

ҚАЗАҚСТАН РЕСПУБЛИКАСЫ ҒЫЛЫМ ЖӘНЕ ЖОҒАРЫ БІЛІМ МИНИСТРЛІГІ

«Л.Н. ГУМИЛЕВ АТЫНДАҒЫ ЕУРАЗИЯ ҰЛТТЫҚ УНИВЕРСИТЕТІ» КЕАҚ

**Студенттер мен жас ғалымдардың
«GYLYM JÁNE BILIM - 2024»
XIX Халықаралық ғылыми конференциясының
БАЯНДАМАЛАР ЖИНАҒЫ**

**СБОРНИК МАТЕРИАЛОВ
XIX Международной научной конференции
студентов и молодых ученых
«GYLYM JÁNE BILIM - 2024»**

**PROCEEDINGS
of the XIX International Scientific Conference
for students and young scholars
«GYLYM JÁNE BILIM - 2024»**

**2024
Астана**

УДК 001

ББК 72

G99

«ǴYLYM JÁNE BILIM – 2024» студенттер мен жас ғалымдардың XIX Халықаралық ғылыми конференциясы = XIX Международная научная конференция студентов и молодых ученых «ǴYLYM JÁNE BILIM – 2024» = The XIX International Scientific Conference for students and young scholars «ǴYLYM JÁNE BILIM – 2024». – Астана: – 7478 б. - қазақша, орысша, ағылшынша.

ISBN 978-601-7697-07-5

Жинаққа студенттердің, магистранттардың, докторанттардың және жас ғалымдардың жаратылыстану-техникалық және гуманитарлық ғылымдардың өзекті мәселелері бойынша баяндамалары енгізілген.

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УДК 001

ББК 72

G99

ISBN 978-601-7697-07-5

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UDC 81'27

IDENTIFYING URBAN GENDER BIAS THROUGH STREET NAMES IN ASTANA: STREETS SPEAK HISTORY, CAN THEY SPEAK EQUALITY?

Zhailaubay Saniya Serykhankyzy
zhailaubay01@mail.ru

Master's student of Department of Foreign Philology in L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National
University, Astana, Kazakhstan
Scientific supervisor - A.Akzhigitova

Introduction

Language shapes a picture of the world, so do street names, as they surround residents in their habitats, giving opportunity to remember the places with their names and unconsciously conclude that this place is named after one person whose gender identity is woman/man and who was a great contributor to a specific field. One ordinary person might not think too deep about questions as why there are more amount of that gender's names than this, if there is a difference between tendencies in timeline of now in contrast to past. However, even if ordinary people do not usually consider these aspects, they know that half of place is named after men/women and as most of them are well-known figures, can conclude that woman and man's way of living was different. Now there is an interesting question that arise to be importantly answered for the aim of contributing to the science of gender linguistics and onomastics: why there are more men's or women's names in street names, if it is conditioned by actual reality of those times that only men/women could contribute to different fields of people those times in the past or it is due to the ignorance of women/men in the picture of the world of different fields and mainly by government or society. The aim of the article is to identify the statistical condition and roles of genders in society through street names of Astana from 1920 to 2024. As results reveal there is an enormous empowerment towards male names in streets, and low numbers of female names. First and foremost, the term "gender" was entered into scientific research in order

to differentiate between the biological and the social/cultural implications of feminine/masculine. If “sexus” divides people dichotomically, then “gender” equals social-cultural differences about sex.

Literature review

A.V. Kirilina in her work has mentioned the interrelation between a language and a consciousness of a person. The language here includes the language picture of the world of that nation, community of people, traditions, and so on: the main idea of this statement is that a person of a particular community look at the world and the surrounding through the prism of upbringing, state of a household, behavioral patterns, and other institutions such as, society, politics, media, school [1, 19]. It is believed that “a mind of person possesses a specific volume of texts that define their relationship towards the reality and behavior” [1, 31]. The words of I.V. Ilyin is well-mentioned in her work that says: “person as a subject is consumed into texts-consciousnesses, consisting of a great intertext of cultural traditions” [1, 31]. Hence, we could conclude that person as a member of specific community is closely related to everything it consumes as well as the way of thinking, perceiving, identifying, positioning, meaning, expecting, receiving: person taking part in society, creates his gender identity through perceiving the forms of gender positions of their surroundings, acting and receiving the behavior in the way the society expects them to do; through already accepted mindset and way of thinking the person means to say, perform, systematize and classify gender-related values. So persona is connected to everything society is acted, presented, just the way it exists, but what if there is an exclusion of one gender there and gender bias in not only mental, discursive, professional, domestic realm but also symbolic and physical in a surrounding area.

