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Men's Socialization and the History of Man's life: The Reproduction of Male Culture in the Individual Narrative

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Men's Socialization and the History of Man's Life: The Reproduction of Male Culture in the Individual Narrative

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Abstract

The research in question is based on the gender schema theory by Sandra Bem. The purpose of the research is to study male narrative features in the context of the norms of male socialization. The aim of the research under consideration is a comparative analysis of male and female autobiographies features, which are not confined to male and female speech characteristics and reflect revision of gender socialization norms by the subject. With the help of biographical interview method autobiographies of women aged 31 to 72 (N= 34) and men aged from 23 to 69 (N= 36) living in provincial Russian towns were transcribed and contrasted. The autobiographies underwent categorial analysis procedure conducted by experts; the obtained categorial matrices were processed with the use of mathematical methods of statistics. Considerable attention was given to men's life stories during the process of analysis. Quantitative data analysis allowed to reconstruct the structure of men's and women's autobiographies, which reflected gender socialization norms. The obtained algorithm, being geared towards the search for gender markers in the autobiographies, identified gender-specific markers in men's texts whereas the female ones were retrieved owing to non-specific categories. This allowed to conclude that the modern Russian male socialization practices are more traditional. According to the results of the research, the categorial structure of autobiographical texts in men and in women is similar in key events and specific to each gender group at the same time. As far as gender normativity is concerned, male stories are more frequent to contain the gender norms abundance markers. Female stories are more individualized and fall into different scenarios (gender-standardized and non-standard).

Keywords: male socialization, lenses of gender, male narrative

Socialización de los Hombres y Historia de la Vida del Hombre. La Reproducción de la Cultura Masculina en las Narrativas Individuales

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Resumen

La investigación en cuestión se basa en la teoría del esquema de género de Sandra Bem. El propósito de la investigación es estudiar las características narrativas masculinas en el contexto de las normas de socialización masculina. El objetivo de la investigación en cuestión es un análisis comparativo de las características de las autobiografías masculinas y femeninas, que no se limitan a las características del habla masculina y femenina y reflejan la revisión de las normas de socialización de género por parte del sujeto. Con la ayuda del método de entrevista biográfica, se transcribieron y contrastaron las autobiografías de mujeres de 31 a 72 años (N = 34) y hombres de 23 a 69 años (N = 36) que vivían en ciudades provinciales rusas. Las autobiografías se sometieron a un procedimiento de análisis categorial realizado por expertos; Las matrices categoriales obtenidas se procesaron con el uso de métodos matemáticos de estadística. Se prestó considerable atención a las historias de vida de los hombres durante el proceso de análisis. El análisis de datos cuantitativos permitió reconstruir la estructura de las autobiografías de hombres y mujeres, que reflejaban las normas de socialización de género. El algoritmo obtenido, orientado hacia la búsqueda de marcadores de género en las autobiografías, identificó marcadores específicos de género en los textos de hombres, mientras que los femeninos se recuperaron debido a categorías no específicas. Esto permitió concluir que las prácticas de socialización masculinas rusas modernas son más tradicionales. De acuerdo con los resultados de la investigación, la estructura categorial de los textos autobiográficos en hombres y en mujeres es similar en eventos clave y específica para cada grupo de género al mismo tiempo. En lo que se refiere a la normatividad de género, las historias masculinas son más frecuentes al contener las normas de género en relación con los marcadores. Las historias femeninas son más individualizadas y se ubican en diferentes escenarios (estandarizados por género y no estándar).

Palabras clave: socialización masculina, lentes de género, narrativa masculina

Men's studies as part of gender studies, while focusing on gender identity development, give considerable attention to men's gender socialization. In the article in question gender socialization is understood to mean social inheritance, reproduction and transformation of the gender culture of society, which manifests itself in norm-centered gender identity development at the individual level and in reproduction and transformation of the gender system of society at the group level. (Radina & Nikitina, 2011). Since the gender culture of society is the matter of gender socialization (Chung, 2009; Tannen, 1990; Radina, 2012), that implies male culture in the case of male socialization. Interiorizing male culture norms and regulations typical of growing-up background, an individual socialized as a male shall look and act in line with the norms of male culture in his social environment, assess himself and the outside world by means of interiorized norms and values. (Bem, 1993).

