Rus);

the usage of new grammatical structures: forms with suffixes indicating women (Rus-Eng);

However, there are several options that should be in the **middle of the scale**:

the usage of gender-inclusive language in English translation: “female+noun”/

“woman+noun” (Rus-Eng);

the usage of gender-neutral rewording (Eng-Rus)

the usage of slashes and brackets (Eng-Rus)

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These strategies are in the middle because there is a consensus whether there is a need to highlight the role of women this way or not. Still, the United Nations and European Union guidelines (EP, 2018; UN, n.d.-b) recommend using them.

Concerning the elements that were subjected to this kind of analysis, I have highlighted the units that express gender grammatically in Russian text, and the neutral units in English text that are predicted to have to be translated in either feminine or masculine gender. Particularly, the analysis of translations from Russian into English covers such units as:

продюсерка

предшественницы

писательницы, художницы

художница

These words designate referents by their occupations (except for *предшественницы* - forerunners/predecessors) with affixes allowing to identify that they are women.

At the same time, the translation of the following units were analysed during the analysis of English to Russian translations:

What I'm really interested in

When I first started getting connected

It was like learning a whole new language

Relationship with myself

I started having conversations

What it meant for me

Why I would use

I also clarified

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As can be seen, the examples of English text predominantly include verbs in past tense or the verbs indicating a state (e.g. to be interested) as their Russian equivalents are supposed to be gender-marked, which is problematic when the author explicitly states that their self-identification does not lie within a binary system. The participants are presented with the names and occupations of the authors and the fact that the speeches were derived from TED talks performances as shown in Appendix B.

Then, the interviews were recorded on my phone recorder. The structure includes ten questions, specified in the Interview protocol (Appendix A). Having all participants interviewed, I transferred these recordings in mp3 format to my laptop. Then, I transcribed the interviews in a separate document using a TurboScribe tool. Having done this, I read them to get the general view and start coding the specific codes that were united to broader themes. The latter is subject to be analyzed and formulated in the findings section. Thus, the first two questions are introductory: they will provide the information on general attitudes leading to the specific topic of this research. Question number four is asked in order to clarify whether a participant and the interviewer understand the concept of gender similarly before asking further detailed questions. The questions six to nine are the core questions for the study. Thanks to them, it is clear: how translators react when asked by clients to use gender-sensitive language in its experimental forms; some strategies that translators follow or their absence; the reasons why they use these principles, as well as their attitude.

Limitations and Challenges

Most qualitative studies are criticized for non-replicability of findings. Replicability or reliability is “the extent to which other researchers (or the researcher herself) could generate the same results, or come to the same conclusion, if investigating the same question, using the same data and methods at a different time” (Saldanha & O'Brien, 2013, p.35). Still, the study on translation lies within the social science, which is focused on social changing

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processes and events. It is also noted that “no sane social science researcher would expect exactly the same results, but [they] should be similar for similar groups of people” (Saldanha & O'Brien, 2013, p.35). In order to overcome the limitation, I adapted the research instrument effectively used in previous studies (Wehle, 2020). Apart from that, I employed member checking in two cases in order to understand the reasons behind unexpected translation strategies, and the participants kindly explained their decisions to me. Furthermore, by transcribing and analyzing an interview, it is possible to provide a rich and thick description of findings. Despite the fact that the interviews were transcribed using an AI tool, the transcriptions were checked by myself prior to data analysis.

Ethical considerations

First of all, I obtained the approval of the Maqsut Narikbayev University Research Committee to conduct a research involving human participants. The Consent form signed by each participant specifies that the study is conducted with each translator individually, and the materials will be stored till the thesis defense in a researcher's device exclusively, then deleted after the defense. The data is stored at the device's disk, not the cloud applications, to minimize the risk of data leakage. Moreover, the laptop can only be accessed by the fingerprint of the owner or by a passcode. None of the participants' personal data is to be disclosed and they were free to withdraw from the research at any stage without any consequences. Prior to the research procedures, each participant was informed with their rights and confidentiality matters. The interview recordings started only after participants' consent. During the data analysis each participant was assigned a code name and number (e.g. Participant 1). Moreover, at this stage, the research does not have any risks to its participants. It is also important to note that the Ted talks speeches are in a free access, therefore, no intellectual property rights are violated.

Findings

Introduction

This chapter presents the outcomes of interviews and translations made by participants. First, I dwell on the results of the translation task considering Russian to English and English to Russian directions separately, and further put the resulting strategies into Acceptance-Resistance scale. As a second step, I describe the attitudes of language professionals on gender-sensitive language. The chapter ends with the section on recommendations from the participants in regard to the use of GFL in translation.

Two Sets of Translation Strategies

Generally, the translators used standard language units to express gender identity of the original referent, but the ways they do so are different. Moreover, participants employed different sets of approaches depending on the language directions. The following subsections describe these approaches in detail.

Translations from Russian to English

Prior to data collection I highlighted potentially problematic phrases in source texts, which are presented at the top of Table 4 below. Then, I compared different translations of those made by participants.

Table 4.

Strategies Used in Translation from Russian to English

	Продюсерка	Предшественницы	Писательницы, художницы	Художница
Participant 1	producer	forerunners	female writers, painters	a painter
Participant 2	female producer	predecessors	female writers, artists	female artist
Participant 3	female filmmaker	female forerunners	women writers, artists	woman-artist

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	Продюсерка	Предшественницы	Писательницы, художницы	Художница
Participant 4	producer	predecessors	women writers, artists	artist
Participant 5	producer	precursors	female writers, artists	artist
Participant 6	female producer	female predecessors	women writers, artists	artist
Participant 7	female producer	..female writings..to step into their shoes	female writers, artists	female artist
Participant 8	producer	women who lived before me	writers, artists	artist

The strategies employed by participants are divided into two groups: gender-inclusive and gender-neutral ones, meaning four of the participants approached the task highlighting the gender of the referents, whereas the other half preferred a more neutral approach. Gender-inclusive strategy used was previously defined as Complex Nouns, e.g. *Female producer* (Participants 2, 6, and 7) or *women writers* (Participants 3,4, and 6). It can be explained by one of the core principles of translation: following the intention of the initial message that the speaker wants the audience to understand. The text provided for translation makes it clear that the author speaks of the importance of women and feminist writing, that is why, the message is to highlight the role women in the mentioned occupations.

