Experimental study of expressive noun semantics cognitive processing by men and women

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In this study we tested the following hypothesis: 1. Cognitive processing of expressive words differs from cognitive processing of neutral units. It can be manifested in differences in the reaction time to these stimuli. 2. Men’s and women’s cognitive processing may be different while performing different kinds of tasks due to the fact that men and women use expressive words in speech in different ways. 3. The perception of expressive stimulus will be influenced by the referential correlation of expressive words.

To test it we conducted 3 experiments using the E-Prime software. All of the conducted experiments had a standard procedure, categorization was used as the task in all the experiments. 3 factors were manipulated: expressiveness (expressive/non-expressive), subject sex (male/female), referential correlation of the stimulus (animate/inanimate; male prime/female prime).

In the first experiment as expressive stimuli we use words with various diminutive suffixes, in the second and in the third experiments metaphorical names of the person were used.

The results of the conducted experiments showed:

· Expressiveness can be a parameter that affects the perception of linguistic units, however, in this case a type of expressiveness has influence.

· When performing cognitive tasks of different kinds, a significant factor is the stimulus referential correlation, regardless of the type of this correlation.

· Men and women differ in the perception of expressive units, but they’re influenced by different factors. At the same time men are more sensitive to changes of the factors and their interaction.

Keywords: expressiveness, gender, experimental study.