Male Socialization and Male Culture

What is male culture in the understanding of social researchers? Sociologists, psychologists and social anthropologists name power ('symbolic violence') and male domination (over women and other men) as universal characteristics regarding traditional male culture (Bourdieu, 2001; Gilmore, 1990; Levant & Richmond, 2007; Rich, Utley, Janke, & Moldoveanu, 2010; Schrock & Schwalb, 2009).

Cruelty, violence against women, environmental pollution, unmindful use of natural resources and the threat of nuclear war are explained through personal aggressiveness and cruelty of a typical man in several studies, nevertheless, Connell cautions against the single interpretation of the 'destructiveness' of masculinity, considering not the masculinity being destructive, but the 'social machine', which derives the destructive from the masculinity, inuring to the benefit of destruction as a whole and of the man himself (Connell, 2001).

In social psychology standards of masculinity are described by means of norms of being successful (status norms), toughness norms (emotional, mental and physical) and antifemininity norms (Thompson & Pleck, 1993; Pleck, 1981). Norms of male culture are deemed by some researchers as contradicting certain essential social roles in men's lives (e.g. fatherhood) (Pleck, 1981).

Based on the conformity or non-conformity with gender norms a man assumes one type of masculinity or another. R. Connell suggested the notion 'hegemonic masculinity' to describe the most honoured and culturally predominant masculinity, which characterizes men on top of gender hierarchy (Connell, 2001). The men failing to meet the accepted standards of masculinity have a subordinated or marginal masculinity (homosexual men, unemployed, disabled etc.).

Kon while supporting the idea of 'plural masculinities' (the coexistence of hegemonic masculinity with other 'marginal masculinities') stated that canons of masculinity depend on the social status and level of education: better educated men evade primitive, raw masculinity, whereas the traditional masculine canon is openly declared in the working-class community (Kon, 2002). Several researchers in gender studies examining into Russian gender culture specifics emphasize that 'non-hegemonic masculinity' ('Ivan the Fool' archetype) is regarded as acceptable in the social environment in Russia and is paired with the strong female archetype throughout history (Pushkareva, 2003).

Among the characteristics of male culture specific to Russia, I. Kon enumerates deviant behavior, rule violations (including psychoactive substance use) as an integral part of male behaviour (as a 'challenge'). Apart from that, per I. Kon, male culture in the post-industrial society continues to deform due to various reasons (Kon, 2001).

1. The division of labour has become blurred, the dichotomization and polarization of male and female socio-productive functions, roles, occupations and scopes have weakened in the sphere of productive relations.
2. Public authority has ceased to be the prerogative of the men.

3. Matrimonial relations evolve in the families of young educated men: men have become more given to closer emotional bonds with their wives and children.

4. Education does not involve sex segregation. Other types of ‘male culture’ have ceased to be social targets, whereas bearers of non-hegemonic masculinity (supple educated subordinated etc. men) are treated with tolerance.

Thus, men in the post-industrial society are exempt from abidance by the norms of traditional male culture due to socioeconomic changes (at the expense of sexual equality, consumer society pressure etc.).

Methodology

The research in question is based on the gender schema theory by Sandra Bem (Bem,1993; Bem, 1983) in keeping with the ideas of cultural-historical psychology by L. Vygotsky: if ‘gender’ is interpreted as a cultural sign, then gender socialization implies interiorization of the development of gender norms by the subject and construction of a typical (norm-centered) gender identity.

According to the theory, the gender schema (a structural element of the gender culture) assimilated in the childhood constitutes the personal experience and world view of the gender subject (Bem, 1983). The aim of the research under consideration is a comparative analysis of male and female autobiographies features, which are not confined to male and female speech characteristics (Goroshko, 2003) and reflect revision of gender socialization norms by the subject. Considerable attention is focused on men’ s life stories during the analysis of autobiographies.

An autobiographical text should be interesting for gender studies for at least two reasons. On the one hand, a life story represents the living conditions in which the biography of a man or a woman was formed (thereby the conditions of gender socialization are revealed). On the other hand, the narrator selects certain facts and rejects (silences) other facts to create a story. This mechanism of selection of life facts can be supported by ‘gender lenses’:

facts that are consistent with the attitudes of society, with the rules of gender culture will be included in the history. Thus, a comparative analysis of autobiographies allows us to understand the differences in the conditions of socialization of men and women, and (more importantly) allows us to understand the differences between the concepts of male and female life that are realized in autobiographical narratives.