Therefore the translations of Participants 1,4,5, and 8 lie in the Acceptance end of the scale, as in most cases they preferred not to emphasize the gender of the people mentioned. Still, the sixth sentence shows that this does not apply to all cases: *женщин писательниц, художниц* was translated as *female/women writers, painters*. This is justified because if one looks at the context of the whole text, it is seen that underlining that the people the author

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will quote are women is crucial, and moreover, inevitable. Otherwise, it would lead to the significant distortion of meaning, while in all other units, this is not the case.

Concerning the translations of Participants 2,3,6, and 7, they cannot be placed neither in Acceptance nor in Resistance ends. The strategies are, instead, put in the Middle of the scale, as they balance the translated text without introducing any experimental approaches neither ignoring the implied sense that the author has attached to her speech. Concerning the non-standard unit *продюсерка* (producer, f), four participants translated it in an inclusive way (e.g. female producer, female filmmaker), which both underlines that the referent is a woman and is in accordance with the grammar standards of English.

Translations from English to Russian

A similar procedure was performed for the translation of the English text into Russian.

The results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5.

Strategies Used in Translation from English to Russian

Participant No.	What I'm really interested in	I'm When I first started getting connected	When I first started getting connected	It was like learning a whole new language	Relations hip with myself	I started having conversations	Why would use	I I clarified	also
1	Мне очень интересно	Когда я начала знакомиться	я	Этот опыт был подобен изучению целого нового языка	Собственного восприятия	Я начала разговаривать	Почему я использую	Я указала на	
2	Однако, я больше заинтересован(а)	Когда впервые начал(а) контактировать	я	Я будто бы узнал(а) целый новый язык	О своих отношениях с самим собой	Затем я заводил(а) разговоры	Почему я использую оба понятия	Я также объяснил(а)	
3	Но вот что поистине	В начале общения		Мне казалось, что я	Способ выражен ия	Начались беседы с	Почему я использую их оба.	Мною были также	

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Participant No.	What I'm really interested in	I'm	When I first started getting connected	It was like learning a whole new language	Relations hip with myself	I started having conversations	Why would use	I I clarified	also
	меня привлекает			изучаю совершенно новый язык	отношений с собой			определены	
4	Но что меня действительно интересует		Когда я впервые начала общаться	Это было похоже на изучение совершенно нового языка	Об отношениях с самим собой	Я начала вести беседы	Почему я использую их оба.	Я также уточнила	
5	В чем лично заинтересован		Когда я впервые начал общаться	Это было подобно изучению нового языка	Об отношениях с самим собой	Я начал говорить	Почему я могу использовать оба термина	Я также объяснил	
6	Меня интересует		Когда я впервые начала взаимодействовать	Это стало для меня как-будто изучением нового языка	О своих отношениях с самой собой	Я начала обсуждать	Почему я использую их одновременно	Я также уточнила	
7	Но что меня сильнее привлекает		Когда я только начала работать	Я ощутила словно я начала изучать абсолютно новый для себя язык	Разговаривать с собой	Строились многочисленные разговоры	И как я использую их	-	
8	Но меня на самом деле интересует		Когда я начал(а)	Я чувствовал(а), что как будто изучаю новый язык	О моих отношениях с самим/ой собой	Я начал(а) разговаривать	Почему я использую оба этих слова	Я также объяснил(а)	

As in previous analysis, the resulting strategies involved those lying in between

Acceptance and Middle-of-the-scale. Overall, participants used the following approaches:

Gender-marked feminine affixes (Participants 1, 4, 6, and 7), using default lemma forms

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(masculine gender, singular) (Participant 5), slashes and brackets (Participants 2 and 8), and gender-neutral rewording (Participant 3).

First, most participants preferred to follow the approach of gender specification (gender marked affixes, default lemma forms). In this the first case, they assigned feminine gender through feminine verb endings (e.g. *Я начала разговаривать, я также объяснила, я ощутила словно...*). This strategy was identified as Acceptance. At the same time, one of the participants decided to follow standard Russian language rules, which prescribe masculine gender as a lemma form (or base form - начальная форма) when the gender of the referent is unknown.

Regarding the use of slashes and brackets (Participants 2 and 8), they do not assign a certain gender to the referent: *Когда я впервые начал(а) контактировать, Я также объяснил(а)* (Participant 2), *О моих отношениях с самим/ой собой, Я начал(а) разговаривать* (Participant 8). Interestingly, Participant 8 translated the line *...and the linguist part of me was really excited* as *и лингвист(ка) был(а) крайне рад(а)*. Here, the translator used the marked ending *-ка* which is a feminine gender ending, however, the whole word *лингвистка* is non-standard (contradicts grammar rules of Russian nor recorded in any dictionaries).

Finally, the last strategy utilized was the gender-neutral rewording, which was only used by Participant 3. The approach implies modifying sentence structures in a way that conceals the words with gender indicators. For instance, such transformations as the replacement of word classes or replacement of parts of a sentence, may take place, as was the case with Participant 3. For example, *I started having conversations* was translated as *Начались беседы*, thus replacing the subject of a sentence, but remaining the meaning of a message. Similar modifications occurred throughout the whole text: *what I'm really*

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interested in - *Но что поистине меня привлекает* (subject changed) or *I also clarified* - *Мною были также определены* (subject changed).

Apart from the translation of Participant 3, gender-neutral rewording was occasionally used by Participant 7: *Relationship with myself* - *Разговаривать с собой*, *I started having conversations* - *Строились многочисленные разговоры*. However, it cannot be concluded that the general approach is gender-neutral as in all other units being analysed, the participant assigned feminine gender to the narrator.

Table 6.

Approaches Mapped to the Acceptance–Resistance Scale

Participant No.	Russian - English	English-Russian
1	Acceptance	Acceptance
2	Balanced	Balanced
3	Balanced	Balanced
4	Acceptance	Acceptance
5	Acceptance	Acceptance
6	Balanced	Acceptance
7	Balanced	Acceptance
8	Acceptance	Balanced

Therefore, the results of the conducted analysis can be summarized in Table 6. They demonstrate that translators do not risk to employ any of the experimental approaches, i.e. non-standard forms as there were no Resistance strategies. On the other hand, several participants seemed to realize that the conventional standard approaches may not always be suitable. In the translation from Russian to English divided into two equal groups: those who used Acceptance strategies, that is, the ones using common forms without gender indicators

(e.g. *Продюсерка* - *Producer*); and those who aimed to balance the situation when the necessity to underline gender identification appeared (e.g. *Продюсерка* - *female producer*).

