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Real and Imagined Women's Voices
in Russian and Japanese Societies: Media, Self-Perceptions, and
Everyday Language Practices

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in Asian Languages and Cultures

by

Natalia Konstantinovskaia

2017

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2017

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Real and Imagined Women's Voices
in Russian and Japanese Societies: Media, Self-Perceptions, and
Everyday Language Practices

by

Natalia Konstantinovskaia

Doctor of Philosophy in Asian Languages and Cultures

University of California, Los Angeles, 2017

Professor Shoichi Iwasaki, Chair

The complex relationship between gender and language has been studied from a diversity of perspectives, which have explored both the historical control of women's language by men and the evolving interactions between genders that shape contemporary language use. To date, however, there is little cross-cultural work exploring the crucial role of the media in shaping the social norms that regulate the use of gendered language. Furthermore, few studies analyzed women's discourses on their perceptions of normative and ideal femininities along with women's real linguistic practices. This dissertation aims to fill this gap by conducting a cross-linguistic and cross-cultural study of women's language in contemporary Japanese and Russian societies.

The dissertation is three-fold: it investigates current gender ideologies in televised advertising, their manifestations in women's narratives on their ideal selves, and women's

actual speech in spontaneous conversations in Japan and Russia. By juxtaposing women's scripted speech in televised commercials, women's beliefs in interviews and their actual language behavior, I examine how various social expectations suggested in media are evoked, asserted, and rejected in women's perceptions of femininity and in their everyday life. Thus, this dissertation compares and contrasts women's self-articulated femininities with the normative portrayals dominant in media, exploring the ways in which women challenge and subvert social expectations.

The results of this dissertation suggest that Japanese and Russian media frequently depicts women highlighting their femininity, which reflects a synthesis of current gender ideologies, traditional models and postfeminist ideas of 'power femininity.' Japanese and Russian women have rigid perceptions about the ideal femininity that in some ways echo the media representations. The corpus analysis of women's conversations and blogs, however, demonstrates the large gap between these perceptions and women's real practices. The dissertation findings add to our understanding of the constructed nature of femininity, its components, and its significance in both Japanese and Russian societies. The findings also highlight the culture-sensitive, nuanced creation of gender, and reveal the cultural inhomogeneity of its manifestations.

The dissertation of Natalia Konstantinovskaia is approved.

Hongyin Tao

Sung-Ock Sohn

Mariko Tamanoi

Shoichi Iwasaki, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2017

To my parents and husband

Table of contents

List of Tables	ix
List of Graphs	ix
List of Figures	ix
List of Abbreviations	xi
Acknowledgements	xii
Curriculum Vitae	xiv
Chapter 1 Introduction	1
1.1 Dissertation structure, design and methodology	3
1.2 Research on gender, stance and indexicality.....	8
1.3 Research on femininity, <i>kawaii</i> and ‘woman’s place’ in Japan	13
1.4 Research on Japanese “Woman’s Language”	18
1.5 Research on femininity and woman’s place in Russia.....	21
1.6 Research on Russian “Woman’s Language”	25
1.7 Advertising in Russia and Japan	27
Chapter 2. Women’s voices in Japanese and Russian televised commercials.....	32
2.1 Corpus analysis of Japanese and Russian commercials	33
2.2 Interrogative structures in Russian commercials	36
2.3 Use of imperatives in Russian commercials	41
2.4 Other- and self-centeredness in Russian commercials	46
2.5 Interrogative structures in Japanese commercials	52
2.6 Use of hortative structures in Japanese commercials	60
2.7 Mimetic expressions, personifications, and metaphors in Japanese commercials	61
2.8 Men as creators of woman’s beauty in Japanese commercials.....	63

2.9 Summary	69
Chapter 3. Russian and Japanese women's perceptions of ideal selves	71
3.1 Russian women's discourse analysis	71
3.1.1 Participants	71
3.1.2 Male gaze and duality of personae	73
3.1.3 Egalitarianism and female autonomy	87
3.1.4 Ideal Russian woman's speech.....	88
3.1.5 Summary	95
3.2 Japanese women's discourses	96
3.2.1 Participants	96
3.2.2 The meaning and value of <i>kawaii</i>	97
3.2.3 The importance of kindness	111
3.2.4 A balanced autonomy and the male gaze	119
3.2.5 Ideal Japanese woman's speech	125
3.2.6 Summary	130
Chapter 4. Russian and Japanese women's real language practices	132
4.1 Women's appropriation of 'male language' in Japanese	132
4.1.1 Theoretical preliminaries on the 'male' particles <i>zo/ze</i>	132
4.1.2 Use of <i>zo</i> and <i>ze</i> in spoken data	136
4.1.3 Analysis of blog corpora	139
4.1.4 Interim summary	147
4.2. Women's appropriation of 'male language' in Russian	147
4.2.1 Theoretical preliminaries on Russian swearwords.....	147
4.2.2 Data	148
4.2.3 Analysis of spoken corpora	150

4.2.4 Summary	158
Chapter 5. Conclusion.....	160
5.1 Televised advertisements in Russian and Japanese societies.....	161
5.2 Japanese and Russian women's discourses on ideal femininity	165
5.3 Japanese and Russian women's linguistic practices	171
5.4 Gender as a social construct	175
5.5 Contributions	177
5.6 Limitations and directions for future research	179
Appendix	181
Bibliography.....	183

List of Tables

Table 1. Gender-based distribution of language choices in the Japanese commercials	35
Table 2. Russian female respondents' biographical data.....	71
Table 3. Japanese female respondents' demographic data	96
Table 4. Distribution of Russian vulgar emphatic terms between genders.....	150

List of Graphs

Graph 1. Female and male voices in Japanese commercials	33
Graph 2. Female and male voices in Russian commercials.....	35
Graph 3. Gender distribution in usage of <i>zo</i> and <i>ze</i> between blogs	141

List of Figures

Figure 1. "Cute" in the Google images	15
Figure 2. " <i>Kawaii</i> " (可愛い) in the Google browser.....	16
Figure 3. Women thinking about leaving the house without make up in a commercial for Dove soap	37
Figure 4. A woman's transformation of stance toward her female friend in a Dove commercial	38
Figure 5. Woman's change of state in the <i>Čistaja linija</i> shampoo commercial	40
Figure 6. Urging female consumers to purchase Dove soap	43
Figure 7. Woman's success and male gaze in a commercial for Nivea cream.....	48
Figure 8. Family happiness portrayed in "Čistaja linija" hair shampoo commercials.....	49
Figure 9. The woman's surprise in a Dove body wash commercial	54
Figure 10. Portrayal of powerfulness paired with <i>kawaii</i> in the Clear shampoo commercial.....	56

Figure 11. A mermaid in the “Je l’aime” shampoo commercial.....	58
Figure 12. The eyelashes master applies make-up in a Fasio commercial for powder	64
Figure 13. Female-male interaction in the Tsubaki shampoo salon	65
Figure 14. Inspection of women’s hair in commercial for “Je l’aime” shampoo	66
Figure 15. Portrayal of “a helpless woman.” Left to right: Kristina, Sasha	77
Figure 16. Portrayal of “a superior man.” Left to right: Kristina, Sasha	78
Figure 17. Female maneuvering. Left to right: Aljona, Dasha	81
Figure 18. Feminine way of story-telling: Left to right: Rita, Anjelika	84
Figure 19. Male reaction to Rita’s milking a cow. Left to right: Rita, Anjelika.....	85
Figure 20. “Impulsive nature of women” Left to right: Lena, Masha	89
Figure 21. “Natural carrier of femininity.” Left to right: Polina, Natasha.....	92
Figure 22. Men’s and women’s places. Left to right: Polina, Natasha.....	92
Figure 23. A beautiful young woman in an act of swearing. Left to right: Anna, Valya	94
Figure 24. True <i>kawaii</i> comes from heart. Left to right: Ayaka and Sari.....	100
Figure 25. Expression of <i>kawaii</i> . Left to right: Eri, Shoko.....	108
Figure 26. A new employee’s obsequious cuteness. Left to right: Saya, Mana	109
Figure 27. “Honoring a man.” Left to right: Mina, Mari.....	115
Figure 28. Feeling discomfort at the sight of a man carrying a baby. Left to right: Yume, Sako	117
Figure 29. Adjusting female autonomy. Left to right: Eri, Shoko.....	121
Figure 30. Proper balance of dependence and autonomy. Left to right: Kari, Hanami	123
Figure 31. Indexing gender in Japanese (Ochs, 1992: 342).....	133

List of Abbreviations

ACC	accusative	POT	potential suffix
ASP	aspect	PP	pragmatic particle
AUX	auxiliary	PREP	prepositional
COP	copula	PSS	passive suffix
COMP	comparative form	Q	question marker
COND	conditional form	QT	quotative marker
DAT	dative	S	subject
DES	desiderative form	SE	sentence extender
DIM	diminutive	SFX	suffix
EMPH	emphasis marker	SOF	softener
GEN	genitive	TE	<i>-te</i> (conjunctive) form
HES	hesitation	TOP	topic
HON	honorific	VOC	vocative form
IMP	imperative		
INJ	interjection		
INS	instrumental		
LK	linker		
MOD	modal expression		
NEG	negative		
NML	nominalizer		
NOM	nominative		
PFX	prefix		
POL	polite suffix		

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Curriculum Vitae

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Creation of new femininities in contemporary Japanese and Russian commercials.	May 2016
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Expression of masculinity through taking a stance: Analysis of <i>zo</i> and <i>ze</i> in songs, blogs and conversations. <i>2nd EALL Japanese Linguistics Workshop</i> , University of Hawai'i, Manoa.	Feb. 2015
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Chapter 1. Introduction

Since the publication of Robin Lakoff's groundbreaking book "Language and woman's place" in 1975, a vast literature using a variety of theoretical frameworks has emerged, which aimed at understanding the relationship between gender and language. This scholarship has been later subdivided into four main frameworks: 'deficit', 'difference', 'dominance', and 'social constructionist,' each of which offered its own understanding of gender and language interaction. This dissertation draws insights from various gender and indexicality frameworks, arguing that one theoretical model is insufficient to characterize the complex relationship between gender and language in different cultures. Furthermore, despite the large volume of scholarship in the area, its attention to cross-linguistic and cross-cultural diversity has been limited. In this dissertation, I help bridge this gap, drawing from the extensive background of linguistic and sociolinguistic feminist research in order to analyze the notions of 'femininity' and 'woman's language' in contemporary Russian and Japanese societies.

This cross-linguistic study is relevant to ongoing theoretical developments in sociolinguistics because it analyzes two culturally different societies that are both undergoing major transformations in their perception of gender and their expectations of men and women's speech. In the 1990s, Japan adopted a series of laws and regulations, which aimed at improving women's work conditions, leading to a pronounced shift in the treatment of women in Japanese society. However, as of 2016, Japan still occupies 111th place out of 144 countries in the "Global Gender Gap Report" of the Economic World Forum (11). In Russia, the concept of gender has also experienced radical changes in recent decades. The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 ended the era of communism in Russia, leading to a traditionalist realignment in perceptions of women and femininity in the country. The recent bill decriminalizing domestic violence (2017) in Russia is one extreme example of this resurgence of conservative,

patriarchal values. This dissertation traces the impact of these societal changes on the perception of gender in Japan and Russia, exploring the media-circulated images of femininity, the agency of Japanese and Russian women in their 20ies, and their real language use.

The present research draws on the four frameworks of women's language ('deficit', 'difference', 'dominance', and 'social constructionist') that are informed largely by feminist theory (Cameron, 1995) and have been developed to shed light on the possible correlations between gender and language. Despite important dissimilarities in approach and reasoning, central to all these theories is the idea that men and women communicate in radically different ways. Within the 'deficiency theory' (a position frequently attributed to Lakoff's early work) language norms are viewed as limiting women's power and constraining equal rights between genders. Unlike 'deficiency' theory linguists, who argue for the creation of gender-neutral language, linguists pursuing the 'difference' approach, contend that men's and women's languages merely represent different ways of talking, rather than reflect social inequality (Tannen, 1990). Linguists working within the 'dominance' model argue that patriarchal society is the cause of both social inequality and the systematic oppression of women, with language serving as a ubiquitous and effective tool of violence and oppression against them (Estrich, 1987; Herring, 1999). Finally, 'discourse' (or social constructionist) theory – influenced by postmodern feminism (e.g. Butler, 2006) – stresses that all gendered language is developed in interpersonal interactions as a response to social expectations, and therefore is an act that is consciously (or unconsciously) performed (Coates, 2004). Feminist sociolinguists in this tradition have explored the differences between women's and men's discourse, and explicated how a language can be used to construct a gendered social identity. For example, the theory of indexicality (Ochs, 1992) argues that various stances, acts and activities are directly indexed, while gender is indexed only indirectly (1992: 342). Over the course of repetitious use, specific

stances taken on by female or male speakers begin to be indicative of a gender category (Ochs, 1992).