Participants. During the study based on the biographical interview method there have been transcribed 34 biographies of women aged 31 to 72 (the average age of women was 44 with a standard deviation of 12,8; level of education - vocational education in 18 interviewees, higher education in 13, secondary education in 3) and 36 men aged 23 to 69 (the average age of men was 42 with a standard deviation of 11,7; level of education - vocational education in 15 interviewees, higher education in 16, secondary education in 6), mainly living in towns.

Instruments. According to the instructions, a participant had to tell his life story from the birth to the moment of the interview, reporting the most significant people and events. Neither leading nor qualifying questions were desirable, an authentic life story without researcher's impact was demanded. The interviews were recorded and then transcribed. Thus, male autobiography texts comprised 29122 words (the average size of an autobiography was 787 words with a standard deviation of 293), female autobiography texts contained 35870 words (the average size of an autobiography was 1055 words with a standard deviation of 407).

Analysis. Then the autobiographical texts underwent processing based on 'open coding' principles from the grounded theory by A. Strauss and D. Corbin (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The grounded theory approach is a qualitative research method using a systematic range of procedures for an inductive elaboration of a grounded theory of a certain phenomenon, in this case - of an autobiographical model. The processing of the texts consisted in an expert group of 2 to 4 people reading an autobiographical text, conferring together in search of 'an objective understanding' and dividing it into meaningful units (defining sequences). Next each sequence was interpreted by the expert group, i.e. versions of understanding of each sequence were

formulated. From the range of ‘sequence meanings’ identified interactively during the discussion the dominant meaning was determined, which would give a ‘label’ to the sequence (the ‘label’ would reflect the conventional content of the sequence).

At the next stage, all the ‘labels’ of the sequences were classified, which allowed the expert group to determine 22 categories, indicating different life events (see [Table 1](#)). After that the text was recoded: the unique ‘labels’ were replaced with the generalized categories. For example: ‘*We lived in a house with grandma and the family of my father’s sister/* (label: ‘extended family composition in the childhood; category: ‘general descriptions of childhood’), *that’s why we grew up together with my cousin of the same age /* (label: ‘childhood with the cousin’; category: ‘general descriptions of childhood’)’ (S., a 50-year-old female, higher education).

Then each category was designated by a digital code, after that all the autobiographies were recoded again (instead of a generalized category each sequence would get a corresponding digital code), the obtained data were transferred into categorial matrices.

22 meaningful categories formed 9 life domains on the basis of semantical proximity (for example, all categories describing family relations were combined). ‘Location’ domain united the categories describing the location of the autobiographical author, his/her moves caused by changes of address, business trips, jobs by distribution etc.

‘Military service’ category was included in the ‘Location’ domain as well since military experience would reveal itself only as a moving experience (from home to another district, town, republic, country), which suited the content of ‘Location’ category.

Military life challenges, described in some interviews, were categorized separately depending on their content, e.g. as ‘Difficulties’ (if it concerned difficult conditions of military life).

I served in missile forms for three years. The unit was in the boreal forest. It was cold - minus 35°C outside, minus 5°C in the barracks. Had to use the spoon fast when eating, otherwise the food would turn

into ice in five minutes.' (S, a 68-year-old male, secondary education)

Due to the coding procedures categorial matrices with data for following computer-based processing were obtained (statistical methods were used, i.e. Mann-Whitney U-test, correlation analysis, classification tree methods), however, the text analysis was inductive and qualitative. The presented algorithm of text analysis was based on the triangulation principle, allowing to integrate the qualitative and quantitative strategies in the text processing (White & Marsh, 2006).

The research question was lying in the identification of the logic of "male life story" construction: the congruence of the gender norms in autobiographies and the gender norms of socialization allows to verify the gender schema theory statements by the example of the Russian sociocultural issues.

Results: Categorial Structure of the Autobiographies

The recording and transcribing of the interviews with the following coding of male and female autobiographies allowed to build categorial matrices which eventually underwent statistical methods processing. The structure of the autobiographies was reconstituted on the basis of the frequency of the categories indicated in the categorial matrices (see Table 1).