Regarding the translation in the opposite direction, there were several cases of assigning feminine gender in translation when the original gender of a referent in the original text is uncertain. In other cases, translators employed a balanced approach between following standard language prescriptions and taking into account the non-binary nature of the referent. They tried to either reword the text, so that all construction demanding gender markers will be replaced by those who do not (gender-neutral rewording) or to apply an inclusive language by the use of graphical means. Only in one case, the participant relied on the standards of the target language, that is Russian, and assigned masculine gender as a default one.

Attitudes on Gender-Fair Language

This subsection describes the attitudes of language professionals revealed as a result of semi-structured interviews. Four main themes were analysed and described: audience adaptation and contextual sensitivity, adherence to standard language, empathy and compassion, and implementation of gender-neutral English units. The subsection also allows one to gain an understanding of opinions of translators in regard to gender-sensitive language and to familiarize with their recommendations.

General Attitude to Gender-Fair Language of the Participants

Generally, translators express positive or neutral opinions on the efforts to make their working languages more fair in terms of gender. Exception was made for one participant who suggested following conventional principles and seemed confused about the roots of the attempt of this nature. Other participants claim GFL is important as it can empower women and reflect society's attempts to introduce changes:

Through language we reflect the problems that society faces, we reflect the problems that women face, and through how we use it, like the word choice, the style of the

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sentences, it will maybe give some power to women, and they will be heard.

(Participant 5)

Similarly, Participant 8 says it is important for her personally to make sure that women are seen and are important: if I'm listening to someone and there is this kind of feminine endings in Russian or in English when it's being specified. Actually, I feel good. Makes me feel good about myself. Like, oh, yes, there's a “go girl” (Participant 8). Therefore, if a translator is a feminist or human rights activist, using GFL can be something that brings pleasure to do or to hear for them personally.

At the same time Participants 4,6, and 7 notice that GFL is a tendency that has become popular in a recent decade. Participants 6 and 7 consider it a social response to some changes in attitudes when it comes to gender equality. GFL aims not to exclude anyone from the context. However, Participant 4 believes that gender-sensitive language is “just a new movement” that came from the West and became highly popular. Still, he follows some recommendations on gender-neutral English as this is requested by his employer: “I stick to these norms and rules *only* because of my job, *only* because I understand that I am, as an interpreter of the [...], I represent not only myself, but my country too” (Participant 6).

Interestingly, those participants who predominantly work on interpretations rather than written translations expressed more positive attitudes towards GFL and readiness to employ some experimental forms when required. This may be connected with the fact that written and oral speeches are different when it comes to standards and grammar, with written texts being more strict in this regard.

Therefore, language specialists in this study who positively react to gender-language connect its importance to the societal changes with the speech being a reflector of modification. They admit the possibility that GFL can impact women empowerment in

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some way. However, it seems more complicated to employ and understand the significance of GFL in written types of translation.

Audience Adaptation and Contextual Sensitivity

Generally, all participants mentioned that they would adapt their speech, i.e. use or non-use of gender-fair language depending on the target audience. Their responses can be divided into the categories based on the age, gender, and the field of work of the recipients. Therefore, translators in this research feel that it is most acceptable and beneficial to employ gender-sensitive speech when the audience consists of women, people of young age who understand the current agenda on human rights and are gender specialists or activists. For instance, Participant 2 names this kind of environment as “welcoming” meaning that it consists of the “experts who promote this kind of language” and who know the agenda: “But if the audience precepts it, it’s just how they prefer to use these words, then I would definitely use them, when I see that the environment is welcoming” (Participant 2).

It was also possible to characterize the audience that requires a careful approach to the use of GFL, especially in its non-standard forms. Thus, interpreters try to stay cautious when the audience includes men, people of the older generation who do not really comprehend the current agenda on human rights and women empowerment through the language. One of the participants indicated he would not use non-standard or complicated units when the recipients are children saying that in early childhood they are supposed to learn standard language first: “if it is a kids show, the first rule is to keep the language in terms of grammar. Because, they are learning a language through that” (Participant 1). Concerning the age, Participant 8 indicated she is most likely to employ GFL with younger recipients and during some minor events, whereas, bigger conferences with older people in the audience may not be the most suitable place:

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I probably wouldn't kind of focus on those [gender-sensitive units] when I'm working for an older audience or when I'm at a conference and so on. But I definitely will try to be more sensitive when I work with a younger audience. (Participant 8)

This is the case as younger people tend to be more into the current agenda on human rights, they tend to be more liberal than the predominantly conservative older generation. Thus, younger people are most likely to welcome and value the efforts on making certain groups visible through language.

Interestingly, the aspect of gender of the recipients was mentioned as a possible decisive aspect in terms of use of gender-sensitive language. Participant 5 states that men in this country can have negative attitude to GFL, therefore, he may not use GFL in such a context unless he is sure it is welcoming:

Maybe I would be afraid to use such words in the audience of men because I would say men, here in Kazakhstan, are not ready to acknowledge such kinds of differences and such kinds of changes. That is why I would use those words only when there is an audience of women or when I know that those men will not be mad at me or the speaker because of the kind of words that I use. (Participant 5)

Another important factor is the level of awareness of the recipients of the reasons why gender-sensitive speech is used and what kind of issues it stems to. If the audience does not follow the current movements on human rights and gender equality, the use of GFL, especially its non-standard forms, may confuse them. Participant 2 states it would be an “effort-consuming thing” to try to be sensitive in this regard when it is not actually valuable for the audience and it would only complicate the understanding for them. Moreover, the inappropriate use of GFL may negatively impact the interpreter’s relations with clients:

If you automatically start to interpret using non-traditional gender-sensitive terms, and the audience is not welcoming, and is not even familiar at all, it will be absolutely

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terrible for them. For example, if they are anti-feminists or sexism or something like that, it would be perceived rather negatively, and they [the client] may even not invite me as an interpreter next time at all. (Participant 2)

Maybe the core reason why GFL is perceived differently is because older generations and those who negatively respond to it typically stick to “traditional” worldviews, and the linguistic units that are considered GFL are mostly the new ones that were proposed not that much time ago. Findings in regard to the target audience are summarized in the Table 7 below.

Table 7.

