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ANALYSIS OF GRAMMATICAL CLASSES IN CHOOSING FORMS OF ADDRESSING A WOMAN IN MODERN LAK LANGUAGE: GENDER ASPECT

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Рассматриваются и анализируются формы обращения к женщине в современном лакском языке. Выявляются характерные особенности обращения к женщине различных носителей языка, с учётом их половой принадлежности, возрастных особенностей, места жительства, образования, а также места службы. С этой целью исследуется фактический материал, собранный на основе анкетных и устных опросов лакского населения. Предпочтение, отдаваемое показателю *бур*, и стремление избежать в речи употребления показателя *дур* обусловлено крайне негативным пониманием группы *дур*. Поэтому в современном лакском языке форма *дур* (*дура*) малоупотребима и заменена формой *бура*, которая употребляется даже при обращении к пожилым женщинам.

Ключевые слова: гендерная лингвистика, лакский язык, грамматические классы, формы обращения, дескриптивный анализ, социальный статус.

The research we are featuring in the present paper is related to gender linguistics. The second wave of mass female movement, which began in the 1960s, has led to a true social and cultural revolution in western world, having undermined the patriarchal system of values, social practices and institutes. Under the influence of female policy, aiming at a change of imperious relations in the society, got all the spheres of public and private life. It was the period when researchers addressed the role of language in a patriarchal society, therefore linguistics reacted with an original paradigm named as a female linguistics or a female criticism of a language.

There are no doubts that feminism addressed the problems of natural language with the purpose to prove the existence of patriarchal traces in it, to open the discriminate structures of the language, to show its sexist character.

The researches within the female linguistics were conceived within the limits of critical linguistics, which is aimed to analyze both implicit and transparent structural attitudes of domination, discrimination, authority and control expressed in language [1, c. 7]. A. Kirilina remarks that «here the talk is about the patriarchal stereotypes fixed in a language, which force a certain picture of the world upon the native speakers of the language, where the unimportant role and negative qualities are allocated to women. Within the limits of this tendency the images of women fixed in a language are investigated, in what semantic fields the women are submitted and what connotations accompany this representation» [2, c. 41].

One of the important achievements of this approach is the fact that special address forms to un-

married women have already disappeared in many European languages (*Miss, Mademoiselle*). They are either not used at all, or applied to considerably narrower circle of the addressees, for example, to young girls. The strong female pressure in this direction was based on the following reasons: first, the forms addressing both men and women should be symmetric, secondly, the distinction between married and unmarried women is regarded as intrusion into their private space, and, hence, is the discrimination with reference to the marital status. It is necessary to add, that address forms, on the whole, are most sensitive to extralinguistic influences, and their change is more often triggered by some external social factors than naturally occurring development of the language [3, p. 137].

The address forms as the subject of study has been placed in the focus of attention of many researches. In the paper devoted to address forms in different languages, F. Braun remarks, that «the words, which are used as address forms, express not only the speaker's attitude to the addressee, but also carry the connotation about the speaker himself, his education, code of behaviour, and social status» [4, p. 36].

So far the problem of the addressing forms has been investigated by the linguists on the data of many European and world languages.

The object of our research is the Lak language (belongs to the Nakh-Gaghestanian language family), which has not yet been a subject of detailed gender analysis, which makes the undertaken research especially promising. We do believe that introducing new linguistic data will empower the linguist with new knowledge concerning the gen-

der-related changes occurring in the language, the pragmatical factors, including analysis and prediction of possible social and psychological consequences of such changes in the language. In this respect the Lak language, as an ergative one, represents a special interest for the researchers. There is a correlation between a formal classification of the nouns, and the grammatical forms of a verb, correspondingly, in Lak, on the one hand, and the sex, age, social status of the referent, on the other. Within the frame of the formal classification there are 3 types of parameters-classifiers *-ur, bur, dur*.

The description of grammatical classes in Lak has been extensively looked into (though not in the gender perspective), and many regularities in the classification of separate groups of nouns were revealed. (Offered classifications are certainly not exhaustive and still require further discussion.) It was found that the group of words incorporated by a patrimonial word, as a rule, refers the same class, as the classifier itself. In most cases, there were found some words – exceptions «dropping out» of a general rule which could not be given the definite and logic explanation and which call for further research [5, c. 125].

The attempts to relate the formal *-ur/bur/dur* classification to address forms date back as far as the 19th century. P.K. Uslar wrote about the specific use of class parameters in addressing / referring to women in Lak: «A Lak girl says about herself: *na bura* with *bur* forms (*I am*); to refer to some female with *dur* forms: *ta duri*”, instead of *ta buri*, means to give the heaviest insult. After marriage, a female is gradually switching on to other formal classes, to another «grammar». It will seem improper if on the next day after the wedding a female refers to herself with: *na dura* (*I am*), but, on the other hand, it looks strange, if a woman upon giving birth to at least one child, refers to herself with *na bura*. All these subtle distinctions are rather strictly observed» [6, c. 10]. P.K. Uslar, however, did not offer any clear cut explanation to these features.