Table 1
Categorial structure of the autobiographies (%)

Men	Women	Life domains	Categories	Women	Men
7	6	Childhood	General description of childhood	6	7

Table 1 (Continued)

Categorical structure of the autobiographies (%)

			The family of the parents	12	13
18**	25**	Family	Children	9**	4**
			Grandchildren	1	0
			New relatives	3	1
18	17	Love and friendship	Love relations	7*	10*
			Friends	10	8
13**	9**	Education	School studies	4	6
			Post-secondary education	5	7
9	7	Work	Work	5	7
			Career	2	2
7	6	Ego-sphere	Self-characteristics	2	2
			Hobbies	4	5
6	7	Location	Military service	0	4
			Location	7**	2**
			Personal misconducts	0	2
			Misconducts and crimes of relatives	1	0
17	17	Problems	Difficulties	9	9
			Death	4	5
			Illness	3	1
5	6	Contemplations	Philosophizing	2	2
			Historicity	4	3

Mann-Whitney U Test: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

Source. Own data

According to table 1, obvious differences between male and female texts are located in two domains. For example, women talk more often about family while presenting their lives (the differences are statistically significant; $p \leq 0.01$).

My son was almost five at the time. I was talking on the phone when I realized that it had become too quiet in the room. I started looking for him and finally found him in the bathroom standing on his little chair in front of the mirror with his face covered in blood. Shocked, I dropped the phone and asked him cautiously what he was doing. The son answered: 'I'm shaving like dad'. Only then I noticed a razor in his hand. (A, a 42-year-old female, vocational post-secondary education)

Men talk more often about the events affiliated with education, including professional post-secondary education (at vocational schools, at evening courses, at universities; the differences are statistically significant; $p \leq 0.01$).

At vocational school I was close with the instructor in gunnery. Well, of course, I mean close friends. I wanted to graduate with dignity. I also started doing gunnery then, took part in competitions, of course with a desire to win. I came in third at the All-Union competition. I used to have good marks, but to be honest, I didn't like English and I still don't. I speak Russian and Turkmen only. (D, a 43-year-old male, higher education)

The 'location' domain describing changing places and addresses of the author of the autobiography is represented more often in the context of military service in male stories.

After graduating from vocational school, I was drafted. I served in the navy and have never looked back. I saw the world. The ship was called 'Komsomolets-Ukraine'. I became really good friends with other guys, would always send gifts home. I even bought an iguana

once but didn't manage to bring it home – it had escaped. I had so much fun. We even sailed abroad. (P, a 46-year-old male, vocational post-secondary education).

'Location' for women is a challenge or a search for job.

Then, a year and a half later my husband was taken for the forced labour, or how do you call it, to the colony. I followed him there like a devoted Decembrist wife. That was a horrific period in my life! I had a little child, going to the middle of nowhere, broke as a joke! You couldn't work there without a residency permit, but you also couldn't get a residency permit without a proper job. A vicious circle! The cares of the world took the shine out of me! I lived as if in a fog! Thank God, we got over that as well! (K, a 55-year-old female, vocational post-secondary education)

The structure of the interpersonal relations domain is different in men and women: women are represented by recollections of friendly ties (with colleagues and girlfriends), men talk about love experiences.

I met my wife-to-be the same year at the young pioneer campsite 'Dzerzhinets', yep. She left an indelible impression on me. I was like hit on the head. I remember that clearly. (D, a 34-year-old male, vocational post-secondary education).

At 48 Lena came into my life. She was a fellow passenger of mine on the train to freedom and love. It dawned on me that the main aim is getting to the state of love. (L, a 52-year-old male, higher education).

There are also differences in other positions: 'military servic' and 'personal misconducts' categories do not occur in female autobiographies, whereas men's texts do not contain 'misconducts and crimes of relatives', which is present in female interviews.

Met him in 1957, got married. (...) I remember, after the registry office we went on foot to the hut. At first, we lived quite nicely, but then hubby went out on the tiles (...). My husband left, was enlisted in Vladivostok (...) made an uproar there, came back here and they smashed him straightaway. (...). Once he did a spell, he went on playing pranks. (L, a 72-year-old female, secondary education).