Types of the audience

Most welcoming audience	Unwelcoming audience
Younger people	Older people
Women	Men
Gender specialists, social activists	People who is not aware of the current agenda on human (specifically women) rights and GFL
Experts who promote gender-fair language	
People who understand the agenda	

Adherence to Standard Language

All of the participants declared they normally stick to the standard Russian language, i.e. without experimental feminine forms in Russian. Participants 1,2,5,6,7, and 8 stated they employ the standard language unless they are instructed otherwise by clients. In contrast, Participant 3 states stated that the use of official language forms is her general professional principle, and when asked about non-standard forms she was rather confused why don't language professionals just follow standard grammar forms. When explained that non-

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standard forms are sometimes required to increase visibility of women or avoid offending gender minorities, participant proposes modifying the language according to the client's demands but in limits of grammar standards as using some graphical methods as complex words with slashes:

We can use such words like *докторка, продюсерка*, in the examples like *учитель-учительница* which has always been in use. But in some common jobs like doctor and producer, and so on, this is a rude mistake in my opinion. Maybe, we can clarify the gender with a slash [dash], *доктор-женщина or женщина-доктор*, but in any case we are not required to use *докторка*. As I know these words do not appear in any dictionaries. (Participant 3)

This confusion may be connected to the fact that the participant works with written texts exclusively. It is widely known that written speech is less flexible to this kind of modification and is more conventional. Consequently modifications are less commonly required by clients in written translations. That may also be the reason why the participant considers new feminine forms in Russian as a “rude mistake”.

Other participants say they would warn the client of possible consequences (Participant 1) if asked to use non-standard Russian, but then follow the requirements. For Participant 8, following the standard and grammatically correct language is a sign of professionalism, though she claims to be highly flexible when required to modify her target language as she understands the agenda and why this can sometimes be requested. In this regard, Participants 2,5,6,7,8 said they will definitely employ non-standard units in Russian if requested. Some of them deem adapting to client's demands is a requirement of a language professional:

If some of the clients or representatives came to me and asked, like, to say *коллежанка* or *психологиня* or something like that, I will definitely do that, of course. It might

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sound a bit unnatural in certain cases or unfamiliar, if you may, but, again, as a language specialist providing services, you're supposed to be kind of flexible in this regard. (Participant 7)

This point of view is shared by Participant 6 and 2 who similarly state that a professional language specialist should be able to adapt to linguistic preferences of a client. Participant 6 mentioned she had a request of this kind during one of the events. Despite the fact that these are not the words she uses in everyday life, she tried to stick with them. Other participants who positively reacted to the possibility of the use of non-standard feminine forms connected that with their personal views towards the problem of women visibility. For instance, Participant 8 identifies herself as a human rights supporter and deems GFL important, saying that she does not have any difficulties with using non-official forms of Russian when asked: "I'm actually all agree about this femininity of new words and everything. I do believe that women do need visibility. I'm also a strong supporter and believer in human rights." (Participant 8)

Empathy and Compassion

Some participants refer to the necessity of understanding the feelings and the situations of people they translate/interpret or the people they translate/interpret for. Apart from the fact that it is a beneficial human quality itself, it can help language professionals in their understanding of the speaker's message as well as the general context of the situation being discussed. In this regard, Participant 8 recommends future interpreters to be empathetic when working with the sensitive topics:

So although this right may not directly apply to you, it does not mean that this right or this freedom is not applicable to someone else. So if we practice some empathy and some compassion, I think it makes it easier for us to understand the people and therefore makes our work a little easier as well. (Participant 8)

When asked on sensitive language in general, Participant 4 remembers the situation when he was advised to use more sensitive units instead of those that are commonly in use, e.g. special people instead of disabled. Answering the question on why he considers it important to utilize sensitive language, he refers to empathy or trying to put oneself in the referents' place to find out how unpleasant it can be when people use terms that might upset you: "First of all, just not to offend them, because it may turn into a very serious situation... I'm just trying to put myself in their shoes". (Participant 4)

Implementation of Gender-Neutral English Units

Concerning gender-fairness of English, it can be characterised by neutrality. i.e. the attempts to conceal gender rather than increase visibility of women. However, based on the answers of some participants who noted that they use gender-fair English (Participants 4,6,7,8), several options of fair language are used in practice.

Participant 6 remembered a case when she was kindly advised to translate Russian *конгрессмен* (literally - *congressman*) as a *member of congress* instead of *congressman*:

Once the meeting was over, it was actually attended by the Kazakh Ambassador to the US, who started his career as an interpreter. So, he was like "just a brief remark with regards to your interpretation, when the Speaker says *congressman* in Russian, you'd better translate this as *the member of the congress*, because they are very sensitive about this in the US, especially female members of the Congress". They don't really like it when you address them as the *congressmen*, because they are not *congressmen*, they are *congresswomen*. (Participant 6)

Interestingly, the Russian word *конгрессмен* which is, actually, an anglicism, a word that came from English, and therefore, is supposed to be translated back literally, should in reality be transformed into a neutral collocation. There is another example of this kind:

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бизнесмен - business person. This may be due to the fact that when these units, anglicisms were adopted by Russian, gender-fair language was not as topical as it is today.

Both Participants 6 and 7 note that if they see that a speaker is a woman, they would address her as *Madam chairwoman* or *chairperson*, but never *chairman*. At the same time, Participant 8 says she never uses *chairwoman*, but prefers neutrality, i.e. units with the stem *person* as it facilitates the work when one does not have time to adapt to the referent (e.g. in simultaneous interpretation). She refers to gender-neutral speech in English as a professional standard: “I always use the person thing. I've actually never been criticized before. But that's my kind of standard. It doesn't always have to be the man. It can be a chairperson.” (Participant 8)

As seen from the examples on *member of congress* and preference of *chairperson* or *chair* over *chairwoman* or *chairman*, it is preferable to use neutral constructions when the target language is English, and especially when a noun indicates a group of people that can include both women and men. It helps to avoid unnecessary assumptions that certain positions can only be taken or are traditionally taken by men exclusively.

Regarding the pronouns, Participants 5 and 7 indicated that they prefer to employ *they* when the gender of the referent is unknown: “When I'm interpreting into English, I'm trying to use, a neutral language, like, they, for instance, *есть молодой профессионал, у него, blah-blah-blah*, I would rather stick to, *there is a young professional, they do blah-blah-blah.*” (Participant 7) This may truly be a beneficial strategy as it does not take much time nor complicates the structure in simultaneous interpretation as if one used *he or she*. It also helps to avoid sounding awkward.