In this work, using feminist linguistic theories supplemented by indexicality and stance frameworks, I will first analyze how women's voices are exploited in televised commercials to create artificial types of femininities. I will then examine women's *real* discourses as they engage in discussions of femininity and woman's language, exploring how the gender stereotypes depicted in the advertising are manifested, evoked, asserted, and rejected in women's actual speech. Finally, using large corpora of spontaneous conversations and blogs, I will highlight the presence of traditionally "male language" in women's communication, and investigate the logic underlying this phenomenon. At a broader level, this dissertation questions the degree to which contemporary theories of gender and indexicality are applicable in cross-cultural contexts, as well as the extent to which these frameworks can inform our understanding of gender in Russian and Japanese societies. By examining the intersection of historico-cultural change and language use, the results of this dissertation contribute to discussions of feminist linguistic theories in particular, and debates about gender and media more generally.

1.1. Dissertation structure, design and methodology

The dissertation consists of three main chapters, exploring three types of data. It first examines televised advertising as the source of circulating gender stereotypes (Goffman, 1979) to investigate the idealized femininity features in Japan and Russia. Second, it analyzes conversations among Japanese and Russian women to elucidate their perceptions of ideal womanhood, examining the modes of behavior and speech revealed in their personal interviews. Finally, using Japanese blog database and Russian spoken corpus, the dissertation explores the use of conventionally male language by Japanese and Russian women, and analyzes the contexts in which this occurs. The three-layered structure of the dissertation engages with

feminist linguistic theories in a variety of ways, analyzing the differences between Japanese and Russian women's scripted discourses in advertising, their perceptions of ideal selves, and their real voices.

The first principal chapter (Chapter 2) uses multi-modal analysis, feminist poststructuralist discourse analysis, and critical discourse analysis to examine the use of women's language and visual images in 50 Japanese and 50 Russian televised 'beauty ads'. Furthermore, this chapter incorporates corpus linguistic methods to define the dominant gender by calculating the word distributions in the Japanese and Russian advertising databases. This chapter demonstrates how various scripted linguistic and non-linguistic apparatuses create artificial types of femininity, and shows how the comparatively meager influence of feminist discourse is strategically utilized and subverted. Although the focus of this chapter is placed on women's language in the advertisements, their body language is also considered, as it frequently complements idealized representations of femininity. The 'beauty ads' selected for the analysis were recent productions aired on Japanese and Russian television between 2012 and 2017. The advertised products in these advertisements range from hygiene items, such as soaps, shampoos, conditioners, and body wash to beautifying decorative cosmetics such as lipstick, mascara, and eyeliner.

Instead of investigating representations of women in advertising worldwide, this dissertation aims to analyze idealized femininities exclusively in contemporary Japan and Russia. The reason for this lies in the culture-specific goals of the research: the features that are valued in women are "neither universal, nor fixed," but vary across cultures and time (Schippers, 2007:14). The advertisements considered in this dissertation therefore include the major brands of international or local products present in the two countries, but only those international brands that utilized advertising specifically created for the local market were analyzed (translated versions of the same advertisements shown unaltered were avoided). The

international brands that were chosen for the study are Dove and Nivea. Despite advertising the same or similar products, Dove and Nivea advertisements in Russia differ greatly from their advertising in Japan, portraying two different type of femininities (see chapter 2). These international brands were included because cross-cultural comparison of their depictions of femininity are especially illuminating. In addition to international brands like Dove and Nivea that created culture-specific content, the study incorporates the domestic Japanese brands “Fasio,” “Tsubaki,” “Biore,” “Kate,” “Clear,” “Sekkisei,” “Je l’aime,” and “Flowfushi” and Russian brands “Čistaja Linija,” “Mirra,” “Krasnaja Linija,” “Barhatnyje Ručki,” “Čjornyj Žemčug,” “Sto Retseptov Krasoty,” and “Green Mama.” Length of the selected commercials ranged from 15 to 25 seconds. All words uttered in the advertisements were transcribed, unless they appeared as song lyrics in the background.

In the second principal chapter (Chapter 3), the study investigates women’s discourses that were audio- and video-recorded in Khabarovsk, Russia, and Osaka, Japan during a series of fieldwork activities in the spring and summer of 2016. Each interview consisted of two Russian or two Japanese women, and lasted approximately 1 hour. To promote honest and natural discourse, the pair of speakers in each interview were established friends or acquaintances. In total, 10 interactions of Russian female speakers (20 participants) and 12 interactions of Japanese female speakers (24 participants) were recorded. Russian women were recruited from the Far Eastern State University of Humanities. In Osaka, Japan, recruitment was conducted on Osaka University campus. All interviews were conducted in private spaces. Although the age span of the Russian and Japanese participants was the same (between 20 and 30 years old), there are certain differences in the Japanese and Russian women’s demographics. The Russian cohort was slightly older averaging around 24.6 years of age, whereas Japanese cohort’s average age was 22.2. Perhaps as a consequence, the Russian women exhibited diversity in occupation/employment, whereas Japanese women generally were undergraduate

or graduate students pursuing academic degrees. More detailed description of the participants' demographic parameters will be given in Chapter 3. These differences, however, are not regarded as impugning the validity of the research, as the goal is not to provide a one-to-one comparison, which is a challenging task that can lead to flawed generalizations (Antal, 1996; Vinken, 2004). Instead, the research gives agency to both Japanese and Russian women and allows them to engage meaningfully with the categories of gender and language that are particular to these cultures.

The interviews were divided into the three main segments: 1) natural speech segment, 2) television commercial discussion, and 3) a question-answer session directed by the researcher (the questions can be found in the Appendix). During the first segment, participants were asked to communicate on a self-selected topic for approximately five to ten minutes. During the second segment, the researcher showed three 15-second commercials to the participants and asked them to discuss the advertising, especially focusing on representations of men and women. The Russian video clips included an advertisement for a Dove cream in which a man makes flattering remark about his girlfriend's skin, a commercial for sausages in which women receive help from men in exchange for cooking, and an advertisement for a cellular network in which a woman personifies a "worse" network, while a man represents "the better" advertised one. Japanese women viewed an advertisement of "Fasio" skin foundation in which a male figure teaches a woman about beauty, an advertisement for "Biore" powdered sheets in which a group of girlfriends enjoy their perfect "feminine skin," and a "Fasio" mascara advertisement in which a man beautifies a woman by applying "cat make-up." These commercials were selected to engage women's awareness about gender and femininity for the subsequent discussion. After viewing the commercials, dyads conversed for approximately 5-10 minutes about their overall impression of the commercials, the depictions of women, and women's use language. The researcher did not participate in the discussions.

In the final segment, the researcher interviewed the Japanese and Russian dyads concerning their visions of ideal womanhood, including the ideal woman's personality and speech, and inquired about the proximity of the women to their ideals. The researcher also asked follow-up questions on women's actual use of language and modes of behavior in different contexts. This part of the data lasted for approximately 20 minutes. The primary methods of analysis for this data are critical discourse analysis and conversation analysis. All interactions were transcribed using conversation analysis conventions (Schegloff, 1997). Gestures were further transcribed and annotated following McNeill's standards (1992) and Goffman's gender display categories (1979).

In Chapter 4, the dissertation investigates women's appropriation of male language in real linguistic practices, using corpus analysis as the main tool to analyze women's conversations and blogs. In particular, the study uses the subcorpus of spontaneous conversations in the National Corpus of Spoken Russian in order to examine women's use of obscene emphatic markers, which are traditionally linked to the male language domain (e.g. Zemskaja, Kitajgorodskaja, & Rjazanova, 1993). For the Japanese data, the blog corpus 'Goo Burogu' was selected in order to analyze women's use of the conventionally male sentence-final particles *zo* and *ze* (e.g. Miura & McGloin, 2008).

The difference in the Japanese and Russian corpora does not obstruct the research goals because the research is aimed at observing the female appropriation of male language given the most representative data available. In Russian, paradigmatically masculine speech is characterized predominantly by the use of profanities. However, the use of profanities in both formal and informal Russian writing is rare, as it is deemed socially inappropriate and impolite. For this reason, women's appropriation of male language can only practically be studied in corpora of spoken language. In contrast, in Japanese gender is encoded in particles that are used in both spoken and in certain types of written language. Because these particles are

strongly tied to a specific kind of coarse masculinity, they are very rare in speech (Sturtz Sreetharan, 2004; Shibuya, 2004). Blogs, however, are abundant in the male sentence-final particles and therefore can inform our understanding of the phenomenon providing a variety of contextual examples. In case of Russian, the large spoken corpus provides the best data for the analysis of the strong emphatic markers that occur mainly in informal conversations.

In the remainder of this chapter, I will review the major scholarships that have informed the current research on gender and language, in particular feminist linguistics, stance, indexicality, and Japanese and Russian sociolinguistic and media studies.

1.2. Research on gender, stance and indexicality

Study of gender and language has been an important subfield of linguistics in the West since the publication of Lakoff's seminal book "Language and woman's place" (1975). Before that, differences between women's and men's language were mentioned in the work of linguists such as Otto Jespersen (1922), who attributed them to the dissimilarities of men's and women's roles in society. It was Lakoff's book, however, that prompted sustained and serious study of the relationship between language and gender in linguistics. Since then, a large number of linguistic anthropologists and sociolinguists have produced an immense volume of research. In this section, I will review the most influential studies in the field of gender, stance and indexicality.

The tradition of gender linguistics is often categorized in three ways: 'deficiency' model, 'dominance' model, and 'difference' model. Lakoff is given credit for the first model. Her goal was not only to demonstrate that female and male speakers communicate differently, but also to emphasize that women are 'trapped' in their attempt to speak femininely, in that gender-appropriate speech constrains women to social roles and modes of self-presentation regarded as inferior. She stresses that if a woman does not talk like a 'lady,' she is accused of being

unfeminine, but if she *does* speak appropriately for her gender, she is ridiculed as unable to participate in serious discussions (Lakoff, 1975: 41). In this way, Lakoff tried to demonstrate that women's social inferiority is encoded in the linguistic norms that regulate the use of gendered speech. Her research is often characterized as a 'deficiency' approach, because she regards women's language as a deviation from the norm established by male language. Some sociolinguists working on gender and language, however, do not agree with attributing Lakoff to a 'deficiency' model exclusively, because it does not encompass all Lakoff's theories and discussions (Lakoff & Bucholtz, 2004: 124). Some of the issues raised by the feminist linguists working within the deficiency framework concern the use of sexist terminology within a language and advocate its eradication to promote gender equality. For instance, the generic use of the pronoun "he" and the noun "man" were argued to be oppressive to women (Pauwels, 1998). Furthermore, linguists claimed that job titles such as "fireman" may be construed as excluding women from a given professional area, making them constantly attempt to adjust to existing gender expectations (Bucholtz, 2014:26). This approach is reminiscent of the praxis of second-wave liberal feminists (e.g. Friedan, 1997), who pursued equal rights between men and women within the existing social structures (Bucholtz, 2014: 25). Baxter (2010), in her research on women's leadership language, emphasized that women in power must constantly monitor their speech to fit into the limited number of identities available to them in male-dominated workplaces (31).

A second group of linguists pursued a 'dominance' approach to gendered language (e.g. Spender, 1980), informed by the critical orientation of radical feminism (e.g. Brownmiller, 1975), which argues that men's systematic oppression of women occurs through language as well. For instance, men's conversational strategies (e.g., interruptions, silencing, extended turns, refusing to uptake the topics selected by women) contribute to men's domination of women in conversations (Ochs & Taylor, 1995). Feminist linguists studying verbal harassment

at workplaces (Ragan, 1996) and street catcalling (Kissling, 1991) have provided evidence for the suppression and elimination of the female voice by men.

A third framework, the ‘difference approach’ to gender and language, was informed by cultural feminism’s emphasis on the different interactional styles of men and women, which may sometimes lead to miscommunication. Men’s socialization into a competitive, or “report” style of communication makes them utilize more imperatives, while women’s socialization into a co-operative, or “rapport” communicative style makes them use more constructions for joint actions (Tannen, 1994; Goodwin, 1998). Unlike the ‘deficiency’ framework, the ‘difference’ model views women’s mode of communication as equivalent in value to men’s mode, and sees the difference in socialization as the underlying reason for the variations between men’s and women’s language.

According to Ochs (1992), however, there is no direct correlation between a certain gender and a linguistic form (337). Rather, the relationship between gender and language can only be understood by considering the interaction between social acts and adopted stances. This assumption thus challenges the ‘deficiency’ framework, according to which certain lexical patterns (such as ‘adorable’, ‘lovely,’ or ‘divine’) are restrictedly features of women’s speech, and if used by a man may damage his reputation (Lakoff, 1975:45). Instead of arguing that women’s language is inherently the language of the oppressed (Lakoff, 1975, 2004; Nakamura, 2014), Ochs (1992) suggests that society tends to associate certain linguistic elements with female or male speech merely because female and male speakers utilize those linguistic elements with differential frequency. This phenomenon in turn is a consequence of societal norms and expectations associated with preferred masculinity and femininity (1992: 342). For instance, the difference in preferred gender-appropriate behavior often leads to the formation of gendered insults. Insults highlighting a man’s lack of power (e.g. “henpecked,” “pussy whipped”), and insults highlighting a women’s possession of power (e.g. “shrew,” “bitch”)

reflect the social prejudice against powerful women and men's systematic attempt to suppress them (Lakoff, 2003:162).