Quantitative analysis of the categorial data allowed to reconstitute the structure of the events in men's and women's autobiographies, which reflects the norms of gender socialization dictating activity in the private sphere (family orientation) and competence in the sphere of emotional relations to women and prescribing activity in the public sphere (orientation towards education and career) including the possibility of social deviations and sexual activity, which transformed into romance plots, to men (Tannen, 1990). Nevertheless, the categorial structure of autobiographies involves more similarities than differences between the male and female story. The autobiographical text of a socialized person, whether of a man or woman, consists of clichés characteristic of autobiographical discourse regardless of gender ('was born', 'started school', 'found a job' etc.), hence this puts emphasis not only on the analysis of categories constituting the autobiographies but also on the rules of creating a male or female autobiographies.

Results: Features of Constructing a 'Male Autobiography'

The correlation analysis consisting in the description of the links between the categories in the texts allowed to establish some of the rules of creating a male or female autobiography, identified with the help of the matter under consideration.

In male autobiographies categories 'general description of childhood' and 'school studies' are often interlocked and are statistically significant (0.545; direct dependence), so are categories 'children' and 'love relations' (0.489;

direct dependence) and categories ‘self-characteristics’ and ‘philosophizing’ (0.608; direct dependence).

I was born in the village of Bortsovo in the Nizhny Novgorod region. Mum gave birth to me at a not-so-early age, she was 43. I was the seventh child. They brought me up together, brothers and sisters. I was not deprived of love, nor of attention. We had a lot of cattle at home: a cow, some sheep, goats, chickens and rabbits. Dad was a smith; mum was busy with the household. I didn’t go to kindergarten, was taught at home. The school was in another village, I was much like the others, had average marks, didn’t stand out. (I., a 51-year-old male, secondary education).

Therefore, school in the male story is an integral part of childhood (school is one of the obligatory institutions of gender socialization), children become mentioned in their stories in case they were born by a beloved woman, as a rule.

I thank God for my love, that we got to know each other and have been together since. She’s the kindest, the most beautiful, the most wonderful, the most gentle. What pastry she bakes - finger-licking good! (...). Then a girl was born to us. She’s twelve months only. She takes after her mother and is as beautiful and smart as her, but nimble as me. (E., a 30-year-old male, vocational post-secondary education).

Philosophizing in the autobiographical text is inevitably paired with self-reflection and self-description.

Before that I had been obsessed with cars since childhood – had read various articles and books, had watched programmes on TV about them, had glued up numerous models of paper and cardboard... But then this obsession petered out, probably because of the fact that I started to strive for the spiritual, so technics couldn’t attract me anymore. That’s how I discovered poetry. To be honest, at first I

didn't pay much attention to the place of poems in my life and I didn't realize how much they would mean to me. Time went by, my studies were coming to an end. Poems, undoubtedly, became the real sense of my life... (I., a 31-year-old male, higher education).

In the female autobiographies categories 'grandchildren' and 'new relatives' are often coupled, which is statistically significant (0.437; direct dependence), so are 'the family of the parents' and 'children' (-0.403; inverse dependence), categories 'the family of the parents' and 'location' (-0.406; inverse dependence), categories 'post-secondary education' and 'self-characteristics' (-0.471; inverse dependence), 'philosophizing' and 'work' (-0.572; inverse dependence). Thus, a female autobiography is prone to contain recollections of grandchildren adjoining reflections about relatives of the daughter-in-law or son-in-law, there is an awareness of the link with other families through children.

Life was on the mend. Every weekend we would go to my mum's house in the village, work up a sweat in the garden trying our best. My daughter was still at school, my son had already graduated from the cookery vocational school, found a job of a confectioner at a café. Such a fun and kind guy! In 1990 he tied the knot, my granddaughter Rita was born the same year and my grandson Nikita came into the world in 1992. We were good friends with the in-laws, spent festive seasons and birthdays together at the same table. (V., a 65-year-old female, vocational post-secondary education).

As far as the reverse dependence between the categories (and topics respectively) is concerned, this means that the mentioned topic displaces the other one, connected with the former, from the autobiographical text. So, if a woman is concentrated on her own parents in her recollections, she speaks less about children (as a rule, the woman is childless) and mentions moves less frequently (lives with her parents). Moreover, if a woman talks about post-secondary education, she doesn't describe herself out of the context of

activity, if the emphasis in the story is put on the description of professional activity, then the woman is not given to talk abstractedly about life.