Another significant remark done in this regard is that if one employs gender-fair language strategies in one language, they are supposed to follow them in the second working language, i.e. in Russian. The only aspect that probably complicates the work is

that English and Russian speakers hold different beliefs to what fairness in language is. Russian aims to include women in the system by introducing new units for women, while English speakers deem neutrality as a solution that includes all people (women, men, and such a variety as non-binary), and the example with a *member of congress* above proves this point.

Recommendations

In order for this study to have more practical outcomes, participants were asked to make some suggestions for beginning interpreters and translators on the work with sensitive topics and gender-fair language. First group of participants made an emphasis on the soft skills of a specialist. Specifically, Participant 8 suggested being empathetic and being aware of one's privileges when working with sensitive issues. Having an understanding of the way that the referents and speakers had gone through makes it easier to understand their message, as previously noted. Moreover, having an understanding of the context of the event and balancing your decision based on this, is as significant as Participant 2 believes: "I would advise to be very sensitive, very mindful, and try to distinguish the context, and find this balance, when you can use it and when you cannot" (Participant 2).

Apart from that, Participants 1 and 6 suggested having conversations with clients and organizations on the preferred language prior to the event or deadline of the translation, which, similarly, facilitates the work and results in more satisfactory results. Concerning the interaction with clients, Participant 7 also highlights neutrality of opinions and views, meaning that language specialists may have different attitude to such a debatable topic as gender issues, but it must not be a reason of a dispute:

If your clients or the society you're interpreting for prefer, the words like *коллежанка* or something like this, do not argue, first of all. Because, yeah, you might have any kind of personal opinions towards that and there are lots of different discussions

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about, like, this sort of grammatical structures. But one of the main principles that interpreters work is supposed to be very neutral (...), so you're not supposed to take any of the parties. (Participant 7)

Regarding the sensitive language itself, it was suggested to not be afraid of any criticism when it comes to the use of gender-fair language. Language specialists have a certain impact on the current norms of language, and if they use such kind of language more often, it may truly result in some societal changes as per one of the participants:

It is very important that we should use such words more often. When I say that I am afraid of using them, so I would advise those interpreters and translators to use it no matter what the audience is. If we use such words more, at some point it will be a new norm and the people, consciously or subconsciously, will be more open to acknowledge these words. (Participant 5)

It is seen that all but one participant understand why gender-fair language emerged and the reasons why it is currently promoted. Concerning the non-standard variations of Russian, participants would use these if instructed by the client and relying on the audience and event in order not to be a reason for a conflict or negative response of the public.

Summary

The present chapter outlined the information received as a result of data collection procedures, that is, the translation of two fragments and interviews. I described the resulting translation strategies putting them into the Acceptance-Resistance scale. This resulted in five approaches in both language directions which correspond to either Acceptance (conventional language deemed acceptable to the target audience with sacrificing the identity of the original referent) or Middle strategies (a balance between utilizing acceptable language and taking into consideration the identity of the original referent). I further indicated the general attitude of participants to GFL and distinguished four main principles

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that language professionals mentioned in regard to the use of gender-sensitive language. In the next chapter I will interpret these findings comparing them to the gender-sensitive language framework outlined in the Literature Review.

Discussion

Introduction

The research focused on the approaches of translators and interpreters based in Kazakhstan towards gender-fair language. The findings demonstrate the preference of the strategies that aim to conform the target language culture, though the presence of balanced strategies showed the awareness of the necessity to consider the identity of the person being translated. This chapter discusses the resulting translations, as well as the interview answers based on the triad of cognitive, affective, and behavioral components that were described previously.

English Translations

According to numerous guidelines of gender-sensitive language mentioned in Chapter 1, currently English speakers express their commitment to gender equality through using language that would conceal the gender identity of referents. Still, if the subject being discussed aims to underline the prominent women, such highlighting their role, is appropriate. This is true for the text chosen for analysis. The division of approaches into two groups reveals a tense situation between sticking to accepted neutral forms and explicitly demonstrating gender identity in relevant situations. On the one hand, the usage of both strategies does not lead to any extremely negative consequences. It is all about nuances of connotations. For instance, in case of Participant 2, the approach (gender-inclusive) corresponds to the principle that was mentioned by her in the interview when one of the speakers she interpreted used this kind of inclusive words (коллежанка - colleague, f): the participant said she should have interpreted that as female colleague because that was the intention of the message. The speaker wanted to underline her feminist position by using a non standard form, and moreover, to make her female colleagues visible. That is why the usage of this approach is reasonable.

Concerning the second, gender-neutral approach, it is also a justifiable one. Despite the fact that it does not convey the feminist shade of meaning, it adapts the target audience's beliefs to what fair language should look like. As mentioned previously, in the case when gender-neutralisation of the referents would distort the meaning, participants preserved units indicating gender.

Thus, these opposite strategies of neutralising gender and making it visible align with the existing debates on the need of gender-fair language. On the one hand, inclusive translation helps to make women visible, and in this regard, a translation can be considered as a means of social activism. Though, it is still uncertain whether feminization in English is fair to every identity, including non-binary.

Russian Translations

The decision of participants to neutralise the structure when the narrator's gender identity is uncertain (to the target culture) by rewording or using graphical elements demonstrates the efforts to resist the common language expectations of Russian language speakers (when one sees a man in front of them to only use masculine units). Specifically, the rewording strategy aims to resist the binary gender system of Russian by avoiding applying masculine, feminine, or even neuter grammatical structures, which dehumanizes the referent. This decision can be considered as the most balanced among those analysed as it both follows standard grammar rules of the target language and avoids assigning the narrator a certain gender or putting them within a binary system. Therefore, it is put in the Middle of the Acceptance-Resistance scale. However, as previously mentioned by Wehle (2020) it can be a truly time-consuming work, consequently, difficult to apply during simultaneous and consecutive interpretation. Apart from that, it is also problematic in terms of extensive literary texts. Still, in cases when language professionals have time to prepare and restructure their translation, the strategy is the most suitable one.