This dynamic can further be seen in the usage of tag questions as a hedging device in English – a phenomenon frequently associated with female speech even though male speakers also use them. This link, according to Ochs (1992), lies in the socially accepted images of femininity and masculinity; self-confidence and assertiveness are preferred qualities for a man, while a woman needs to appear less straightforward and forceful to be perceived favorably. Thus, because tag questions may convey hesitation and solicit confirmation, both activities favored by women in American society, usage of tag questions eventually became linked to the female gender (Ochs, 1992: 340). In summary, the effects of gender norms on language are to be understood, according to Ochs, not as direct or inherent (in most cases), but as mediated by expectations that women and men will adopt different stances and social roles.

Ochs's argument can be conveniently applied when examining English and other European languages because they do not have exclusive gender indexing, except for referential expressions such as pronouns (e.g. he, she) and titles (e.g. Mr., Mrs) (Bodine, 1995) that usually mark the gender of the interlocutor and the third person. European languages tend to have certain phrases and speech elements that sound feminine and are not likely to be uttered by a man. The theory of indexicality attempts to explain this phenomenon by suggesting that these linguistic elements are linked to women's language, because they index stances that are frequently preferred by female speakers due to societal norms and expectations.

Kiesling (2009) proposes a further distinction between "interior" and "exterior" indexicalities, defining interior indexicality as the indexical meaning created within a given speech event, while the exterior indexicality refers to the "indexical meaning that is transportable from one speech event to another, and connects to the social contexts", i.e., meanings that do not change from one speech event to another (177). For instance, the word

“dude” on the exterior level indexes a certain level of non-intimate cool solidarity and even masculinity, while on the interior level it indexes various sentiments depending on the context, from diffusing an argument to expressing amazement and positive evaluation (Kiesling, 2009:178). However, the ability to differentiate between the two terms in practice proves to be a rather difficult task, making Kiesling (2009) admit that frequently “exterior and interior indexicalities become almost indistinguishable from one another” (178). Similarly, Bucholtz (2009) analyzes various stances conveyed by the Spanish lexical item *güey* ‘dude’ among Mexican high school students, demonstrating that it can be used as an address term, an insulting reference, and a discourse marker, and can also index masculinity indirectly (158). She argues that the media’s highly ideologized space tends to simplify and erase diverse indexicalities, linking the word *güey* with “middle-class form of masculinity,” thus, excluding other categories of its users (Bucholtz, 2009).

Discussion of indexicalities and styles contribute to the most recent constructionist (or discourse) gender and language theory, in which gender is considered something that a speaker does, rather than has. This approach is largely informed by poststructuralist (postmodern) feminism, which has challenged the connection between gender and language and asserted that gender is essentially performative (Butler, 2006). For instance, Eckert’s studies of Detroit suburban high school students (1989) questioned the common perception that men use more vernacular language while women favor the standard way of speaking. Eckert (2000) suggests that women need to take advantage of a larger repertoire (including non-standard verbal forms) because language is a crucial marker of social status for them, whereas men have other ways to mark their social status, such as through sport activities and school council participation. Thus, women need diverse linguistic means in order to perform different kinds of gendered social identities. Coates (2004) also argued that women and men are “performing femininity and masculinity” in ways that are shaped by prevailing social values, whereas both male and

female conversations share a common aim of “creating group solidarity”, and therefore should not be regarded as completely different patterns of communication (143).

The various approaches to gender and language outlined above possess many overlapping features and are not necessarily incompatible. While explanations of the differences between male and female speech vary depending on scholars’ theoretical views, all of the aforementioned theories stem from the belief that men and women speak differently. In this dissertation, I will investigate the applicability of these theories to the context of Japanese and Russian gendered language and femininity, utilizing a combination of frameworks on gender, language, indexicality and stance.

1.3. Research on femininity, *kawaii* and ‘woman’s place’ in Japan

Historically, women’s societal inferiority has frequently been justified and rationalized through theories emphasizing that women have different physiological and emotional characteristics than men (Gottfried, 2003). In the pre-war and wartime periods, Japanese femininity was ideologically perceived in the context of three dimensions – “modesty,” “elegance,” and “tidiness” – cultivated in women through the process of socialization, or so called “femininity training” (Lebra, 1984). These key concepts of femininity in the mid-nineteenth to early twentieth century were dependent upon the Confucian teaching of *ryoosai kenbo* ‘good wife, wise mother’ (Matsumoto, 2004: 241). This notion was utilized as an ideological tool to specify a woman’s role in the Japanese society, explicating the appropriate ways for female individuals to contribute to the creation of the strong nation (Nakamura, 2014: 75).

After ten years of post-war American Military Occupation, the Japanese government was forced to address the social issue of gender inequality by giving women the right to vote, which gave rise to women’s liberating movements and discourses. Although legally gender

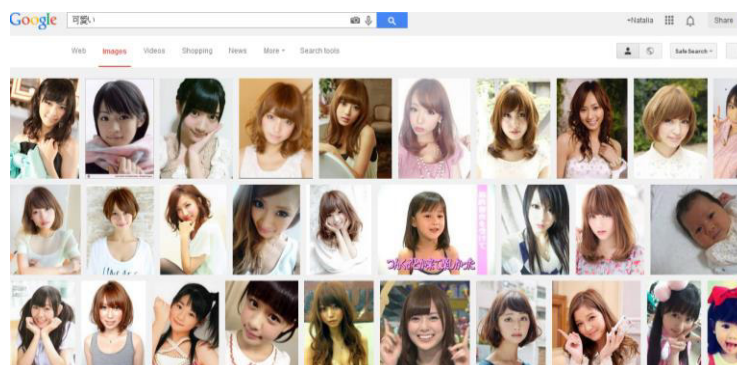
discrimination became prohibited in all stages of employment process, these new laws co-existed with dominant traditional gender ideology, which required women to fulfill their duties as wives and mothers (Tamanoi, 1990: 28). The perceptions of an ideal woman as modest, reserved, elegant, and compassionate have remained (Nakamura, 2014: 196, 202).

At present, femininity is frequently associated with the notion of *kawaii* or ‘cute’ (Kinsella, 1995), which is believed to be a required feature for a young Japanese woman, linked to her natural place in society (McVeigh, 1996). The term *kawaii* is regarded as an important “affect word,” connected to femininity (Clancy, 1999). According to Yomota (2006), the fascination of Japanese people with cuteness appeared as early as the 11th century with Sei Shonagon’s *Makura no souchi* ‘The Pillow Book’, in which she described what constituted ‘adorable’ in her opinion. For example, she considered “the face of a child drawn on a melon” and “Not only lotus leaves, but little hollyhock flowers,” and other small things to be especially lovable (Burdelski & Mitsuhashi, 2010: 67; Morris, 1991:168). Interest in *kawaii* representations can be further observed in the works and theatrical performances of the Edo period, as well as in contemporary literature (Yomota, 2006). In the 1970s, the boom of *kawaii* was especially visible, gradually spreading in Asia and Western countries through Japanese animation and cute-looking commodities, marking an age of “pink globalization” (Yano, 2013:6).

This boom turned out to be a long-lasting social phenomenon (Burdelski & Mitsuhashi, 2010:67). One cannot escape from the intense cuteness of “acres of wide-eyed little girls, aisles of cuddly animals screens full of cute little monsters, all in kindergarten colors” surrounding people everywhere in Japan (Richie, 2003:53). Kinsella (1995) claimed that “cute fashion in Japan was more than just cuddling things; it was all about ‘becoming’ the cute object itself” (237). The concept of *kawaii* cannot merely be translated into cuteness; it represents more than just “attractive by reason of daintiness or picturesqueness in manners or appearance, as a child

depicted in the Figure 2 below. It is similar to the term ‘coquettishness’ in its association to the female gender, yet lacks the naïve and childish components of *kawaii*.

Figure 2. “*Kawaii*” (可愛い) in the Google browser



Preschool girls are more likely than preschool boys to view themselves as *kawaii*, as indicated by psycholinguistic interviews (Tomomatsu, 1994). Moreover, this ratio increases drastically from 3:1 among children at three years of age to 9:1 among children aged six (Tomomatsu, 1994), suggesting that Japanese people are socialized into the expectation that women must be *kawaii* from early childhood (Budelski & Mitsuhashi, 2010: 68). Feminist linguists have argued that the fascination with cute and immature femininity contributes to the stereotype that women are different from men – fragile, incompetent and unable to take initiative – and thus impedes women’s social opportunities (Asano, 1996). Furthermore, if a woman performs *kawaii* to the extent that it seems insincere, she is labelled *burikko* or “a woman who plays bogus innocence” (Miller, 2004: 149). This extreme cuteness is stereotypically characterized by exaggerated displays of childishness, such as nasalized, high-pitch voice, baby talk register, and lifting of the hands to the cheeks when smiling (Miller, 2004). On the other hand, if a woman in her speech or behavior deviates from the prescribed norm of *kawaii* femininity, she then risks being called *ore meshi onna*¹ ‘me-food woman’. This

¹ *Ore* ‘I’ and *meshi* ‘food’ are masculine linguistic forms, which parody an autocratic husband’s command to his wife to feed him. *Oremeshi onna* ‘me-food woman’ is a term for a category of women who deliberately choose hyper-masculine language, and refuse to use traditionally feminine speech.

term is used to designate a group of women who (putatively) utilize hyper-masculine forms of conduct (Miller, 2004:162). This double standard toward women is reminiscent of Lakoff's deficiency theory, in which she argued that women are blamed regardless of whether they abide by or deviate from the norms of gender-appropriate speech (Lakoff, 1975: 41).

Though gender discrimination is formally illegal, Japanese women are nevertheless subject to systematic inequality at the workplace through the two-track employment system (*soogooshoku* 'management track' and *ippan shoku* 'clerical track'). In the management track, workers pursue career promotions and other benefits, but agree to disadvantages such as overwork and the possibility of being transferred to other branches. In the clerical track, however, while one does not have to work long hours and cannot be relocated, one also lacks significant possibilities for wage increases and promotions. Although both men and women in theory may choose either of the two trajectories, there is a social expectation that the management track is more suitable for men while the clerical track one is more family-friendly – and thus, more appropriate for women. Overall, even those few women who choose the management track rarely succeed in being promoted through the career ladder, while many women engage in so-called "part-time" contract jobs. This type of work does not provide the benefits that come with official employment, even though female employees hired under the contract system may work the same hours as full-time employees. Moreover, women are not represented in or supported by worker's unions to the same extent as men; most women are not members of the unions and most unions do not strongly support women's rights (Tamanoi, 1990: 25).

Emphasizing the short term of female employment and their decorative, unimportant role at the workplace, female workers are sometimes called *shokuba no hana* 'office flowers' (Charlebois, 2014), although this expression has more recently been deemed offensive and officially removed from corporate publications. The justification of male preference in the

employment process usually comes from the biologically-based reproductive ‘duty’ of women, who must get married, give birth, and take care of children – and will thus be unable to compete with men at a workplace. The management track is conceptualized as masculine, while quitting one’s job and devoting oneself to home is regarded feminine. A woman is expected to devote her life to family and domestic chores, rather than improving her education and accruing professional achievements (Charlebois, 2014). Japanese femininity is frequently conceptualized as “a form of other-centeredness,” in which women are supposed to receive self-fulfillment through supporting the needs and desires of others (Charlebois, 2014:15).

1.4. Research on Japanese “Woman’s Language”

“Women’s language” (or *onna kotoba/jyosei kotoba*) is a well-defined category in Japanese language encompassing the array of lexical and grammatical characteristics that describe feminine speech. It is commonly believed that *onna kotoba* has had a long history and is rooted in the innate feminine nature that compels women to converse in a beautiful and womanly manner, speaking softly and politely. It has thus been argued to be a precious aspect of Japanese linguistic and cultural heritage (Kindaichi, 1942).

Traditionally, “women’s language” in Japan has been linked to the concepts of “refinement,” “demeanor,” “deference,” and “delicacy” (Ide, 1992; Matsumoto, 2004), qualities that are believed to emanate from within a woman’s soul. Hyper-polite, “gentle, unassertive, and empathetic speech” is generally considered womanlike (Okamoto & Shibamoto Smith, 2004:3). In particular, it is stereotypically believed that women 1) utilize more honorific expressions, indirect speech acts, interjections and exclamatory expressions than men, 2) generally employ higher vocal pitch, 3) exclusively use the sentence-final particles *wa*↑ with rising intonation, and 4) avoid the copula *da* and such sentence-final particles as *zo* and *ze* (Okamoto & Shibamoto Smith, 2004:4).