Later linguists tried to account for the difference in choosing the reference and address patterns when dealing with either a girl or a woman in Lak. L.B. Panek, like A. Dirr, explains it in the following way: «in grammatical classes there is a hidden social division between the women who have and have not got a certain social status», «when a woman gives birth to a child, she herself and other people will speak about her applying the other grammatical class» [7, c. 233].

We have to admit, however, that lack of one-to-one correspondence between the gender and sex is typical of many other languages, to mention, e.g., such German words as *das Madchen, das Fraulein* which are also of the neuter gender, and not the

female one. To further confirm it there are ethnographic data showing that many peoples still stick to an ancient belief that «a married young woman passes from girlhood into a group of the women only after the birth of the first child. In this respect, the girl and the young women represent the same group» [7, c. 234; 8, c. 45–46].

In modern Lak there can be recorded some changes in the use of class parameters when referring to / addressing females, esp. women. G.B. Murkelinskiy marks the cases when in addressing women in the colloquial speech a speaker can use both *bur class and dur class*, for example: *nittilsu nei bur or nittilsu nei dur* ('the aunt is going'). Thus the preference is given up to the form *bur*, which is considered as the form of politeness and supersedes the form *dur*, which expresses the negative and scornful attitude: «now even the woman who has a child, usually prefers the *bur class*, instead of the *dur class*. Only an old woman, no matter whether she has children or not, prefers to use *dur class*, speaking about herself: *na dura* ('I am'), and she would be referred to with *ta dur* ('she is')» [9, c. 160].

We investigated the field data collected on the basis of biographical and oral questionings of the native-speakers of Lak and tried to analyse the changes of the lexicon in the modern Lak language. The research was meant to reveal the specific characteristics of the address forms in different native speakers of the language, taking into account their sex, age group, residence, social status: educational background, also vocational parameters, marital status. The native speakers of the language were offered to choose variants of the address forms to the woman depending on her age, marital status, social status and personal attitude of the informant to the concrete woman. The sample of the questionnaire is given below:

Table 1

The questionnaire:

1. Fill in:

1. Sex	
2. Age	
3. Place of residence	
4. Education	
5. Job	

2. Mark in the last column of the table which of the four variants (a,b,c,d) would you use addressing the people with the social portrait to follow:

- «*Chun nei bura?*» ('where are you going?')
- «*Chun nei dura?*» ('where are you going?')
- «*Va chu bur?*» ('where is she?')
- «*Va chu dur?*» ('where is she?')

Table 2

Profession	Age	Marital status	To be respected or not in the community	Attitude to a person you are addressing at the moment	Mark the proper variant of address a), b), c) or d)
Doctor	65	Married	Yes	positive	
				negative	
Doctor	65	Married	No	positive	
				negative	
Doctor	35	Unmarried	Yes	positive	
				negative	
Doctor	35	Unmarried	No	positive	
				negative	
Clerk	60	Married	Yes	positive	
				negative	
Clerk	60	Married	No	positive	
				negative	
Clerk	40	Unmarried	Yes	positive	
				negative	
Clerk	40	Unmarried	No	positive	
				negative	
Milkmaid	50	Married	Yes	positive	
				negative	
Milkmaid	50	Married	No	positive	
				negative	
Milkmaid	30	Unmarried	Yes	positive	
				negative	
Milkmaid	30	Unmarried	No	positive	
				negative	
Manager	60	Married	Yes	positive	
				negative	
Manager	60	Married	No	positive	
				negative	
Manager	40	Unmarried	Yes	positive	
				negative	
Manager	40	Unmarried	No	positive	
				negative	
Attendant	55	Married	Yes	positive	
				negative	
Attendant	55	Married	No	positive	
				negative	
Attendant	20	Unmarried	Yes	positive	
				negative	
Attendant	20	Unmarried	No	positive	
				negative	

3. Choose between two variants (*a* or *b*) to use addressing people in the table in a neutral communication / when in an angry condition:

a) «*Ti zi bura?*» ('what are you doing?')

b) «*Ti zi dura?*» ('what are you doing?')

Table 3

You are addressing to	Usual condition	Angry condition
Mother		
Grandmother		
Sister		
Wife		
Neighbour		
Cousin		
Aunt		
Inhabitant of the same Village		

«*Khunmassa barchallah!*»
'Thank you very much!'

The purpose of the given research is to define more precisely what factors are governing the choice between address forms to females by native speakers of the language.

Before we begin to analyse the received information, it is necessary to give the descriptive characteristic to the above questionnaire. First, as you can see from the first point, we took into account social and biological index: sex (gender), age, residence, education, and the job. There were polled both males and females, people of different ages, inhabitants of village and urban districts, those who have different kinds of education and also employees and unemployed. All these data were taken into account when we processed the received results.