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Another approach was to assign a feminine gender to a non-binary speaker. The decision was, at first, rather surprising. It needs to be noted that at the participation sheet, there was a brief information on the speaker that said: “The second text is an excerpt of Archie Crowley’s (American linguist) speech given at TED Talks in 2022” (Appendix B). I expected the participants to assign a male gender to the speaker, as despite the fact that Archie can be both feminine and masculine name, it is more popular among men. At first, I assumed that Participant 1 relied on the grammatical gender of the word (*небинарная персона* (non-binary person, f), however he said that that he didn’t pay attention to the name at the top of the list and just felt it was right to translate gender-neutral words feminine. At the same time, Participant 4 noted that he relied on the fact that the speaker is a linguist, and people working in this domain are typically women. This shows the power of stereotypes regarding the typical “male and female” occupations. I defined this strategy as Acceptance since it was neither concealing or neutralising the gender identity nor using any experiential form, but closer to relying on gender assigned at birth.

There was only one participant who assigned masculine gender to non-binary narrator. This approach may be effective if the context demands official and recognized language forms exclusively. The translator relies on the rather masculine name of the speaker, therefore, on the gender assigned at birth, which may be a solution when there is a lack of time as in simultaneous interpretation. However, it still assigns a certain (male) gender to the speaker who declares themselves non-binary, thus, not taking into account this aspect. Again, the approach corresponds to the participant’s position in the interview: general preference of standard grammar rules with the encouragement of others to not to be afraid of using GFL, including non-standard units.

Regarding another inclusive strategy, that is, using slashes and brackets, it is also admitted to be a balanced strategy that does not assign a certain gender nor contradicts

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Russian grammar. Though, potential issues may occur concerning the fact that the speaker declares to be out of the existing binary gender system, while slashes and brackets presuppose either feminine or masculine narrator. Consequently, the approach is defined as the Middle strategy too. It is also obvious that this graphic method is limited to the use in written speech exclusively.

Cognitive component

Cognitive aspects describe the way translators and interpreters conceptualize gender-fair language, their beliefs and opinions.

Concept of gender

In general, the translators of this research seem to be aware of what the concept of gender is, however, their interpretations differ. Some understand gender in the similar way as defined in Chapter 1, that is, a set of social behaviors that are connected to what is being a man or a woman. Others add other identities, such as transgender and non-binary to their understanding of gender. The third group sees gender as a synonym for the sex, that is, a set of biological features that distinguish people as female or male. The definitions of the second group of participants allows me to conclude that there is an appearing sensitivity to the complexity of gender among translators and interpreters. This is seen among the participants that predominantly work as freelance interpreters.

Gender-Fair Language

Most of the participants admitted the relevance and necessity of GFL connecting it with the demand of the society to increase the visibility of women and the equal treatment of genders in both languages. One of them deemed non-standard forms of GFL unacceptable, and sounding rude, which is a wide spread view of the opponents of GFL discussed previously, who claimed it unnatural and inelegant. As previously mentioned, this may be due to the fact that written speech, which is the area of specialization of the

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Participant 3, is more conventional and does not usually tolerate non-standard units. The other participant connected the emerging attention to the GFL with the requirements of political correctness and popularity of feminist movement. Generally, those who believe that GFL is a relevant concept, sometimes confess that they lack the knowledge on how to translate or use gender-sensitive language. I have to note that this should not be surprising, as the concept of GFL is different, if not, polar for English (natural gender language) and Russian (grammatical gender language). The one thing that a language professional needs to understand in this regard is that feminization is typical for grammatical gender language cultures, and is not topical, moreover, may be an offensive technique for such natural gender language as English (the example of *member of congress* as a translation for *конгресмен - congressman*). For instance, one participant believes and uses gender-inclusive English units as chairwoman in order to demonstrate respect and follow the official language style. Whereas, the other participant never specifies whether the referent is a woman (*chairwoman*) or a man (*chairman*), but prefers neutral units as chair or chairperson following the same aim. It is important to note that English speakers strive to adapt their language for *all* identities, not only women, that is why, gender-neutral tendencies are being recommended to use in English.

Despite the fact that in Chapter one I summarized the existing linguistic debates on gender-sensitive language, the translators declare the importance of staying neutral, i.e. not letting others know that one is on the specific side of these debates. The participants recommend setting some of these beliefs aside during the work, as staying neutral or using some linguistic units that may contradict one's concept of what the “correct” interpreter's or translator's language should be, is important for the client and their event.

Awareness of Non-Binary Identities

Notably, three participants showed a higher awareness of non-binary identities (Participant 5, 7, and 8) and expressed a readiness to challenge some conventional standards of language with an eye for the context of an event. Their positions suggest that despite the observed conformity to the target audience accepted norms there is a place for resistant approaches. This was especially seen in the interview with the Participant 8 who interprets in the field of human rights, including for LGBTQ+ communities abroad, as well as in the events dedicated to women empowerment. At the same time, I cannot state that only those language specialists that work in the human rights field are more aware of non-binary identities. Participant 5 claims to have experience in automobile industry interpretation and says he has never worked in the events dedicated to gender issues. Consequently, it is not only the types of topics or events that the language professionals work that shape awareness, but the background knowledge.

Then, the reasoning of one of the participants corresponds to what was claimed in previous studies. Participant 5 encourages other language professionals to use GFL and be open to its non-standard forms as it can make change within the society highlighting the interconnection of language and society. This argument agrees with the studies of Verweken & Hannover (2012) and Formanowicz & Scieszny (2014) who proved the relation of the gender-fair language to the chances of getting hired or vacancy response, which is a social effect of GFL.

Affective component

As the name suggests, the affective component includes the feelings on the use of GFL in during translation and in general. The participants are mainly positive about the desire to make women and gender minorities visible through language units that have not been in use previously. When dwelling on what kind of feelings may their target audience have when they hear some new non-standard forms of GFL, the participants made some

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remarks on the social groups that are welcoming or unwelcoming to that. The suggestion of the Participant 5 that men are the least welcoming people when it comes to the language that aims to make women and gender minorities visible corresponds to the Sugiyama (2025) research findings on that men are more opposed to gender-sensitive (non-sexist) language than women. Thus, the Participant's concerns on the target audience consisting of men are reasonable. The positive aspect in this regard is that the aforementioned participant encourages other translators and interpreters to use GFL, including its experimental forms without being afraid of the reaction of people. Therefore, even though I noted the commitment to acceptance strategies and standard language, on the affective level participants demonstrate resistant moods and opinions. This is also seen in Participant 8 argumentation when she says that it is important for her to make sure that the audience knows that the referent is a woman. She underlines the positive feelings when she hears that the speaker does the same. Other participants with positive feelings on GFL also report the fear of criticism from the part of both the audience and the public, and therefore, recommend being cautious and discuss the sensitive aspects with the client.