The first Japanese linguist to question the validity of Japanese women's language was Akiko Jugaku, whose book *Nihongo to onna* 'The Japanese language and women' (1979) is compared to Lakoff's first publication on gender in its significance (Yukawa & Saito, 2004:26). In her book, Jugaku (1979) analyzed language directed towards female audiences, topics chosen for female readership, and linguistic strategies that indicate that the speaker is female. She concluded that women's language is built on gender ideologies that constrain women's freedom and predetermine their future. Ide (1980; 1990), however, eschewing a feminist critical perspective, suggested that Japanese women's language is characterized by dignity rather than oppression, and contended that women actually possessed more power in family matters than their husbands. She was criticized for reinforcing hegemonic gender ideologies by neglecting the systematic oppression of women in Japanese society (Reynolds-Akiba, 1993; Yukawa & Saito, 2004). A series of studies were conducted to question the essential nature of the Japanese women's language. For instance, it was found that Japanese women use a high pitch only when speaking Japanese, but not when speaking English, refuting the notion of the innateness of *onna kotoba* (Ohara, 1992). This finding suggests that women are pressured to speak gender-appropriately to be favorably perceived in the Japanese society, while this requirement is no longer relevant in English (Ohara, 1992)

Inoue (2006) calls Japanese women's language an "imagined" construct, which appeared in the process of novel-writing during and after the Meiji period language modernizing reform *gembun'ichi* 'unifying speech and writing.' When creating reported speech uttered by female characters in their stories, Meiji period writers utilized the speech of *jogakusee* 'schoolgirls' as a model and added elaborate honorifics (Inoue, 2006: 68). This reported speech of fictional heroines later became the foundation of normative women's language. Thus, Japanese women's language is not a natural outcome of spontaneous women's speech or an endogenous development of Japan's cultural heritage; it is instead a relatively

recent imagining of the voices of women by fiction writers that subsequently became associated with ideal femininity, and started to be imitated by actual women (Inoue, 2006).

In a similar vein, Nakamura (2014) has demonstrated that women's language has often been used as a deliberate political instrument of ideological propaganda, aimed at maintaining the social norms of Japan in various periods. For instance, in the war and post-war periods, female language was regarded as a deviation from the norm while male language was classified as standard Japanese, emphasizing masculine superiority. Grammar books written by postwar linguists, who characterized women's language as a speech based on innate femininity, were used as a tool to blunt criticism of gender inequality in society and language (Nakamura, 2014).

Japanese discriminatory expressions, as documented by contemporary and historical dictionaries, also attest to the systematic oppression of women in Japanese society. The terms that describe men tend to emphasize their power, strength, honor, and reliability, such as *shujin* 'master' for husband. Female reference terms, however, venerate passivity, dependence on men, and beauty. For instance, *umazume* (written as 石女) 'lit. stone woman' is defined as "a woman without an ability to conceive," although there is no corresponding term for a man (Gottlieb, 2005: 109). Another example is the word *miboojin* (written as 未亡人) 'lit. not yet dead,' 'a widow,' emphasizing the lost purpose of a woman who has lived on after the death of her husband (Gottlieb, 2005: 109).

Female attractiveness and beauty are said to be strongly influenced by a woman's mastery of *onna kotoba* and honorific speech (Okamoto, 2004:42). Although sociolinguists (e.g. Nakamura 1995, 2001; Inoue 1994, 2006) have demonstrated in their diachronic research that Japanese women's language is an ideological construct rather than a reality, the social expectation and pressure for women to speak gently and femininely in order to be favorably perceived are strong. Even nowadays, varieties of speech manuals for women instruct them how to speak in order to appear charming. Such books as *Onna no miryoku wa hanashikata*

shidai ‘Women’s attractiveness depends on how they speak,’ or *Sutekina anata o tsukuru: Josee no utsukushii hanashikata* ‘To make yourself nice: Women’s beautiful ways of speaking’ are evidence of remaining unequal gender and language expectations in Japan (Okamoto, 2004:42).

Currently, Japanese society is experiencing significant changes in both the prevailing norms regulating women’s speech as well as women’s actual use of language (Okamoto, 2004). On the one hand, *kawaii* (i.e. ‘cuteness’) is regarded as a key element, essential for a woman to possess in both her appearance and language (e.g. Kinsella, 1995, McVeigh, 1996). Such language is different from the traditional women’s speech, and presents a set of features utilized by predominantly young women to sound adorable, naïve and childlike (Miller, 2004). On the other hand, women rarely use in practice elements of traditional women’s speech that are characterized by extreme graciousness and language beautification. For instance, the sentence-final particle *wa* with rising intonation, auxiliary *kashira, mono* after the copula *desu*, and other features traditionally associated with women’s language do not appear frequently in actual use by young Japanese female speakers (Matsumoto, 2004: 241; Okamoto, 1995). Instead, they exist mainly in the translations of western novels, manga, anime, movies and other forms of virtual language (Kinsui, 2003). Young Japanese women, conversely, sometimes utilize traditionally male speech, such as the sentence final forms *da yo* and *da* (Okamoto & Shibamoto Smith, 2004). The usage of male language reflects the female speaker’s strategic choices, which depend on various social factors not limited to the speaker’s gender. The goal of the speaker is to project a certain persona to a specific addressee in a particular context (Okamoto, 1995).

1.5. Research on femininity and woman’s place in Russia

Before 1991, discourse about women in Russia (or ‘women’s question’) focused mainly on how most efficiently “to accommodate women’s innate differences to the ideal of the New

Soviet Man.” By emphasizing equality between genders, Soviet dogma had led to the formation of the “idealized dual worker-mother role of women” (Lyon, 2007: 28). This rhetoric presented a tenuous ‘doublethink’: women should be treated as men at work, but as women at home (subject to all the household chores and child rearing) (Johnson, 2007: 7). Women’s struggles at workplaces were frequently not raised or strategically elided by citing official gender equality. Throughout the Soviet era prior to Perestroika women were commanded to work alongside with men “equally.” In 1932, women younger than 56 years old lost access to ration stamps for groceries and basic commodities if they did not work (Kozlova, 2000: 24). During the later Perestroika period, however, they were directed to return to the home, while at no point were women’s personal choices seriously considered (Johnson, 2007:31). Russian society during the Soviet period remained inherently unequal, while feminism was disparaged as a capitalist movement from the West (8). Compared to the hardships of the 1990s, the problems suggested by the Western feminists seemed farfetched and unreasonable to Russian women (Levinson, 2000:43). Feminism was linked in their minds with hatred toward men and family making, attitudes that contradicted the cornerstones of Russian womanhood – domesticity and the appearance of subservience (Johnson, 2007:29).

Subservience, however, has frequently been a merely exterior ruse or strategic image, necessary for women in order to satisfy the male gaze. The crucial significance of this male gaze in Russian culture has been portrayed in literature, and has been the subject of analysis from a variety of different perspectives (Reyfman, 2008; Kovarsky, 2008). To cite one classic example, in Tolstoy’s novel “Family Happiness,” the marriage of the female protagonist falls apart when she can no longer acquire and maintain her husband’s interested gaze, a sequence of events highlighting the importance of being “a sight” even in a committed relationship (Reyfman, 2008:32). The overriding significance of the male gaze in turn prompts women to look at themselves (reflectively and reflexively) through men’s eyes, molding themselves in a

manner aimed to attract men's glances. In a 1992 essay competition about women's 'ideal selves' (organized by a modeling agency), a medical student (age 21) wrote, "If in the course of a day not a single man has looked at me, then the day was wasted" (Kay, 1997: 86). Thus, women tend to view themselves through the eyes of men, pretending to be an object of their desire (Turkina, 2000:80). Towards the end of 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s, many Russian women started to use international dating websites in the hopes of marrying a foreigner, most frequently an American. They manipulated their short introductory stories in order to create desirable images of traditional femininity and to distance themselves from "feminist American women" (Johnson, 2007:158).

In post-Soviet Russia, a neo-traditional gender ideology has become dominant, based in part on traditional labor division and affected by the values of both past communism and ongoing globalization. A "real" woman was believed to not only be externally beautiful, but also possess a beauty of soul, patience, generosity, as well as constant sympathy for others (Volkova & Muzychenko, 1993). Some argue that the Soviet ideas of egalitarian gender roles have been completely erased, with the result that masculinity is associated with breadwinning, while femininity is strongly tied with homemaking (Lyon, 2007: 31). This argument, however, appears questionable when the discrepancy between abstract perceptions of gender and the reality of women's conduct is taken into consideration. According to Lyon (2007), the impact of Soviet egalitarian policies and rhetoric has not dissolved with the collapse of the USSR (26). Portrayals of women satisfied exclusively with being homemakers and mothers are misleading and inaccurate, because Russian women, although ideally desiring men's protection and strength, in reality aspire to self-realize in professional spheres (Kay, 2006). As survey research has shown, Russian women, in contrast to many Russian men, do not work only for income but also for personal and social reasons (Lyon, 2007: 32).

The new post-Soviet ideology has also triggered extreme sexualization of women, emphasizing women's beauty, youthfulness and attractiveness above other features (Johnson & Robinson, 2007: 10; Lipovskaya, 1994). The notion that women must strive to be visually appealing has been fueled by the rejection of the traditional image of a strong working Soviet woman who lacks distinctively feminine characteristics. Thus, the necessity of becoming beautiful has not been portrayed as a limitation of freedom or pressure to conform to male expectations, but rather as a "release from austerity and hardship" of the Soviet era (Kay, 1997: 82).

The widespread social restructuring after the fall of the Soviet Union also allowed feminist discourse to emerge and to be acknowledged by the government to some extent. Women's crisis centers were organized in order to "renegotiate understandings of domestic violence and gender." Previous discourse had either completely neglected domestic violence, or blamed victimized women for their provocative behavior and a supposed "inability to perform their domestic duties selflessly," with an emphasis on societal decline in women's morality (Johnson, 2007: 43).

Overall, the unstable economic and political climate, however, led to a dramatic deterioration of the job market, which more profoundly affected the availability of jobs for women than for men. The vast majority of the newly unemployed and individuals below the poverty line were women, while the amount and availability of social support for females decreased strikingly. Furthermore, women have almost disappeared from the political arena after 1990s. Currently, Russian women are still underrepresented within elected bodies, while female politicians do not have considerable influence on the state of affairs (Shevchenko, 2007:128). In light of diminished job opportunities, maintaining pleasing appearance and demeanor became a practical necessity for women. Job advertisements listed attractiveness as

one of the preferred characteristics for female applicants, making beauty a woman's strongest asset (Kay, 1997:82).

In a survey of 120 letters, written by Russian women in 1992 as a submission to a competition "The Perfect You," women expressed their views on what being an ideal woman entails. The results of the survey showed that Russian women placed beauty high on the list of priorities for an ideal woman. In their essays, women repeatedly stressed the necessity of remaining fit and good-looking, and advised that one should 'never let oneself go' even after marriage (Kay, 1997: 82). They also referred to an ideal woman as a "guardian of the family hearth," who nevertheless in most cases aspires to employment and professional self-realization. Communal moral characteristics, such as kindness and fairness, also scored high in these essays, while "independence, self-reliance," and a strong will were mentioned in only half of the entries (Kay, 1997:83). The mixed (and potentially contradictory) nature of these responses may be the consequence of a 70-year long totalitarian regime, which emphasized both traditional femininity through home-making, *as well as* mandatory work and annual participation in physically intensive non-paid labor in state-owned agricultural cooperatives for both men and women. The expectation that women must work could not be erased from people's minds in post-Soviet Russia, even as a return to traditional gender norms was promulgated through schooling, media, and dominant scholarly discourses.

1.6. Research on Russian "Woman's Language"

The category of "women's language" in Russian is not as well established as in Japanese, and research on gender differences in spoken Russian is also relatively scarce. Similarly to English, the Russian female genderlect contains mostly gender-preferential language forms (Bodine, 1972). Russian women are believed to use more diminutive forms, interjections, emphatic and hyperbolic expressions, and expressive adverbs than men

(Yokoyama, 1999:408). Unlike men, they tend to provide concrete examples rather than abstract ones, narrate more frequently, and avoid the use of vulgar expressions and swearwords (Zemskaja et al., 1993). In addition, women are said to switch from one subject to another more flexibly than men and use technical terminology less often, replacing it with general terms. Furthermore, Russian women's speech is claimed to have such phonological patterns as sound lengthening, sound aspiration, labialization, and nasalization for emphatic purposes (Zemskaja et al., 1993).

Unlike scholarship on Japanese and English, Russian women's language has never been linked to women's inferior position as a homemaker, or tied to any specific ideology. Conversely, Russian gender linguists Zemskaja et al. (1993) explicitly avoided connecting women's language with societal statuses, claiming that it would make research less objective (94). Using spoken Russian data, they investigated the major tendencies of female and male speech, using Lakoff's work (1975) as an example. The differences in language between the two genders were asserted to be the consequence of the dissimilar roles that men and women played historically in Russian society, rather than being representative of inequality (Zemskaja et al., 1993). The Russian linguists' treatment of the gendered language can thus be assimilated to the position of the 'difference' theory outlined above (Tannen, 1990).