So, the rules of creating an autobiography of a man regard the way of organizing the material in the story. The rules of creating an autobiography of a woman demand the choice of a certain scenario (either this or that) and the following of this scenario.

Results: Statistical Patterns of Identifying a Story of ‘Male’

In order to find the rules of construction of a male autobiography, classification tree method was used (with the use of Information gain metric). According to the built tree, the vast majority of male autobiographical texts could be identified by the inclusion of events connected with the military service (see [Figure 1](#) and [Table 2](#)).

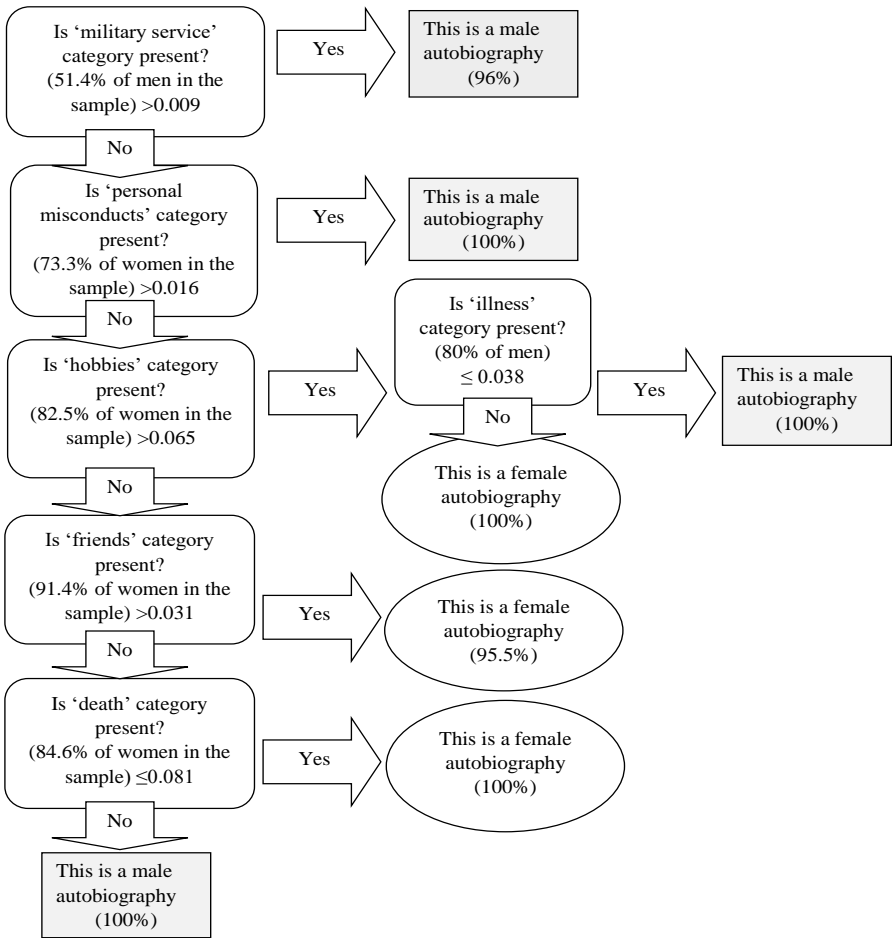


Figure 1. The algorithm for male and female autobiographies identification (with the use of Information gain metric)

Table 2

The results of an experimental search for male autobiographies in the collection of texts based on the classification tree method (with the use of Information gain metric)

CA, Classification Accuracy	F1-Measure	Precision	Recall
0.8286	0.8333	0.7895	0.8824
	0.8235	0.8750	0.7778

Source. Own data

After that came the military service. It gave me everything! I got to know different people, discern characters, learned to command (I was a commander), to make decisions, to be responsible for my own deeds. When I came back home, I found a job straightaway – as a driver. (Y., a 57-year-old male, higher education).