On the other side, there are two language professionals that were reserved, to say the least, in regards to GFL. Participant 4 underlines that he tries to make his language sensitive when it comes to gender *only* and only because this is prescribed by the administration of his organization. The gender-fair language is just a technical requirement in this case. This may be a positive aspect demonstrating neutrality: despite the slight irony in the voice of the participant when discussing the gender-fair language, he still follows the recommendations on GFL to stay professional. At the same time, Participant 3 seemed to be out of the current agenda on women visibility through the language forming rather negative perception and naming non-official Russian feminine forms of occupations rather rude and strange. Interestingly, Participant 3 and Participant 4 are the only ones that do not work freelance but

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are employees in the organizations. It can be suggested that when working under a certain company or organization, the standards and norms of language must be followed, and any deviation or a mistake is more critical. This may also be due to the nature of work: international organizations, companies, funds, and corporations typically seek freelance interpretation services. Thus, language professionals working with them are more familiar with the issues of gender equality due to the areas of their activities. Whereas, governmental bodies in Kazakhstan are considered to be more conventional institutions trying to preserve “traditional values”. The range of events may shape interpreters’ awareness and concept of GFL. Similarly, written translators working with a great variety of texts every day, still are not directly involved in the discussions on GFL. However, this diversity of attitudes proves the presence of debates and raising awareness of the issue.

Behavioral component

This aspect indicates the readiness of translators to use GFL when requested, the strategies that they use presently and the situations where GFL was involved or recommended.

The absence of resistance approaches suggests the adherence and prioritisation of professional norms and acceptable by the target culture strategies, i.e. standard language, avoiding risk with experimental ones. It seems that translators, specifically, interpreters can be afraid of the response of the audience if some experimental forms are used. They fear that the public would not understand why GFL is being used, deem it weird and “rude” and consequently, deem such interpreters unprofessional because of violation of standard grammar.

Some participants report consistently applying neutralisation techniques in English naming it a habit (e.g. using they pronoun instead of generic he or the units with neutral stems as chairperson, member of congress, etc.). Generally, the approach on standard forms

of GFL of the participants corresponds to what is recommended by the UN, EU structures, as well as APA. Specifically, the words with a -man stem are avoided in favor of -person stem. Apart from that, the use by interpreters of neutral pronouns (singular they) when the gender of the referent is uncertain is also one of the recommendations of the aforementioned guidelines.

Concerning the Russian language, one participant mentioned using paired forms of pronouns (он или она) when speaking of groups of people of uncertain gender. The expressed actions can be named to what was defined as speech etiquette (Shurupova et al., 2018) of language professionals in both Russian and English.

The approach to non-standard forms in Russian is contextual, i.e. all participants stated they would rely on the a) client's wishes and remarks; b) the type of the target audience; c) the context of the whole event, before switching to these units.

Summary

The chapter analysed the findings through the lens of the previously described approaches in literature and a triad of cognitive, affective, and behavioral components. The analysis demonstrated that most translators and interpreters believe GFL is a relevant instrument of language. They express positive, to different extent, attitudes towards both standard and non-standard forms admitting that the latter should be approached cautiously. Those who expressed more negative or reserved opinions stand for standard language, following the instructions, and underline the unnaturalness of the non-standard units. In practice, participants generally avoid experimenting with the language forms being more committed to accepted standards, though some of them have tried to balance the identity of the original narrator and the standards of the target language.

Conclusion

The research explored the ways English-Russian translators and interpreters approach gender concepts in their working languages. It aimed both to examine the practical strategies they employ in translation to both directions and to record their attitudes and opinions. The data analysis demonstrated that translators either try to balance the concepts poorly known to the target language culture and the identity of the speakers of the source language, or follow the acceptable language practices. Almost all language professionals understand the current agenda on women empowerment and positively react to the efforts to put women into an equal position through changing the stems of the units denoting occupations and positions in English. When it comes to the same concepts in Russian, they admit that the people in the target audience perceive it in a very different manner, therefore, they should be especially sensitive to the context and the audience. This is due to the fact that the women's issues are perceived differently in the language cultures, so that, English speaking culture aims to conceal or neutralise the gender of a professional, while in Russian speaking culture, there are attempts to underline and include and make women visible in a certain professional domain.

At the same time the translators are more cautious when it comes to non-binary identities. In translation they normally remain with a binary gender system, i.e. the strategies that conform to a certain degree the norms of the target culture. Though there was one exception, one strategy, i.e. gender-neutral rewording, that takes into consideration both the necessity to use gender-neutral language without violating grammar of the target language. Therefore, this approach may be recommended to other language professionals (e.g. editors, international journalists, etc.) , as the most balanced one.

Apart from that, all translators in this research prioritized adherence to the grammatical norms of languages unless they are instructed otherwise by a client.

Concerning these instructions, the attitudes to using non-standard forms of GFL were mostly positive. The only exceptions were among the participants that are employed as translators or interpreters, while people holding the opposite views were freelance specialists. This suggests that working under permanent management may pose more restrictions when it comes to the sensitive topics and related language. Generally, the ability to balance the aspects of both language cultures, as well as the adaptability to the client's wishes, and sensitivity to the context are the approaches that guide translators when their work involves gender issues and gender-fair language.

Limitations

While this study cannot be generalised to all translators, it shows the individual approaches and deep opinions, which aligns with the principles of the basic qualitative design. The initial aim was to delve into the different approaches and listen to the opinions and attitudes. This twofold aim was fulfilled by using a comprehensive approach which is based on both analysing the strategies through the Acceptance-Resistance model on translations made by participants and holding and coding the interviews.

Furthermore, the qualitative studies, especially those involving interviews, face a problem of self-reporting bias, i.e., when the participants desire to make a certain impression or conform to the current tendencies. As this research related to such a sensitive matter as gender, self-reporting bias may be a problem. From my part, I tried to minimize it by informing the participants on the confidentiality matters, and the fact that it would be valuable for me to record their true attitudes. Additionally, the participants were asked not only to reflect on hypothetical situations, but to provide some examples based on their past experience.