Zemskaja et al. (1993) acknowledged the existence of certain objectifying terms of address for women such as *rybka moja* 'my fish (diminutive)', *ptička* 'bird (diminutive)', *kotjonoček* 'kitten', *solnyško* 'sun (diminutive)', *tsvetik moj* 'my flower (diminutive)', *jagodka* 'berry (diminutive)', and *detka* 'baby.' They, however, deemed these terms non-offensive and argued that these expressions merely "convey supreme tenderness and authentic feelings of love" (96). Zemskaja et al. (1993) claimed that feminist thinking frequently clouded objective linguistic analysis and thus should not be practiced, so as to avoid logical leaps. These researchers frequently resorted to their own non-theoretical intuitions about language, and did

not consider the variety of contexts in which the aforementioned terms of address can be used, as well as their implications for women. Zemskaja's approach (1993) demonstrates the unwillingness and resistance of Russian scholars to evaluate sexism in contemporary society and incorporate feminist thinking in their research on gender. This phenomenon is linked to the fact that 'feminism' has been perceived skeptically in the Russian society, making even female activists dissociate themselves from the feminist movement (Lipovskaja, 1997: 191).

This dissertation will reevaluate some of the earlier claims about Russian women's lexicological patterns, such as the use of swearing, using both qualitative and quantitative methods, and will explore the reasoning behind this phenomenon using spoken corpora of spontaneous conversations in Chapter 4.

1.7. Advertising in Russia and Japan

Advertising is a powerful tool that encapsulates and reinforces gender ideologies through repeated presentations of stereotyped visions of femininity (Goffman, 1979). The information presented about a specific commercial product constitutes the primary discourse layer, while social sentiments and ideas are conveyed through the secondary layer (Yurchak, 2000:65). Furthermore, the goal of the advertising is not only to guarantee the concrete benefits of a given product, but also to engage with and even create more abstract desires related to social identity concerns, which are frequently realized through idealized portrayals of women (Turkina, 2000:80). The abundance of visual and auditory material that men and women consume daily is so great that these stimuli act as "socializing agents," influencing our attitudes, values, behavior and thinking (Kang, 1997). By encouraging gender conformity, advertising solidifies in our minds the meanings of 'masculinity' and 'femininity' (Lindner, 2004: 409). It has been proven that low-involvement learning based on repeated exposure to certain information increases the likelihood that people will perceive that information as true (Hawkins

& Hoch, 1992: 212). The power of low-involvement learning through advertising is so great that when exposed to explicit images of women performing traditional gender roles in advertisements, both men and women show a greater level of acceptance of gender stereotypes (Lanis & Covell, 1995; McKay & Covell, 1997).

Examination of women's speech and non-linguistic behavior in the commercials thus can unveil the mechanisms by which current gender ideologies permeate society and become normalized. Following Foucault's methodology (1991), Yurchak (2000) studied the discourse strategies that allowed Russian advertisers to introduce and solidify gender norms. He described how, under the influence of Western advertising, Russian post-Soviet commercials started to utilize "active agents" in their portrayals, attempting to convey strong connectedness to their viewers. Through the use of direct gaze, imperatives and informal referential forms (e.g., *ty* 'you,') female characters were presented in the guise of such "active agents" (Yurchak, 2000:71). Even though Russian women thereby seemingly acquired their own voice and gaze, they were being undermined through various "intertextual presuppositions" (Fairclough, 1992). The meaning of an advertisement frequently must be decoded through the activation of the structured social knowledge in people's minds. By exploiting the presuppositions that were repeatedly associated with specific ideas on gender, advertising normalized various stereotypes and biased perceptions of women (Yurchak, 2000:93). As an example, Yurchak (2000) cites an earlier cigarette-lighter commercial that portrays a smiling female erupting in the flame of the lighter as the background voice says *ne otkazet nikogda* '(it/she) will never refuse.' The next scene portrays a partially naked man sitting down relaxed and satisfied. These portrayals, based on the patterns of conservative patriarchal discourse, objectify the women depicted through the activation of gender stereotypes (Yurchak, 2000: 75).

In Japanese advertising of the 80s and 90s, women were portrayed as pervasively employing stereotypical woman's language, a depiction that consistently stressed their

traditional gender roles. For exactly this reason, a widely aired 1983 commercial about instant noodles was perceived to be offensive by Japanese women, and ultimately removed from national broadcasting (Gottlieb, 2006: 110). In the commercial a woman says *watashi tsukuru hito* ‘I am the one who cooks,’ while the man responds by *boku taberu hito* ‘I (male) am the one who eats,’ reinforcing the idea that the woman’s function lies in the domestic domain (Gottlieb, 2005: 110). Since then, Japan has adopted a Basic Law for a Gender Equal Society (1999) and a Plan for Gender Equality (2000), encouraging media to promote diverse representations of women by highlighting their autonomy and active social roles and avoiding depictions that emphasize women’s inferiority (Gottlieb, 2006: 121). Because of these reforms aimed at promoting gender equality, and in response to changing social attitudes regarding gender roles, Japanese media have made progress in removing simplistic representations of women as homemakers and stopped utilizing sexist terminology (Endo, 2004: 180).

Despite the attempts to eliminate stereotypic depictions of women, however, gender ideologies still manage to penetrate into media, revealing ongoing forms of gender discrimination. Women and men continue to be depicted differently in Japanese advertising; women are mostly presented in the roles of “beautiful and wise wives,” “young celebrities,” and “young ladies attracting people’s attention,” while men are portrayed as “middle- and old-aged people enjoying private time,” and “middle-aged worker bees” (Arima, 2003: 87).

The dominant spread of *kawaii* ‘cuteness,’ a crucial feature of normative femininity in Japan, can also be observed in various forms of mass media alongside traditional gender stereotypes. In commercial media, Japanese women talk politely and gently while appearing *kawaii*. For instance, the initial news coverage of the alleged discovery made by Haruka Obokata focused profusely on the female scientist’s cute appearance, until her fabrication was discovered. In the national broadcast, the reporter stressed that despite being a distinguished scientist, Obokata had *jyosei rashii ichimen* ‘a feminine side,’ pointing out that she colored the

doors and walls of her office in pink, and decorated the working space with numerous drawings of her favorite comic book character Moomin, who “watched over her.” Her feminine side was further exemplified by the fact that she wore a Japanese-style apron instead of a professional robe, and enjoyed the company of her pet turtle in the research laboratory. Attention to these details demonstrated that femininity remains a necessary attribute even for a potential female Nobel Prize nominee. Furthermore, the features that were described in order to portray the scientist’s “feminine side” are directly linked to the *kawaii* image, emphasizing the woman’s childish and cute nature.

As a response to more recent societal changes, advertising has started to incorporate (post)feminist ideals of ‘power femininity’ alongside traditional gender stereotypes (Lazar, 2014). According to Nakamura’s dynamic model of language and gender (2004), media creates gendered communities of consumers by building on the existing stereotypes while accommodating new perceptions of idealized femininities. The existence of an easily recognizable female genderlect in Japanese contributes to the ability of media to convey various feminine images, which mainly are based on stereotypical notions about women’s verbal behavior. In Nakamura’s comparative study of Japanese popular youth fashion magazines (2004), she demonstrated how authors strategically utilized language to depict a certain feminine identity and project it onto the readers. In particular, an abundant use of exclamation marks, hortatives, interrogatives, and interactional sentence-final particles depicted readers as inquisitive, emotional, advice seeking and helpless. This portrayal reproduced and reinforced both traditional and more recent gender stereotypes (Nakamura, 2004:145).

In Chapter 2, I will focus on Russian and Japanese televised advertisements and uncover the layered nature of women’s portrayals that blend traditional gender roles, current ideologies, and sporadic infusions of (post)feminist values. By investigating women’s language in these

commercials, I will analyze linguistic mechanisms for creating idealized femininities in the two societies and consider their influence on Russian and Japanese women's perceptions of their ideal selves in Chapter 3. Finally, in Chapter 4, I will investigate how women subvert, ignore, or abide by the gender-normative behavior in their real language practices.

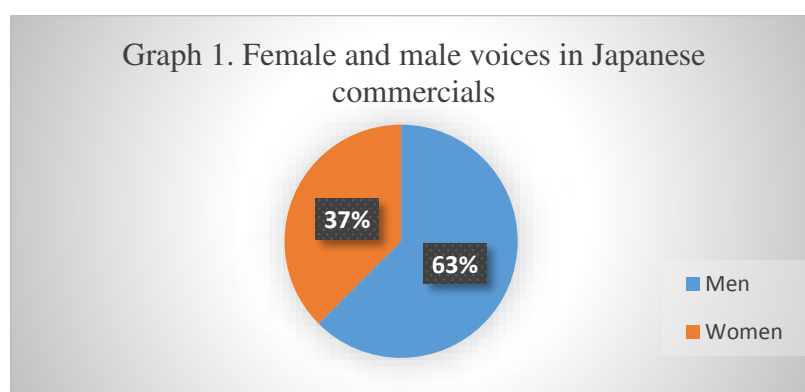
Chapter 2. Women's voices in Japanese and Russian televised commercials

This chapter closely examines the portrayal of women in 50 Japanese and 50 Russian televised commercials for beauty and hygiene products, aired from 2012 to 2017. The characteristic feature of such advertising is that it is promoted specifically for a female consumer and is aimed at making a woman want to beautify herself in some way. The analysis considers linguistic features that are deliberately used to express certain types of idealized femininities in Japan and Russia, draws cross-cultural comparisons and contrasts between these depictions. According to Nakamura's dynamic model of language and gender (2004:135), media produces and reproduces gender ideologies by recycling traditional stereotypes and contemporary popular visions of femininity. I argue that Japanese and Russian commercials depict women as both incessantly concerned with their femininity and actively seeking to display it, and I contend that such depictions reflect a synthesis of current gender ideologies with more traditional ideals as well as postfeminist ideas. By using multi-modal analysis, feminist poststructuralist discourse analysis, and critical discourse analysis, this chapter explores the linguistic mechanisms through which products receive a gendered representation for the targeted female audiences in Russia and Japan.

I will first identify the dominant voice in Japanese and Russian advertisements by calculating the number of words that are attributed to men and women, as well as determining the number of televised commercials that do not incorporate male voice at all. I will then investigate the linguistic structures that are commonly used in advertising, such as interrogatives, imperatives, and hortatives (Nakamura, 2004), and identify the most typical lexicological patterns. These indices will then be used to further an in-depth examination of the types of femininities that are being created in the Japanese and Russian advertising.

2.1 Corpus analysis of Japanese and Russian commercials

Of the 1567 words in the 50 analyzed Japanese commercials, Japanese women uttered 862 words, while men uttered 709 words. Out of the 50 commercials, 14 commercials did not incorporate male voice in any form. In the remaining 36 commercials incorporating male voices, women uttered only 425 words (37 percent) in contrast to 709 words (63 percent) spoken by a man, as shown in Graph 1 below. A chi-squared test confirms that male word-utterances are significantly more frequent than female word-utterances ($X^2(1) = 68.95$, $p < 0.001$). In one commercial, women did not utter a single word, while in many – women uttered merely one or two words throughout the whole commercial. On average, Japanese men uttered 19.6 words per commercial, while Japanese women uttered only 11.8 words.



Japanese men functioned as the primary storytellers, narrating the plot of each commercial and providing detailed information about the advertised products. Women, in turn, passively displayed their beauty and their contentment using the product, in effect entrusting male protagonists with the care and cultivation of their appearance. Thus, despite the fact that the advertisements were targeted exclusively at female audiences, and promoted products specifically for women, the male voice nevertheless was dominant. This finding suggests that portrayal of women in Japanese advertising conforms to the ideals of traditional submissive and subservient femininity, in which women are silenced. From the seventeenth century to the

modern age, conduct books for Japanese women praised the female's ability to refrain from "excessive" talkativeness, calling a silent woman "elegant and prudent" (Nakamura, 2014: 50).

Furthermore, the type of vocabulary that men and women used in the 50 analyzed commercials also differed. For instance, the second most frequent word used by men in the commercials was *kami* 'hair,' which presents a content word. In contrast, only the seventh most frequent word used by female speakers was a content word (*kami* 'hair'), while the previous six words were function words. Among the function words, Japanese women used interactional sentence-final particles more than men. In total, Japanese women uttered 14 particles (10 tokens of *ne*, two tokens of *yo*, one token of *kashira* and one token of *wa*), while men uttered only three sentence-final particles (two tokens of *ne* and one token of *yo*). This result recreates and reconfirms the stereotype that women are more emotional and hesitating than men, making them use more sentence-final particles that are aimed at soliciting confirmation, even when talking about themselves – while men are self-confident and thus do not need to use this linguistic strategy.