Methodological background

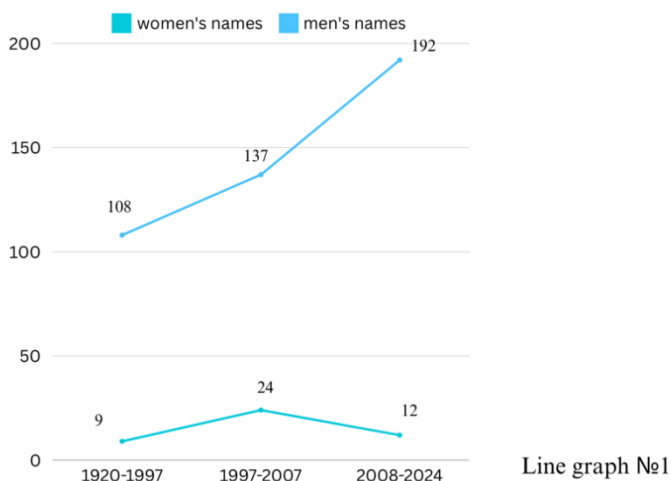
With the attempt to analyze the data of how many street names were taken after women and men’s names and were changed throughout the time beginning from 1920 till 2008, the reference book, which is called “Елорда көшелері-тарих шежіресі” released by Department of archives and documentation of Astana city, was taken as the main source of comparing past and present times of street names of Astana. It provides readers with description of history of how present capital city has been evolved; which key figures were involving in the development; what kind of production of goods/food was successful; how many times the city’s name was changed and what they meant as well as what story lied under them. Additionally, it gives real scanned documentations of accepted decisions and resolutions about the change of street names by governments: from the Akmola County executive committee, the city Council of Workers' Deputies, the Akmola City Council, the executive committee of the Tselinograd Council of People's Deputies and others, to the akimat and maslikhat of Astana. Apparently, the table shows 764 names of streets, boulevards, villages, squares, etc. It shows old and new street names, and as the third column there are types of decisions accepted by government, and illustrations of them afterwards. As Astana’s 176-year-history depicts the essence from a Russian military outpost to independent administrative and capital city has had different periods of changing names, particularly: 1830-1832 years-Aqmola (“White Grave”), 1832-1961 years: Akmolinsk, 1961-1992 years: Tselinograd (“City of the Virgin Lands”), 1992-1997 years: Aqmola, 1998-2019 years: Astana (“Capital”), 2019-2022 years: Nur-Sultan, 2022-...: Astana. The data from this reference book about naming and renaming street names of Astana starts its collected material from 1920 and till 2007 showing each street’s renaming periods, *for example, the current street named after “Zhumat Shanin” (beginning from 2007) was called “Molodezhnaya” in 1966 [2].*

As the diachronic analysis here is the attempt of trying to understand the change of each gender’s balance/inbalance/fluctuations/dominance in streetscape via street names throughout the time starting from 1920 till present day, not only the mentioned reference book was used but also the materials manually collected from the State Archive of Astana [3], government's official online sources called "Adilet: Information and legal system of normative legal acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan" and "the Maslikhat of Astana". By manually collecting the resolutions of the Akimat and the decisions of the Maslikhat from mentioned sources, all the renamed and newly-named streets from 2008-2024 were put in tables in order to calculate amount of streets named and renamed after women/men’s names.

As far as the synchronic analysis is concerned, it would be also rational to analyze the growth, steadiness, or downfall of gender equality in cityscape by collecting all street names of current times. The next analysis provides with the current state of gender roles in the urban spatial aspect. All the street names were gathered manually and systematized by each region of Astana. Namely, there are 5 regions called: Almaty (foundation date: 1998), Saryarka (1998), Esil (2008), Baikonyr (2018), Nura (2022). There were collected about 1100 street names from all regions. As Almaty, Saryarka regions are much older than Esil, Baikonyr, and Nura, they are closely connected to history and culture of the city, revealing trends of those times presenting essential contributors.

Results and discussion 1

The line graph №1 below shows the amount of street names of each gender that were named or renamed between 1920-1997, 1997-2007, 2008-2024 years.