Apart from that, even if the translators were subjected to self-reporting bias this demonstrates how professionals in such a conservative culture as Kazakhstan's desire to seem liberal and tolerant.

Future Research

The current study is based on two different languages on the expression of gender components. It can be even more beneficial to conduct similar research based on other working languages, specifically Turkic languages, such as Kazakh, or the languages such as Korean or Japanese, which are extremely rarely seen in the studies on language and gender.

Furthermore, despite the fact that gender-neutral rewording was recommended as the most compromising strategy, it would be interesting to examine whether it is applicable in simultaneous interpretation. During oral interpretations, there are only one to three seconds to reflect which may not be enough to restructure the sentence that would conceal the gender identity.

Lastly, it can be suggested to conduct a study of the perception of GFL on the attitudes of the audience. In this way, language professionals will be better aware of the language attitudes in a society.

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APPENDIX A

Interview Protocol

Professional translators based in Kazakhstan with English and Russian working languages.

Hello! First of all, thank you for your interest in this research. It studies the translators' principles when they encounter gender-related concepts, specifically I aim to answer my second research subquestion the kinds of attitudes translators have towards gender-fair language. First, I'll ask some general questions and then switch to the ones related to the topic.

Shall we begin?

1. Would you introduce yourself shortly? Your age, your education, and occupation.
2. Do you have any professional principles as a translator? Could you tell me about them?
3. Could you describe your approach to dealing with topics or speeches that contradict your worldviews? Why?
4. How do you understand the term "gender"?
5. Have you ever translated or interpreted speeches that concerned women issues or problems of gender minorities? Can you tell me about it?
6. If you are asked by your client to employ some unofficial forms of language, such as Russian feminine forms (avtorka, rezhisserka), what would your actions be? Why?
7. Are there any principles of gender-sensitive language that you follow throughout your translation?
8. Why do you employ/do not employ these?

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9. Does a certain target audience impact your use of gender-sensitive language?
10. Finally, would you give any piece of advice for those translators who are going to work in the domain of social issues?

This is the end of the interview. Thank you for your time.

APPENDIX B

1. You are invited to translate the following two texts.

The **first** is an excerpt from a TED Talk given by Nargiz Shukenova, a producer from Kazakhstan, in 2023.

Я - продюсерка и моя профессия - создавать.

Чтобы найти опору, вдохновиться и пережить новый для себя опыт, я все чаще обращаюсь к женскому письму. С опытом моих предшественниц мне легче себя ассоциировать, понять его и примириться с ним. Феминистское направление в литературоведении до сих пор не является признанной научной традицией, хотя часто женское письмо относят к деколониальной практике. В женском письме женщина перестает быть невидимой. Поэтому сегодня я буду цитировать писательниц, художниц и матерей - их тексты меня притягивают и освобождают.

Художница Паула Модерзон-Беккер писала "У женщин нет фамилий - только имена. Они будто бы берут фамилии в долг, для них это непостоянный, эфемерный признак. Они находят опору в чем-то другом. В мужской мир они проникают со взломом". Я думаю, я нахожу опору в этом - в своем творчестве, в созидании, таким образом я обретаю свою субъектность.

2. The **second** text is an excerpt of Archie Crowley's (American linguist) speech given at TED Talks in 2022.

I am a linguist. Linguists study language. But what I'm really interested in is what people think and believe about language and how these beliefs affect the way we use it. All of us have deeply held beliefs about language such as the belief that some languages are more beautiful than others or that some ways of using language are more correct.

So I'm a linguist, and I'm also a nonbinary person, which means I don't identify as a man or a woman. When I first started getting connected to other transgender people, it was like learning a whole new language and the linguist part of me was really excited. There was a whole new way of talking about my relationship with myself and a new clear way to communicate that to other people. And then I started having conversations with my friends and family about what it meant for me to be trans and nonbinary, what those words meant to me specifically, and why I would use both of them. I also clarified the correct words they could use when referring to me. And all of them would have to switch the pronouns they used to refer to me. My correct pronouns are "they" and "them," also known as the singular they.

APPENDIX C

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Approaches to the Translation of Gender-Related Concepts between English and Russian

You are invited to participate in a research study on the topic of *Approaches to the translation of gender-related concepts between English and Russian* aimed to understand how translators approach gender-specific linguistic features in their professional life. You were selected as a research participant because you meet the criteria of being a translator with at least a bachelor's degree in Translation Studies, Foreign Philology or Applied Linguistics who practice English-Russian translation. You will be asked to translate two short fragments, one hundred and thirty-three and two hundred and thirteen word-texts, respectively, which is planned to take you approximately 40 to 60 minutes. Then, you will be asked to answer 10 interview questions, which will take about 30 to 40 minutes.

Based on the nature of the instrument, there are not any apparent risks in this study. You may benefit from the study's results by reflecting on how you would approach any challenging situation related to this field in a real-life situation and be prepared for this. Your answers will contribute to the field of translation studies by describing and analyzing the various ways that translators handle gender-related content, which can be challenging to translate.

The study is guided by the following research questions: What kind of linguistic strategies do English Russian translators employ in translation of gender-related concepts?
What kind of attitudes do translators have towards gender-fair language?

If you have read this form and have decided to participate in this project, please understand your **participation is voluntary** and you have the **right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty. The alternative is not to participate.** The results of this research study may be presented at scientific or professional meetings or published in scientific journals; however, your name and any other personal information will not be disclosed. The interview will be **audio recorded** and stored at the researcher's device exclusively, then deleted after the defense. The data will be stored at the device's disk, not the cloud applications, to minimize the risk of leakage.

By signing this consent form, you **agree not to use Internet resources or other additional translation tools** during your participation. If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about this research, its procedures, risks and benefits, please contact

Alina Kabilanova

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+7 777 311 37 01, Researcher

or Anar Ibrayeva

a_ibrayeva@kazguu.kz

Supervisor

If you are not satisfied with how this study is being conducted, or if you have any concerns, complaints, or general questions about the research or your rights as a participant, please contact MNU Research Committee, rec_sla@kazguu.kz.

Please sign this consent form if you agree to participate in this study.

- I have carefully read the information provided;

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- I have been given full information regarding the purpose and procedures of the study;
- I understand how the data collected will be used, and that any confidential information will be seen only by the researchers and will not be revealed to anyone else;
- I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason;
- With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree, of my own free will, to participate in this study.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

The extra copy of this signed and dated consent form is for you to keep.