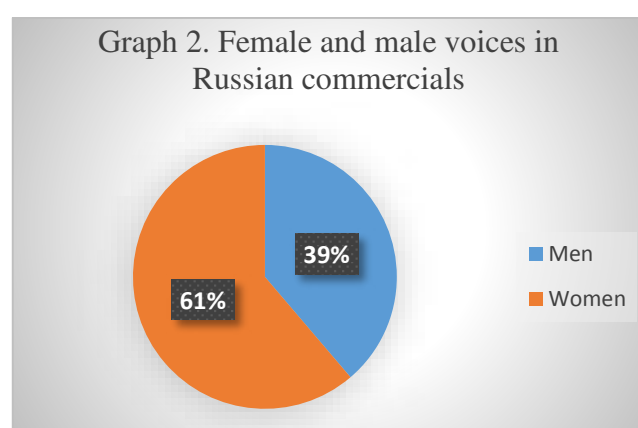
Moreover, Japanese women used politeness suffixes *desu/deshita* and *masu/mashita* much more frequently than men did. Women uttered 23 tokens of the politeness suffixes (or 2.7 percent of all the words uttered by female speakers) in relation to eight tokens uttered by male speakers (or 1.1 percent of all the words pronounced by male speakers). This conforms to the social expectation that women have to be more polite than men in order to be perceived as polite (Ide, 1992: 119). These findings are summarized in Table 1 below. Furthermore, as seen from the table, men compliment women on their looks using such assessments as *kirei*, *utsukushii* and *byu-tifuru*, all meaning 'beautiful,' while women did not use these terms at all. Thus, men play a role of evaluators of female beauty, explicitly commenting on women's appearance. In addition, it was predominantly men who pronounced the *tanjyoo* 'creation' of the new product, reproducing the stereotype that men are the chief innovators, while women

do not have intellectual or creative potential. Therefore, based on the corpus analysis Japanese women are depicted as emotional, polite, docile and praise-seeking, while men are presented as knowledgeable and dynamic innovators.

Table 1. Gender-based distribution of language choices in the Japanese commercials

	Number of tokens		Percentage		Total number of words	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Sentence-final particles	14	3	1.6%	0.4%	862	709
Politeness suffixes	23	8	2.7 %	1.1 %		
<i>Kirei, utsukushii</i> <i>byu-tifuru</i> ‘beautiful’	0	12	0%	1.7%		
<i>Tanjyoo</i> ‘creation’	1	11	0.1%	1.6%		

In contrast, in the Russian commercials the dominant voice was female. In total, women uttered 1903 words, while men uttered 450 words. In the 23 commercials in which male voice was incorporated, women uttered significantly more words (711 words (61%) in contrast to 450 words for men (39%), (($X^2(1) = 68.95$, $p < 0.001$)), as presented in Graph 2 below.



Women on average spoke 30.9 words per commercial, while men were allotted only 19.6 words. Thus, in comparison with the Japanese commercials, male voice was incorporated

into the advertisement plots less frequently, and when it was incorporated it tended not to dominate the conversation. The main difference in the vocabulary between female and male speakers in the Russian advertisements was the use of interrogative words: Russian women asked 22 questions, while Russian men never did. This portrayal – in which women are depicted as questioning, while men are shown providing reliable information in response – reinforces the stereotype that women are inquisitive, hesitating and lacking knowledge.

The preceding quantitative analysis of Japanese and Russian commercials lays the foundation for the qualitative analysis to follow, which examines the ways that linguistic structures and lexical items are manipulated to create various types of idealized femininities. In the remaining sections of the chapter, I will address the linguistic mechanisms that were deliberately used in the advertising to project the voice of female consumers.

2.2 Interrogative structures in Russian commercials

Most of the 50 analyzed Russian commercials commence with an inquiry regarding the current state of affairs of a female protagonist, highlighting issues that (as a woman) she might likely be experiencing. These portrayals frequently emphasize women's anxiousness and inability to resolve "common problems" without the aid of "an expert" (e.g. a male figure, as presented in the advertisement). The focal issue addressed by a given advertisement is typically a "common problem" that supposedly challenges a large number of female consumers. A female voice-over usually poses an initial question, which is directed to other female characters in the commercial as well as to the female viewers, inquiring in a knowledgeable manner about the problems that women putatively experience. Excerpts 1-5 demonstrate how the opening questions in the advertisements strategically define the potential gendered audience.

- (1) *-Vy by soglasilis' vyiti iz doma bez makijaža?*
 you would agree leave from house:GEN without makeup:GEN
 'Would you agree to leave your house without makeup?'

-Bez makijaža? Ne za što!
without makeup NEG for what
'Without makeup? Never!'

- (2) *Leto vysushilo vashi volosy?*
summer dried your hair
'Summer has made your hair dry?'
- (3) *A vashe mylo ostavljaet naljot na kože?*
and your soap leaves coating on skin:PREP
'Does your soap leave a coating on your skin?'
- (4) *Hočeš' pritjagivat' vzgljedom?*
want attract look:INST
'Do you want to attract with your eyes?'
- (5) *Ideal'nye brovi?*
'Ideal eyebrows?'

In context, all the interrogatives above clearly imply that the intended consumer of the products is female. Moreover, as seen from the substance of the questions, it is presumed that all women experience similar troubles: inability to go outside without applying makeup, dryness of hair due to summer heat, and dissatisfaction with their soap. The general applicability of such feelings to the majority of women is emphasized through the visual representations of the female characters. For instance, the question presented in (1) above is accompanied by an image of several women congregated together (as seen from figure 3 below) as if standing in for womanhood as such.

Figure 3. Women thinking about leaving the house without make up in a commercial for Dove soap



The three women are asked if they are willing to go outside of the home without applying makeup, to which the women respond, "Without make-up? Never!" They, however,

do not utter these words, but shrug their shoulders, avert their gaze from the viewer, and reservedly smile – expressing unity in their hesitation as seen in figure 3. A separate female speaker, through a voice-over, interprets their facial expressions and vocalizes the response on behalf of the women. The unanimity of the women’s non-linguistic cues, alongside the summarizing voice-over, reinforces the perception that the majority of Russian women would and should have similar stances. By generalizing women’s reactions, the advertisement normalizes women’s lack of self-confidence in their looks as a natural and reasonable character trait. Having constructed and articulated the problem of female self-doubt, it then provides “a solution” that would give women the courage to leave the house without make-up. In this way, the importance of beauty and self-monitoring is elevated and standardized through the generalized use of interrogatives and images of women expressing their emotions non-verbally. Women are portrayed as hesitating, insecure, routinely worried about their appearances, and unable to solve everyday problems.

A similar generalized use of an interrogative structure is presented in excerpt (2) above (“Summer has made your hair dry?”). This query is also accompanied by the portrayal of a woman disturbed by her female friend’s appearance. The scene presents two women happily greeting each other with an embrace (as seen from the first panel in Figure 4), when suddenly the woman on the left discovers that her friend has dry hair (shown on the second panel of Figure 4).

Figure 4. A woman’s transformation of stance toward her female friend in a Dove commercial



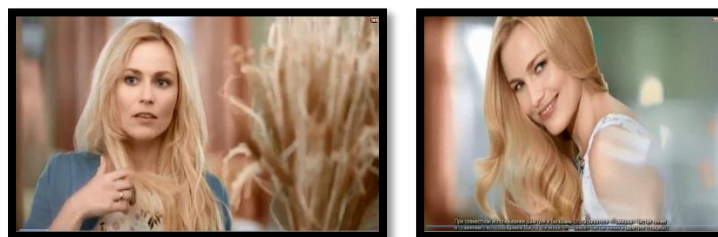
The woman's dazzling smile is rapidly replaced by an expression of confusion, anxiety and discomfort, conveyed both through her gaze and accompanying hand gestures. The extent to which her emotional state is transformed by the unsatisfactory condition of her friend's hair demonstrates to the viewers of this commercial the paramount importance of female appearance. Furthermore, the woman's marked shift in stance toward her friend stresses that such attributes as poor hair quality may have consequences for women's interpersonal relationship. Women may be judged by both friends and relatives if they fail to pay sufficient attention to their looks. Having received this helpful admonishment, the friend is presented in the next scene with radiant and smooth hair – after having tried Dove nourishing shampoo. Meanwhile the voice-over encourages female viewers to follow her example in order to avoid social censure for dry hair. The women in contemporary Russian commercials for hygienic products are thus presented as obsessively focused on the value of their physical appearance, monitoring not only their own looks but also the looks of other women, and are constantly concerned with other people's perceptions of their beauty (or lack of it). The necessity of other-centeredness that is reinforced by these commercials will be further discussed in section 2.4.

Even though excerpts (4) and (5) ('Do you want to attract with your eyes?'; 'Ideal eyebrows?') are framed as interrogatives, the queries are obviously rhetorical, presupposing that the answer is apparent to the targeted audience and universally applicable to every woman. Posing rhetorical questions sets the goal and agenda for the advertisement: explicating how a particular product will enhance a woman's appearance and increase her attractiveness, presumably for the opposite gender. The interrogatives are followed by imperatives, urging Russian women to take action to become more beautiful. The portrayal of women as inquisitive and ignorant of crucial information is consistent with the traditional gender stereotype that women are anxious about their looks and deficient in knowledge. In contrast, men in Russian commercials do not appear to be lacking relevant information or unconfident about their

appearance; instead, advertisements targeted for male audiences merely describe the benefits of the product directly. Russian women, however, are urged to monitor their appearances and strive to be as beautiful as possible, with the suggestion that beauty is imperative in order to maintain successful friendships and relationships, and be confident and emotionally healthy. Through the women's anxious voices and behaviors, female viewers are encouraged to take initiative in their appearances, thus engaging traditional feminine stereotypes and appealing to the female agency at the same time. In this way, Russian commercials offer women autonomy in only a restrictive sense: they are permitted to solve problems that have been constructed for them by advertisers based upon the normative expectations of traditional gender ideology.

Some commercials incorporated the use of “troubled” self-directed voice that accomplished the same function as the interrogative structures: conveying women's anxiousness and unsettled feelings. For example, in a shampoo commercial for the Russian brand *Čistaja linija* ‘Pure line,’ a woman looks in the mirror and notices that her hair resembles a bouquet of straw in her room. Alarmed, she approaches the mirror and examines her dry hair, as seen in the first panel of figure 5.

Figure 5. Woman's change of state in the *Čistaja linija* shampoo commercial



In the background voice-over, her internal monologue is presented: *moi volosy stali suhimi i lomkimi* ‘My hair became dry and breakable.’ Her concerned inner voice, the disheveled appearance of her hair, her inquisitive self-touch, and the worried gaze she levels at her reflection, all combined leave the viewer with no doubt that the woman is dissatisfied in her appearance. She does not speak explicitly in the commercial, but conveys her stance

through her internal monologue and non-linguistic cues. After using the advertised product, we see a very different image of the woman, as shown in the second panel of figure 5. She is no longer looking at herself in the mirror, but gazing directly and confidently at the viewer while projecting radiance and happiness.

In this way, Russian commercials elevate the importance of physical appearances for women by suggesting that there is a strong correlation between a woman's emotional state and her external attractiveness. Women are portrayed as insecure and unconfident when their appearance falls short of the ideal, and are restored to happiness and fulfillment only when they achieve the desired beauty. In addition, the advertisements stress the necessity for women to engage in constant self-monitoring, looking at the physical and social mirrors in their environment to assess whether they measure up. It is women themselves or their female friends who notice appearance-related issues, while men tend to appear later in the commercials to emphasize a woman's successful transformation. In this way, while the direct role of the male gaze is absent, it is nevertheless the end goal towards which women's self-improvement and concomitant economic consumption is oriented.

2.3 Use of imperatives in Russian commercials

Russian advertisements also depend crucially on the strategic deployment of imperative constructions aimed at viewers. Imperative structures tend to occur in the end of the commercials, often as a closing statement aimed at convincing women to purchase the product.

For instance, at the end of a Dove hair shampoo commercial, a female voice-over encouragingly says, "*Ne bojtes' menjatsja. Dove pozabotitsja o vashih volosah*" 'Do not be afraid to change. Dove will take care of your hair.' These types of *fear*-derivative words were a common lexical item in the Russian advertisements. In the same commercial, this tactic was used earlier when the narrator insists, "*S Dove možno ne bojatsa povreždenij*" 'With Dove you

do not need to be afraid of damage.’ In this way, women are repeatedly depicted as fearful of novelties and needing confirmation from an expert in order to assure them of the safety of new endeavors – even if the novelty is merely trying a new shampoo or a new soap. The interaction between female viewers of the commercials and a female authority figure thus forms a ranked or status-dependent relationship. The figure of female authority in the commercial frequently directs and supports women in their insecurities, supplements their knowledge with her expertise and provides comfort in a rather straightforward manner. However, this fictional, high-status female authority also carries a normative force, reminding women of the gender-based expectations to which they must conform.

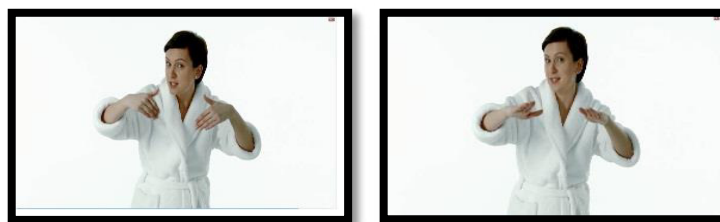
At times, the direct instructions and explanations given to the female audience can appear in a condescending fashion. For instance, after showing an experiment in which Dove soap is compared to an ordinary glycerin soap, a female authority states, “*Esli daže eto ne smoglo vas ubedit’, togda ja ne znaju, čto smožet*” (‘If even that could not convince you, then I don’t know what can.’) The intensifying adverb *daže* ‘even’ here is used to emphasize the ridiculous nature of a woman who would not believe the undeniably transparent evidence for the benefits of Dove soap. At the end of the commercial (after the experiment with the Dove soap has been completed), the female authority encourages women to try the product themselves, directing women to purchase the soap as soon as possible, as seen in excerpt (6) below.