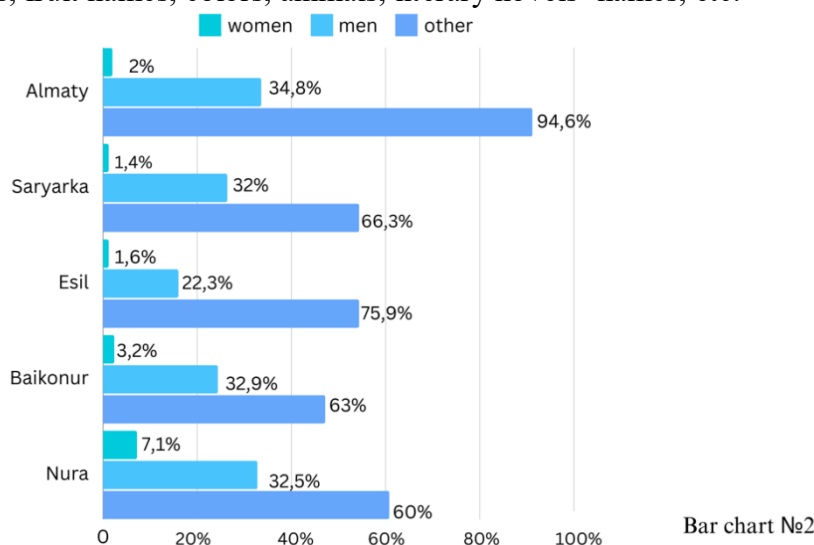
If we will focus on each year, then each year's street names displayed renaming process mostly from neutral names (without any gender connotations) to names of men in total of 75, from neutral to names of women in total of 3, from men's to men's names in total of 35, from men's to women's names in total of 2, from women's to men's names in total of 2. And naming process of unnamed or new streets, that commenced only in recent years from 2005, depicts the female names in total of 18 till including 2007, and similarly male names of 18. It is interesting to notice that in the renaming process according to the data shown in that table, there was no such phenomenon as renaming from women's to women's names, but it is somehow sensible to judge why it is in this way, because streets named after men are much higher in numbers than streets named after women in total despite any processes. The all times of process of naming shows underrepresentation of women in urban space. While naming streets after men has been uplifted progressively. The lowest proportion of streets named after women was 9 in past years between 1920-1997, then numbers moved upward moderately to 24 by 2007, but in current times it fell double in numbers which states that there is not much improvement in integration of women into streetscape now. Nevertheless, in 2007 there was much more naming and renaming changes of streets compared to the before and after years. That time all new and unnamed streets were named after by a large number of females, which includes mostly commemorated people and fabled characters. Interestingly, there is no religious related names in both genders. Conversely, all are related to culture, arts, politics, social, warfare fields. If we take results into consideration, then it can be proved that during all these years till nowadays there is still a symbolic marginalization of women in Astana street map. Between 1920-2000 streets were overcrowded with Russian names of both neutral and personal ones. With the independence of Kazakhstan, the tendency moved towards Kazakh names. As the power to name belongs to authorities, street names reflect the condition of gender equality. Thus, women historically been excluded from public life whether beginning or continuing from those times. Though according to UN Women, Kazakhstan ranked 62nd place in the Global Gender Gap Index 2023 among 146 countries, becoming a leader among central Asia. A lot of contribution of women-friendly policies

made in the last decades, and as our country is young being a developing one presents enormous improvements of integration of women into all common discriminated spheres. Nevertheless, there is a lot to change to become the better and symbolic empowerment of women should not be a secondary importance too.

Some notices from this process include the fact that there are some females first names that have no cultural and historical connotation, that interfered with classifying names according to their gender and background information about the owner of those names. As our analysis is based on not only statistics of systematically quantifying gender bias in streetscape, but also finding connection with social, cultural, and historical patterns of those phenomena, it is considered to also include the person's identity, background life experience, the reason of appreciation and commemoration, or the identity in specific stories. The words of philologist A.E.Bizhkenova fits here well "And a person just lives, continues to work enthusiastically and does his favorite work, without thinking about the fact that in doing so he saturates and thickens his name with additional meanings. The enriched name begins to live its own life in the language, forms a conceptual space.[4]" Hence, presence of male names being more natural in all spheres might be historically conditioned due to different events, however the roles of women were also powerful in culture and warfare. And why not to also reveal the power of both genders in a symbolic way.