In 1991 I was drafted. Old-timers, ensigns and ordinary lads like me were before my eyes every day. It was hard to comply with the commands all day long. They were breaking us roughly. I came back home being a person with a different stance. The world didn't look so warm and fuzzy after the service. My rose-coloured glasses had been lost somewhere out there. (P., a 39-year-old male, vocational post-secondary education).

The second category, based on which the program identified the rest of male autobiographies, was constituted by the stories of people's own misconducts.

What was the main thing for us at that stage? To roughhouse (smiles). There was no malice intended in all that...to mock a bit, to laugh, adrenaline... That must be it... We were all street thugs and I can't say that someone of us had an influence on the others... It was all like a game. (M., a 32-year-old male, higher education).

If a male story does not contain events connected with military service or misconducts, the man is to tell about hobbies and diseases.

I had a well-paid job at a time, my income was enough not to think about nappies and what to buy them with. But that job was not my thing. Then I decided to find something for my liking, to come back home in a good mood. I joined a club and started doing aikido. (S., a 33-year-old male, higher education).

However, the large majority of male autobiographies can actually be identified by two categories - 'military service' and 'personal misconducts'. Following the logic 'military service - misconducts - hobbies' nearly depletes the rules of creating a male story.

How relevant are the unveiled features of the autobiographical texts to the norms of male socialization? The 'military service' category reflects the objective and mandatory nature of male socialization institutions functioning in the social environment (military service is mandatory for men in Russia). The 'misconducts' category is also culturally specific (Russian researcher of male culture I. Kon considered moderate deviation as an integral part of Russian male culture). Thus, the machine algorithm, geared towards the search for gender markers in a biography, identified gender-specific markers in male texts, whereas female texts were identified in the last turn according to non-specific categories ('hobbies' - 'friends' - 'death'). Consequently, modern male socialization practice in Russia is more traditional (specific in a masculine way) and hence more identifiable.

Results: Love Experience in Male Life Stories

The description of amorousness in male life stories is encountered more frequently than in female, which is statistically significant. Nevertheless, not only is the frequency of such descriptions important, but also the description of love experience itself and its content specifics.

In female stories the experience of ‘romantic communication’ becomes mentioned in a formal way and is often connected with pregnancy: “I graduated from vocational school, got pregnant from Sashka, he left without giving me a phone number before one knows where one is” (N, a 34-year-old female, vocational post-secondary education).

Love relationships are described by women in the context of collaborative activity ‘kissed’, ‘married’. Although individual, very own activity might be described with the expression ‘ended up by’, as a rule.

To recall something pleasant from my youth... Yeah, I was making out with guys, we were kissing, but the one doing military service was always on my mind. He came back several times for a leave, then we got married, went to Krasnoyarsk. But didn’t make it for a long time. He started cheating on me, looking at other girls, not coming home. (K., a 51-year-old female, vocational post-secondary education).

In male stories love experience is romanticized. Much importance is attached to the meeting of the beloved, the man tries to make himself agreeable not only to the girl but also to her parents.

I got married the same year, I had met my wife-to-be at the post office (...) she had given me the cash transfer. When I wanted to ask in marriage, I hunted the town for sword lilies: mother-in-law loves them. (S., a 40-year-old male, vocational post-secondary education).

I remember my friends’ wedding and the very moment when I was introduced to my future wife, she was a bridesmaid. I couldn’t keep my eyes off her. At some point I thought she was more beautiful than the bride. We danced all evening. (S., a 55-year-old male, higher education).

If the story of the first encounter is not vibrant, men tell how they courted the beloved, describe her extraordinary traits.

The acquaintance with my wife was commonplace. One of my sisters was studying at a vocational school to become a tailor, she had a friend. We were introduced to each other right when I came round to see sis. I was courting my wife-to-be for a long time while my sister was giving tips and tricks on what to do. I gave her flowers, boxes of chocolate, recited poems. And went out to the cinema too. She became my life-partner. (...) My wife is kind, educated and the most beautiful. She reads books a lot, solves crosswords in the evenings. She sews and cooks very well. She is retired now (...) (A., a 54-year-old male, secondary education).

The first encounter and the relationship with her become ‘male initiation’ *sui generis* for the modern man, the adult world linked with the responsibility for the girl and their future children opens to him. Men relatively often tell about the need of clarifying the relationship not only with the beloved but with their own parents.