In the second point of the questionnaire four variants of questions are represented. The first two questions the native speaker of the language is instructed to apply the form when addressing the female suggested in the table, changing only grammatical classes (*bur/bura*, *dur/dura*) – a) «*Chun nei bura?*» ('Where are you going?') b) «*Chun nei dura?*» ('Where are you going?'). The following two questions are used when the native speaker of the language asks or speaks about the female with someone else, again changing the grammatical classes (*bura*, *dura*) – c) «*Va chu bur?*» ('Where is she?') d) «*Va chu dur?*» ('Where is she?'). We tried to take into account most socially relevant characteristics, which could tell on the choice of this or that address form / reference forms to females: profession, age, marital status, attitude at the given moment, if she enjoys any respect with the community or not.

In a final part of the questionnaire two variants of the questions are offered which the native speaker of the language must use addressing his immediate circle of people in various emotional conditions: in a neutral condition or in an angry condition. a) «*Ti zi bura?*» ('What are you doing?') b) «*Ti zi dura?*» ('What are you doing?').

So, let us start to analyse the results obtained. The grammatical class *bur/bura* was used by all speakers of the language when they addressed unmarried females, no matter what her profession, age was like, whether she is respected or not, the speaker's attitude to her at the moment was irrelevant. None of the speaker's individual characteristics has influenced the use of this address form. It means that this grammatical class never changes when we address the unmarried females.

Practically all the speakers of the language used the grammatical class *bur/bura* addressing married women, with no regard to her educational background. Two native speakers are exceptions from this rule: (1. Milkmaid, 48 years old, elementary education, village-dweller; 2. char cleaners at a

secondary school, education – 8 forms, 57 years old, village-dweller). They used *dur/dura* class, addressing females equal to themselves in status, profession and age.

It is also necessary to emphasize that some speakers of the language used *bur/bura* class, talking about married women, who are respected in the society (community), or the attitude to her at the moment is positive, for example, *Va chu bur?* (Where is she?). This address/reference form is usually used by people with higher and secondary education, from urban areas.

There were also exposed the cases, when the speakers of the language always used *bur/bura* class. They are people from 20-to-30 age band who received higher education and live in town.

As for the third item of the questionnaire, the analysis has revealed the following picture. First, the emotional condition is not affecting the choice of the address form to the *sister*, and in most cases to the *cousin*. It means that *sister*, as well as any unmarried female (girl) are always used with *bur/bura* class. In some cases there were persons, usually with higher education, middle-aged, living in a village, who addressed inhabitants of the same village and neighbours, using the same grammatic group. It is important to note the fact, that all native speakers of the language, who have higher education and live in town, tend to use *bur/bura* form addressing females listed in the third part of the questionnaire. The polled of more mature age, who live in an urban districts also address/refer to using this grammatical class, but very often in an angry condition they tend to address a spouse with *dur/dura* class. As for the people of a countryside, it is necessary to draw the attention to the fact that in a normal and neutral emotional condition they use *bur/bura* class addressing close relations (e.g. aunts), neighbours, inhabitant of the same village, spouses disregarding her education and age.

In spite of the fact that *bur/dur* classes are very similar formally, there is a clear cut semantic difference between them. The research showed that when native speakers of the language were filling the questionnaire, they used *dur/dura* form extremely seldom. However, this address form was used by the speakers when they referred to married woman, who were not respected in the community, or if at the moment the attitude to her was negative, or speaking about elderly females (50–60 age group). As for *dur/dura*, the research showed, that this grammatical class was always used in the third part by those living in the country, when they could address mother with *dur/dura* form or only when in an angry condition

The analysis revealed that the modern Lak language has undergone some changes in the use of

class parameters in female address/reference forms. The preference which is given to *bur/bura* forms, and the aspiration to avoid *dur/dura* forms in the speech is caused by extremely negative connotation in the semantics of *dur/dura* forms. If earlier there was the opinion that the use of the *bur/bura* form to females and the aspiration to avoid the use of *dur/dura* form was typical of city-dwellers, for whom Russian was the second native language, now we see the same trend and some changes, which are recorded in the speech of Lak people, who live in a countryside. Therefore, in the modern Lak language *dur/dura* forms are rarely used, being replaced by *bur/bura* forms, which are used even when a speaker addresses elderly females.

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ANALYSIS OF GRAMMATICAL CLASSES IN CHOOSING FORMS OF ADDRESSING A WOMAN IN MODERN LAK LANGUAGE: GENDER ASPECT

B.M. Alieva

The article examines the forms of addressing a woman in modern Lak language. The research was meant to reveal the specific characteristics of the forms of addressing used by different native speakers of the language, taking into account their sex, age group, residence, social status. The preference which is given to *bur/bura* forms and the desire to avoid *dur/dura* forms in the speech is caused by extremely negative connotation in the semantics of *dur/dura* forms. Therefore, in the modern Lak language *dur/dura* forms are rarely used, being replaced by *bur/bura* forms, which are used even when a speaker addresses elderly females.

Keywords: gender linguistics, Lak language, grammatical classes, address forms, descriptive analysis, social status.

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