- (6) *Počuvstvujte raznitsu sami. (...) Nu idite, idite.*
 Feel difference selves well go:IMP go:IMP
 ‘Feel the difference by yourself. (...) Well, go, go.’

The hierarchical relationship between the female authority-figure in the commercial and the potential consumers is conveyed through the repetitive use of the imperative form *idite* ‘go’ and the interjection *nu* ‘well’ aimed at urging women to sample the new Dove. It is also emphasized through the use of hand gestures paired with a gentle, encouraging smile, which

serves to mitigate the potentially rude and offensive nature of her command. When telling women to go to the store and to purchase the product, the authority-figure lifts her arms and gestures with her palms as captured in figure 6 below.

Figure 6. Urging female consumers to purchase Dove soap



The content and presentation of the message, combined with the non-linguistic devices deployed, helps the authority-figure to convey a strong epistemic stance of superiority. Her bathrobe outfit (unnecessary for testing a hand soap) and her amiable smile portray her as a friendly and approachable expert. Though the female authority-figure in this commercial possesses some knowledge of the product, she can hardly be described as a scientist or a scholar. Her utilization of imperatives when paired with her appearance and facial gestures lean heavily on her feminine characteristics, conveying her closeness to the female consumers. It is possible for her to give direct imperatives to women and blame them for indecisiveness precisely because she is an in-group member and thus possesses the same concerns as the audience. Thus, an ‘insider’ is used to subordinate women’s judgment to that of the advertisers, treating the viewers as hesitating, slow in grasping the information, lacking knowledge and good judgment. Interestingly, there are no commercials in the analyzed Russian corpus in which male actors use imperatives. Having a male authority-figure urge women to purchase the advertised products using imperative constructions would make him appear excessively arrogant and patronizing. This substantiates Lakoff’s claim (1975) that men do not need to utilize strong language to sound persuasive, while women have to put in additional effort (56). If a male authority-figure were to emphasize female insecurity and ignorance, his evaluations and suggestions might be rejected by viewers; however, patriarchal suppositions of female

inferiority are successfully inserted into the dialectical structure of the advertisement through the use of a gender-conforming female authority. Viewers are implicitly encouraged to abandon their own deliberative thinking and follow the judgment of the (fictional) female role model provided in the advertisement.

Imperatives presented in the excerpts (7)-(9) below also overtly encourage female viewers to perform certain actions to improve their looks.

- (7) *Podarite volosam v tri raza bol'she pitanija.*
give hair:DAT in three times more nutrition

‘Give your hair a present of three times more nutrition.’

- (8) *Bud'te prekrasny každy den' vmeste s Dove.*
be beautiful every day together with Dove

‘Be beautiful each day with Dove.’

- (9) *Podarite sebe voshititel'nyi uhod s krem-gelem dlja dusha Dove*
give self:DAT entrancing care with cream-gel for shower Dove
Naslajdenie i Zabota.”
enjoyment and care

‘Give yourself a present of delightful treatment with shower cream-gel Dove
“Enjoyment and Care.”’

Excerpts (7), (8), and (9) show that Russian advertisements explicitly urge women to look beautiful and attractive by treating their bodies with hygiene products. It is emphasized that beauty is an attribute that is essential for any woman “each day,” and that it can easily be bought as a present for oneself. Furthermore, while quite common in Russian commercials for female hygiene and cosmetic products, imperative constructions are entirely absent in advertising for male audiences. In the set of twenty commercials for products for men, imperative structures were not used even once, while almost all fifty commercials targeted at women used imperatives, sometimes several times. Thus, unlike the commercials for men (which foster a more egalitarian relationship with the viewer) commercials for women display pronounced hierarchy. The assumption in the commercials is that women, in contrast to men,

are 1) not averse to receiving direct advice in the form of imperatives, and 2) are perfectly content to subordinate their autonomy to others' judgment if beauty is the end result. This presents women as cooperative, compliant, yet hesitating and advice-seeking. Furthermore, the roles that women play in the commercials are limited to the "suffering women" before the use of the product, the "rejoicing women" after product use, and the "expert women" or authority-figures who explain the benefits of the product and persuade other (lesser) women to purchase it. Women rarely if ever appear as innovative scholars, or professionals, while these empowering depictions are common in commercials for men.

The lack of the imperatives in the commercials for Russian men is consistent with the stereotype that men intensely dislike being told what to do and prefer to make autonomous decisions (Connell, 1995). Thus, it is necessary for the advertisements to construct male consumers as strong and successful individuals who can benefit from the use of the product, while avoiding threatening imperatives. Shampoo commercials for men tend to conclude with phrases specifying the type of men who would prefer the advertised product, such as *Shampun' dlja mužčin, gotovyh pobeždat* 'a shampoo for the men who are ready to win,' or *Sport Max dlja nastojaščih mužčin* 'Sport Max (shampoo name) for real men.'" Thus, the commercials targeted for men provide images of success and positivity, highlighting the enhancing benefits of the product. A male viewer is never compelled or urged directly to purchase the advertised item but is granted the freedom to do so, presuming that he will make the right choice. If any negative evaluation is present, it is in the implicit suggestion that a man who does *not* purchase the product is not 'ready to win' or a 'real man'. The failing of the male viewer to live up to the explicitly articulated ideal of true manhood is thereby transferred to his own impotence and his own choice. In this way, advertisements exploit both traditional images of female insecurity and male autonomy in order to manipulate both genders.

2.4 Other- and self-centeredness in Russian commercials

While Russian commercials for women stress the importance of taking the initiative to be beautiful, the effectiveness of women's action in pursuit of beauty is universally evaluated through positive feedback from others (often men). These others include male partners, husbands, and 'men in the street' as well as women's children and other family members and friends; all are inserted into the commercials to underline women's success at achieving beauty. In this section, I will refer to these people collectively as the third party. In some commercials, female speakers explicitly note the increased level of interest from the third party associated with their use of the product, while in other advertisements the third party expresses admiration verbally, affectively, or through gesture. For instance, in excerpt (10) below a Russian woman reflects on her experience using a new Dove soap, conveying the improved attitude of her husband and children.

- (10) *Mne kažetsa, što ja stala bol'she nravit'sa svojemu mužu i detjam.*
I:DAT seem that I became more like self husband and children
'It seems to me that my husband and children started to like me more.'

On the one hand, the woman in (10) conveys confidence in her looks. On the other hand, this confidence is achieved through the appreciation of her by others (contingent on her use of the advertised product). Her utterance presupposes that a major concern for Russian women is to find ways to make their kids and husbands love them more. The woman in the commercial provides a suggestion on how to resolve this problem by recommending the use of Dove soap. Thus, women are depicted as caring about their appearances not principally for their own satisfaction, but rather from a desire to appear beautiful for their husbands and to be adored by their children. They monitor themselves for the sake of the third party and his desire, and are also monitored by the third party directly as the final arbiter of whether they succeed or fail in the pursuit of beauty.

This sentiment is especially prominent in the lotion commercial that presents a man describing his girlfriend's skin, utterly convinced that she must have a secret that helps make her skin especially soft. Although he is unable to formulate exactly what that secret is, he stresses that he loves it a lot. The commercial is then followed by a female voice-over appealing to the audience presented in excerpt (11).

- (11) *Slyšite, emu nraivitsa, čto vy uhažyvaete za kožej s los'jonom dlja tela Dove.*
 Listen he:DAT like that you care after skin with lotion for body Dove
Uhaživaete za soboj každyj den' i naslaždajtes' ego vnimaniem.
 care after self every day and enjoy his attention

'Listen, he likes that you pamper your skin with the skin lotion Dove. Take care of yourself every day and enjoy his attention.'

The advertising ends with the man saying *Očen' ljublju tselovat' ejo s golovy do nog* 'I really love kissing her from head to toes,' reinforcing the effectiveness of the product. Thus, the commercial emphasizes the importance of female beauty, which would be appreciated by others if maintained properly. As a result, women are portrayed as constantly needing to appear physically attractive to receive male attention, which is presented as a crucial component of women's happiness. The commercial does offer the woman limited autonomy in the retention of her 'secret', which gives her control of male desire and leverage over his affection. However, the content of her autonomous feminine power does not stem (as in some traditional gender ideologies) from her character or her purity or her innate wisdom – in this instance it is reduced to a skin-cream.

Through the insertion of the third party, Russian commercials manipulate depictions of feminine confidence, cultivating the illusionary image of an accomplished woman capable of attracting and sustaining men's attention. For example, in a commercial for Nivea cream, a woman is shown successfully acquiring the male gaze after application of the advertised cream, as seen in figure 7 below. In fact, the man is so impressed with the woman's appearance that he quickly purchases flowers for her as a demonstration of his love. She clearly enjoys this

attention and the concomitant boost to her self-confidence, playfully winking at the hypothetical viewer in order to share her success.

Figure 7. Woman's success and male gaze in a commercial for Nivea cream



The woman is shown in the midst of driving to work, thus adding the impression that she is 'in charge'. Nevertheless, the male interruption of her commute to work is encouraged and appreciated; the solicitation of his desire is prioritized over whatever professional attainments she might be on the way towards. She confidently embraces her feminine self, enjoying her attractiveness – but her confidence is contingent upon the presence and power of the male gaze. Thus, postfeminist ideals are conveniently combined with the traditional representation of beauty, helping to craft a “postfeminist feminine subjectivity” (Lazar, 2014).

As the woman receives the flowers from the handsome male stranger, the voice-over insists, *Ty gotova k novomu dnju i komplimentam* 'You are ready for a new day and for the compliments,' creating the image of a woman ready to be both successful and feminine. Her femininity is indexed through the word 'compliments,' implying that every woman appreciates compliments from acquaintances and strangers and strives to receive as many as possible. Compliments are not depicted as something that may be bothersome (especially when coming from a stranger) or even constitute harassment, but as a desirable praise. Thus, Russian commercials effectively combine a limited postfeminist self-centeredness with traditional feminine other-centeredness. In order to provide evidence of women's beauty, it seems necessary to incorporate a (typically male) third party to add credibility. Under the guise of a liberated and autonomous woman, the commercial reinforces the traditional stereotypes about

femininity: beauty is necessary to gain interested male gaze. There is a poignant irony in the double-deflections of desire and gaze accomplished by these advertisements: the dictates of patriarchal desire shape commercials that demand and sustain the attentions of women precisely by promising products that will demand and sustain the attentions of men. In addition, women are deflected from their own autonomous pursuits by a cultivated image of a post-feminist role model who cultivates an image appealing to men.

Self- and other-centeredness along with traditional values were also emphasized through direct and indirect evaluations from the family members that made women feel happy and satisfied. For instance, in “Čistaja linija” hair shampoo commercials, the women’s daughters and husbands conveyed their appreciative stances toward the women’s beauty, as seen in excerpts 12 and 13 below.

(12) Daughter: *Ma:močka, ty vygljadeš na pjat’.*
 mother: DIM you look on five
 ‘Mommy, you look on A.’

Husband: *Na pjat’ s plusom.*
 on five with plus
 ‘On A+.’

(13) Daughter: *Ma:močka, ty oslepitel’na!*
 mother: DIM you dazzling
 ‘Mommy, you are dazzling!’

Thus, the commercials stress the importance of family and their approval for a woman. Excerpt (12) presents both the daughter and the husband expressing positive assessment of the woman’s appearance (first panel of figure 8 below).

Figure 8. Family happiness portrayed in “Čistaja linija” hair shampoo commercials



The daughter uses a sound prolongation in the word *Ma:močka* ‘Mommy’, extending the initial syllable, thus conveying her affective stance towards the mother. She also uses a diminutive suffix *očk*, softening her speech and emphasizing her love for her mother. The husband then upgrades the daughter’s assessment, giving his wife an A+ for her appearance rather than an A. The woman does not respond verbally but merely smiles, happily receiving praise from her husband and daughter, while a female voice-over concludes, *Teper’ volosy- eto vaša gordost’* ‘Now your hair is your pride,’ – reinforcing the biased perception that beauty is woman’s strongest asset (Kay, 1997:82).

Similarly, excerpt (13) presents a woman surrounded by her family, as she receives a compliment from her daughter (second panel of figure 8 above). The daughter’s lexical choice of *oslepitel’na* ‘dazzling’ as her positive assessment sounds unnatural in a child’s register and exposes the scripted nature of the commercial. In both excerpts, as seen in figure 8, the nuclear family is depicted in intimate closeness, touching and holding one another, demonstrating their overall unity.