Results and discussion 2

Basically, in the bar chart №2 there are overall percentage of three values: women names, men names, and others that include the names of Kazakh traditional games, concepts, geographical names, fruit names, colors, animals, literary novels' names, etc.



These neutral street names make up more than half of the city, following the other proportion of men's names and finally the least amount consists of women's names. As there was previously mentioned, there were just first names or surnames standing alone giving no clue of the owner's identity. Those were abstract names (*Ақжербез, Айғаным, Ақбаян, Мәди, Даулет, Аяулым*). That is why, a particular gender using code had to be done in order to sensibly classify into two values and analyze the trends. After collecting all street names by regions, the manual classification of gender connotated names was made: the famous commemorated people's full names including Kazakh, Russian, French, etc.; the names of characters from famous Kazakh novels; the names of Kazakh heroes, mothers, grandfathers, elder wise men (bi) of tribes. The key words in identifying those gendered names are «батыр», «жырау», «ана», «баба», «би», «ханым», «ханшайым» and suffixes of surnames «-ова/-ева», «-ов/-ев» or last names «-ұлы». For example, *Әнет баба, Домалақ ана, Қазыбек би, Тұмар ханым, Ханшайым Сүйінбике, Шабал Бейсекова, Шәмші Қалдаяқов*. Worth noticing that mostly there appear first and surnames of women, while the suffix «-қызы» added to Kazakh last names of women in street names do not occur compared to men's. Additionally, it might be a personal viewpoint, but maybe it is worth studying in future that while

collecting those names, the words like «ақын», «жырау» left a feeling as if names with these words are already meant to be men's, as if it is culturally or cognitively rooted phenomenon.

There is a drastic gap in percentages between females and males names: higher amount of female names indicates Baikonur (3,5%) and Nura (7,1%) regions compared to older regions, that claims there is still development to better inclusive urban toponymy nowadays. However, if we look at larger scale with men, the previous data becomes insignificant in contrast to approximately 30 percent of each region, illustrating male predominance in street name system. This might cost emotional well-being of women, affect building stereotyped mind for young generations, and growth of toponymic activist efforts with the desire of symbolic empowerment of women. "The fact that commemorative street names express the ruling socio-political order and that marginalized groups are underrepresented is hardly surprising, but the exclusion of women from the cityscape is particularly shocking because they are not a minority but half of the population [5]". Research on urban gender bias through street names has revealed significant imbalances in various cities. For example, Auto-Peralias and Gutiérrez-More both found that Spanish cities have a strong gender bias, with only 12% of streets named after women. This bias is particularly pronounced in town centers. Similarly, Niculescu-Mizil and Rusu found unequal gender distribution in street names in Bucharest and Sibiu, Romania, respectively, with men being more prominent in naming streets [6]. These studies highlight the potential of street names as a cultural measure of gender equality and the need for more inclusive naming practices.

By field of contributions made by all those women who now are honored in street names consist of heroes of wars, actresses, writers, singers, and caring mothers: *Ақын Сара, Әлия Молдағұлова, Домалақ Ана, Мариям Жагорқызы, Шолпан Иманбаева, Қарашаш Ана, Қарқабат Ана, күйші Дина, Мәншүк Мәметова, Ұлбике ақын, Жұбан ана, Баян Сұлу, Ұмай ана, Роза Бағланова, Фариза Оңғарсынова*, etc. In comparison to men, there is no woman figures in street names that reflects the positions in politics.

Conclusion

According to results, delving into past helped us to understand that there is slight improvement in acknowledging the presence of women in urban space, but street names still have predominance of men over women. It reveals women are quantitatively under-represented in the hierarchy of the urban network; cultural attitudes towards gender roles; and the need of reclaiming of streetscapes. It is obvious that even if we identify ourselves by looking back to past, the future starts from present: no matter how past historical events affected to the present conditions of genders and gender inequality in toponymical space may be commenced from those past years, the present already trying to improve the gaps, and there is a hope an onomastic commission is aware of public space being masculinized and capable of opening the eyes and minds of residents with more inclusive symbolic cityscape. It is hard to identify the state of genders in street names by one city to statistically prove the whole country's attitude, so it will be the start of future study with more cities and data.