I met my love, chased long after her, even had to sort it out with another admirer of hers, but she chose me. One day I learnt that she was pregnant from me, I was anxious, it was a bit scary. I told mum, she wasn’t very happy to hear that. But the pregnancy put everything on its place. The birth of my child is probably the most crucial stage in my life. When it was born, I was like shot in the chest, I realized that I would live only for it. (I., a 23-year-old male, vocational post-secondary education).

Flowers and the fact of personal uniqueness of the man (‘she chose me from many others’) in the description of amorousness pass from one story to another.

I got married right after the military service. We had been making out with my future wife even before the service. We had gone for walks, had camped. We get on well with each other, have two children. All of my friends were head over heels in love with her, but she chose me. Before I was drafted, I picked all the flowers from the gardens, lavished them upon her room. No sooner had I come back from the service than I asked in marriage. We've been together since. (S., a 68-year-old male, secondary education).

Discussion

All in all, the results of the conducted study allow to join the authors accentuating the high productiveness of the gender schema theory for the analysis of gender socialization influence on gender identity and self-narrative development (Starr & Zurbriggen, 2016).

The comparative analysis of male and female narratives has shown the solidarity in 'building material' for the male and female life stories, whereas the differences between the stories accentuated the archaism of Russian gender socialization and gender culture. It is stressed in psychological studies that the most differences between the personal particularities of men and women declare themselves in traditional societies (Schmitt, Realo, Voracek, & Allik, 2008), since traditional societies are based on the traditional gender culture. The traditional character of the post-Soviet societies is studied, as a rule, in the aspect of the attitude towards homosexuality (Verdins, 2015; Zоргdrager, 2013). In postindustrial societies (beyond the pos-Soviet heritage) 'gender narratives' are mostly individualized (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005).

The question of a higher romanticism of men's life narratives is explained in other psychological studies through men being more independent and active in traditional societies (even economically) in the process of courting their beloveds (Ackerman, Griskevicius, & Li, 2011), which is proven by the study under consideration. In male life stories the romantic admirations of beloveds are linked with the narration about courting and winning the heart of the beloved woman, as a rule.

The obtained results regarding the impact of male socialization on the standardization of a man (on the formation of a socially acceptable identity of a man) correlate with the data of other researchers (Edwards & Jones, 2009; Thompson & Bennett, 2015). Thus, the Russian specifics of male socialization lies in saving particular institutions of male socialization (formal - mandatory military service and informal - social deviations, rule violations). However, both military service and informal institutions of male socialization orienting the man towards risky behaviour and deviations are not unique, specific to the Russians exclusively, and are investigated in several other studies, e.g. on the basis of developing countries (Gibbs, Sikweyiya, & Jewkes, 2014).

As for the prospects of the study of the characteristics of male socialization and transformation of male identity based on Russian data, it seems important to study the culture of traditional Russian 'brutal masculinity' oriented to physical strength, riskiness and dominance, the effectiveness of social institutions, except for the army, which broadcast these norms, the specifics of the internalization of these norms by Russian men. These prospects are significant not only in the field of developmental psychology or social psychology, but they also concern political psychology, since the social influence of the Russian president abroad is largely due to the promotion of the ideal of traditional brutal masculinity (Eichler, 2012; Petersson, 2017; Sperling, 2015).

Conclusions

Therefore, the categorial structure of the autobiographical text is similar in men and women in key events and specific to each gender group at the same time. From the point of view of gender normativity, male stories contain markers for meeting gender norms more frequently. Female stories are more individualized, fall into different scenarios (gender-normative and non-standard). Perhaps the Russian edition of female culture is in line with that

characteristic of the post-industrial society whereas the male culture preserves traditional traits.

As a result, male socialization forms the lives of Russian men successively, gender norms are interiorized by men according to the gender schemas, the text of the life story is based on them. The typical traits of a male life story text consist in marker-events depicting the involvement of the man in social institutions providing male socialization, which allows to suppose that male socialization in the Russian sociocultural context is under more consistent social influence and control.

However, the findings of this study are limited by the characteristics of the sample and are relevant for men and women in Russian small towns and rural areas. Urban men, especially Muscovites (metropolitan residents) socialize in different cultural conditions, so their autobiographies may differ significantly from the autobiographies of provincial Russian men.

Notes

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