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ЛЕКСИКА-СЕМАНТИКАЛЫҚ ӨРІС ЛИНГВОМӘДЕНИЕТТАНУ ҒЫЛЫМЫНЫҢ ЗЕРТТЕУ ПӘНІ РЕТІНДЕ

Жунусова Аружан Канатқызы

zhunusovaaruzhan444@gmail.com

Л.Н.Гумилев атындағы ЕҰУ Филология факультеті, Шетел филологиясы: ағылшын тілі
мамандығының 1 курс магистранты, Астана, Қазақстан
Ғылыми жетекшісі – Г.К.Кенжетаева

Тіл мен мәдениеттің өзара әрекеттесу мәселелері лингвистерді сонау ХІХ ғасырда қызықтыра бастады. Неміс ғалымы В. фон Гумбольд халықтың рухы мен белгілі бір халықтың сөйлейтін тілі бір-бірінен ажырамайды деген гипотезаны алға тартты [1]. Бұл гипотезаны жақтаушылар атақты орыс филологтары А.А. Потемня және А.А. Шахматов. ХХ ғасырда тіл ғалымдардың тек белгілер жүйесі ретінде, грамматикалық ережелер мен лексикалық заңдардың жиынтығы ретінде қарастырылуын тоқтатты – тіл әлеуметтік құбылыс ретінде қарастырыла бастады.

Когнитивті ғылым тұрғысынан «білімді бейнелеу жүйелері және адамға әр түрлі арналар арқылы келетін ақпаратты өңдеу туралы» ғылым ретінде В.А. Пищальникованың айтуы бойынша, «менталитеттің мазмұны когнитивтік салада жатыр және ең алдымен белгілі бір қауымдастықтың білімімен анықталады. Тіл әртүрлі деңгейдегі білімді сақтаудың, қалыптастырудың және берудің әмбебап құралы бола отырып, менталитетті зерттегенде талдау объектісі ретінде әрекет етеді, өйткені бізде психикалық формациялардың мазмұнын анықтаудың басқа жолы жоқ»[2]. Сонымен, тіл әртүрлі деңгейдегі білімді сақтаудың, қалыптастырудың және ұсынудың әмбебап құралы ретінде менталитет талдауында маңызды рөл атқарады. Бұл тілдің танымдық процестер мен психикалық формацияларды білдіру мен жеткізудің негізгі тәсілдерінің бірі екендігіне байланысты.

А.Вежбицкая «Кілт сөздер арқылы мәдениеттерді түсіну» атты кітабында қоғам өмірі мен ол қолданатын тіл арасындағы тығыз байланысты айқын көрсетеді. Әлбетте, әр түрлі тілдерде басқа тілдерде тікелей аналогы жоқ сөздердің болуы белгілі бір мәдениеттердің немесе тілдік қауымдастықтың ерекше ойлау тәсілдері мен құндылықтарын көрсетеді. Ғалым сол зерттеуінде тілдің сөздік қорына көңіл бөлу қажеттілігі туралы мәселені көтеріп, лингвистика мәдениетті түсіну үшін өте қажет жаңа идеяларды енгізе алатынын атап өтеді. Мәдениетті семантика призмасы арқылы талдау, автордың ойынша, мәдени талдауда ескеру қажет негізгі аспект [3]. А. Вежбицкаяның бұл пікірі өте орынды, өйткені мәдени түсініктер мен идеяларды қалыптастыруда сөздік қор және семантика маңызды рөл атқарады. Мәдениетті тілдің және оның семантикасының призмасы арқылы қарастыру ұжымдық ойлау ерекшеліктері мен қоғамның құндылықтарын тереңірек түсінуге мүмкіндік береді. Сонымен тілдегі лексика мен семантикаға қосымша көңіл бөлу мәдени талдаудың көзқарасын кеңейтіп, мәдени құбылыстарды неғұрлым толық және тереңірек зерттеуге ықпал етеді. Бұл сөздер мәдениетті түсінудің кілті ретінде маңызды рөл атқарады.

В.А.Маслованың пікірінше, тіл – менталитеттің жасырын саласына еруге мүмкіндік беретін бірден-бір құрал, өйткені ол белгілі бір мәдениетте әлемді қабылдау тәсілін анықтайды [4]. Н.Д. Арутюнова, тілдің антропоцентристік қасиеті әсіресе лексикалық және синтаксистік деңгейде байқалады деп атап кеткен. Ғалымның айтуынша: «Тіл негізінен антропоцентристік сипатқа ие. Адамдық тілдің барлық аспектісінде айқын көрінеді, бірақ бұл әсіресе лексика