Women are portrayed acquiring ultimate happiness from family life as a result of their beauty, which is assessed by their husbands and children. They are encouraged to be in charge of their looks and take pride in achieving beauty, but their joy is gained only when they feel appreciated by others. The traditional representation of women as keepers of the family hearth is combined with the portrayals of their feminine achievement, creating another mixture of self-oriented and other-centered subjectivities.

Self-centered subjectivity paired with dramatic sexualization of the female body are also visible in the Russian brand of hygiene products *Krasnaja Linija* ‘Red Line.’ Women are assured that they need to look gorgeous at all times in order to be successful in their lives: female beauty is presented as a cornerstone for good relationships with men, family members, and female and male friends to such an extent that a woman’s happiness depends primarily on

whether or not she is beautiful. Every advertisement promises a woman that the achievement and maintenance of beauty will result in her ultimate self-fulfillment. The promised transformation from mundane mediocrity to fulfilling and beautiful happiness is possible, but only once women realize that they must apply effort to maintain their appearances with the help of the advertised products as seen in excerpt (14).

- (14) *Ja vseгда starajus' vygljadet' bezuprechno, a dlja togo, štoby moi volosy*
 I always try look impeccable but for that:GEN so that my hair

vygljadeli takže, ja vybiraju šampun' Krasnaja Linija.
 look:PAST same I choose shampoo red line

'I always try to look impeccable, and in order for my hair to look the same, I choose the shampoo "Red Line"'.

The woman in excerpt (14) accentuates the need to apply effort constantly in order to appear beautiful and desirable, while stressing the importance of shampoo choice. The advertisement projects a highly sexualized image of the woman's body, implying that "impeccable" looks are necessary to attract male gaze.

The integration of self-oriented concerns with normative other-centeredness can also be observed in a *Krasnaja Linija* body wash commercial, as a woman in a soft, whispery voice encourages female viewers to exert their feminine power in their interactions with men, as seen in excerpt (15) below.

- (15) *°Soblaznjaj v svojo udovol'stviye.°*
 seduce in your pleasure
 'Seduce as much as you please.'

Thus, women are encouraged to enjoy a seductive influence over men that can only be achieved through truly flawless beauty. The emphasis here is on female pleasure and power in seduction, adding a (post)feminist overtone to the advertisement's framing. The woman pronounces this in a hushed tone, suggesting that the art of seduction is a secret shared between the women and should not be overheard by the outsiders (men). On a broader scale, however,

women are again encouraged to beautify themselves in order to attract and please male partners, even in the commercial of a body wash.

In Russian commercials, male figures frequently evaluate the effectiveness of the product through non-verbal expressions of interest in the female protagonist that indicate her attractiveness. Advertisements tend to summarize the usefulness of cosmetics by such slogans as *Inogda dostatočno odnogo vzgljada* ‘Sometimes one glance is enough,’ implying that even one glance toward a man is sufficient for seduction if a woman is wearing the right makeup. Interestingly, however, the men in Russian commercials, unlike in Japanese advertisements, rarely explicitly state their perceptions of women’s beauty. They tend not to compliment women or comment directly on their attractiveness, but are used to dramatize the efficacy of the product.

Furthermore, Russian women’s autonomy and power are centered through epithets such as *roskošnyje ženščiny* ‘gorgeous women,’ and *rokovaja krasavitsa* ‘fatal beauty,’ as well as catch phrases such as *privykaj byt’ v tsentre vnimanija* ‘get used to being the center of attention,’ and *pokori vzgljadam* ‘conquer by one glance.’ Thus, Russian advertisements are infused with postfeminist representations of self-centered female power, in which women are encouraged to be strong and self-sustainable even when the goal is appealing to male affections. These type of commercials, nevertheless, merely exploit liberated images of women as a “feminism commodity,” in which femininity and feminism are entangled together as a common project (Goldman, 1992). Russian women are urged to take initiative *to become more beautiful and feminine*, thus combining both the feminist value of ‘self-confidence’ and the imperatives of traditional gender norms, which dictate that women must be pretty and desirable.

2.5 Interrogative structures in Japanese commercials

Interrogatives in Japanese commercials similarly to Russian advertisements were also frequently utilized, although their goal differed somewhat from their deployment in Russian

advertisements. Instead of functioning to problematize the situation and provide a pretext for the introduction of a product that would purportedly resolve the consequent dilemma, interrogatives in Japanese advertisements were often utilized by female actors to express surprise and astonishment in response to new information, or to make a (usually erroneous) guess as to the ‘magic’ behind the product’s efficacy.

For instance, in the commercial below three women are trying the new Dove soap while showering, and listen to an edifying voice-over about the product. Excerpt (16) presents the off-screen informant’s explanation that Dove’s soap has a secret, followed by a woman’s partial repeat, which emphasizes her bewilderment, hesitation, and interest.

- (16) - *Dabu no awa ni wa himitsu ga arimasu.*
 Dove GEN foam DAT TOP secret NOM exist
 ‘There is a secret in Dove’s foam.’
- *Kono awa ni?*
 this foam DAT
 In this foam?’

By repeating a part of the statement, the woman conveys her surprise and lack of understanding, projecting a childish persona. This representation of childishness is further fostered by the women’s delighted remark about the Dove soap after having tried it, *konna no hajimete!* ‘It’s the first time that I see such!’ The degree of childish naivety she exudes, absent in the depictions of women in Russian commercials, is directly linked to cute femininity of *kawaii*.

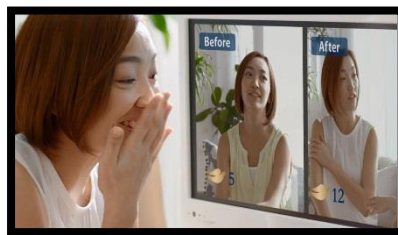
Interrogatives communicating surprise were frequently employed to depict feminine cuteness. In another Dove commercial, Japanese women were video-recorded before and after they tried the new body wash in order to demonstrate the increased frequency of self-touch. The commercial starts with a woman’s voice in background voice-over inquiring, *dabu de hada ni fureru kaisuu wa doo kawaru?* ‘How has the number of times you touch your skin changed

with the help of Dove?’ At the end of the commercial, a woman uses an interrogative structure to convey her surprise, transcribed below in excerpt (17).

- (17) *Watashi, konna ni sawatteta n desu ka.*
 I this DAT touch:AUX:NONPAST SE COP Q
 ‘Did I really touch (my skin) this much?’

Figure 9 below shows the woman’s exuberant non-verbal expression of surprise and modesty. While observing the video record of her self-touch after using Dove, she covers her mouth while smiling, a canonical gesture of *kawaii* cuteness (Miller, 2004:149). Thus, with the help of the interrogative structure combined with the woman’s expression of astonishment, the advertisement conveys an image of natural naivety, child-like cuteness, and femininity.

Figure 9. The woman’s surprise in a Dove body wash commercial.



Unlike Russian commercials, in which women were frequently portrayed as sad and anxious, Japanese commercials depicted women as highly sentimental, cute, and slightly childish – thereby satisfying the requirement of being *kawaii*.

Interrogatives were also deployed in order to reveal a woman’s assumption about the product, which could be further corrected in the commercial. In this maneuver, the dialectical emphasis is again placed on women’s naivety and lack of knowledge. For instance, excerpt (18) begins with a woman asking if the soap will make her skin dry. She is subsequently corrected by an informed Dove specialist, who explains to her the beneficial (and non-desiccating) properties of Dove soap.

- (18) *-Sengan ga uruoi o ubau tte honto?*
 facial soap NOM moisture ACC steal Q real
 ‘Is it true that facial soap deprives you of moisture?’

-*Iie, chigaimasu.*
no differ
'No, that's wrong.'

The woman is thus portrayed as unsure, excessively anxious about her skin, and ill-informed about soaps, needing help from the experts in order to make an educated decision. Similarly, in a shampoo commercial for the brand "Clear," a female narrator uses an interrogative form to suggest that women have erroneous beliefs and perceptions regarding hair damage. Her utterance is presented in excerpt (19) below.

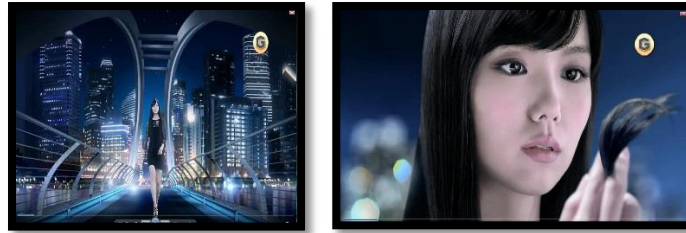
- (19) *Kami no dame-ji, mada kesaki no kea dake? Jitsu wa anata ga*
hair GEN damage still hair end GEN care only actually TOP you NOM
miotoshite ita no wa toohi no oku.
neglect:TE-AUX:PAST NML TOP sculp GEN depth

'Hair damage, do you still only take care of the ends? Actually, you neglected the scalp.'

The female informant in excerpt (19) suggests using the interrogative form that women have a general misconception about their hair treatment, the nature of which she then identifies explicitly. By using the adverbial expression *jitsu wa* 'actually,' she signals her superior epistemic stance vis-à-vis the following information. Thus, women (this time, the viewers themselves) are portrayed as naïve, lacking correct information, and in need of an expert's advice and support. Just as a child plaintively seeks help from his or her parents, Japanese women in commercial advertisements are shown calling for help in taking care of their own appearances. At the same time, the commercial attempts to inject a limited substratum of (post)feminist ideas into the female persona, portraying a strong woman radiating self-reliance. As seen from the first panel in figure 10, the actress (Miyazaki Aoi) strides powerfully across a bridge in high heels and a short black dress; her gaze is direct and her overall posture projects confidence. This image, however, is quite detached from real women's lives and resembles a scene from a futuristic movie. Rather than showing a woman empowered by the achievement of success in the concrete relationships of her actual, lived experience, it presents an illusionary,

superficial abstraction disconnected from reality and conveying the mere pretense of empowerment. In fact, when the background female voice-over utters an interrogative (*Kami no dame-ji, mada kesaki no kea dake?* ‘Hair damage, do you still only take care of the ends?’), the woman looks at her hair ends in a naïve and confused way, as seen in the second panel of figure 10.

Figure 10. Portrayal of powerfulness paired with *kawaii* in the Clear shampoo commercial



The commercial incorporates repeatedly the key words tied to post-feminist self-construal (*utsukushii* ‘beautiful’ and *tsuyoi* ‘strong’). Thus, the commercial splices together a distorted image in which the female protagonist is both a confident, beautiful woman and a cute, confused girl, incorporating both postfeminist ideals while dissolving their challenge in *kawaii* femininity.

The image of a strong woman is also engaged in another “Clear” shampoo commercial that subverts the potential strength and autonomy of its central female character. The protagonist is introduced as a strong female executive whose slogan is, *watashi wa dakyoo o shinai* ‘I do not compromise.’ A male voice then asks her about various hair settings, such as *kayumi* ‘itchiness’ and *sawayakasa* ‘freshness,’ to which she gives one-word directions: “On” or “off.” Apart from these terse commands, however, the woman does not speak, while the male voice-over voluminously explains the benefits of the product. In addition, she is portrayed almost as a female robot, stripped of any human emotion or feeling, with the implicit suggestion that a woman must be put into a robotic body to convey confidence.

Interrogatives were also used to present women in stances of anxiety, hesitance, and uncertainty. For example, in excerpt (20), a woman sits closely beside a man in an automobile,

looking directly into his eyes; the overall atmosphere is romantic. After a male voice-over describes the laudable properties of her mascara, a female voice, putatively representing internal monologue of the woman in the car, asks a final question, which concludes the advertising.

- (20) *Honki de aishiteru?*
really INST love:TE-AUX:NONPAST
'Do you really love me?'

In excerpt (20) the woman, seeking the man's evaluation of her attractiveness, plays on the homophony of *ai* 'love (Japanese),' and 'eye (English).' Ultimately, the value and effectiveness of the mascara are judged solely by the man whose approval she implores. Although the woman does not receive a direct verbal confirmation of love, the man's kiss in response to her query is taken as indicative of his affection and approval. Thus, the advertisement reiterates women's constant need to be reassured of a romantic partner's love which is consistent with a traditional gender ideology that women are perpetually anxious, nervous, suspicious, and doubtful. The effectiveness and power of this depiction is apparent in the fact that the narrative of the advertisement does not even need to involve direct speech. The woman's need for affection can be presupposed, her judicious selection of mascara is an attempt to solicit this affection, and his response does not need a verbal explanation. The viewer is taken to understand that the need for affection is universal and transparent, with male and female figures knowingly and wordlessly playing their respective parts in the evocation and resolution of female insecurity.

Furthermore, interrogatives were used to reinforce the stereotypes regarding female emotionality. For instance, in the mascara advertising a beautiful woman is portrayed crying and rubbing her eyes for approximately eight seconds, trying to wipe the tears off her face. The scene is then followed by a question produced by a woman in voice-over in excerpt (21).

- (21) *Anata no masukara shokku furii desu ka*
you GEN mascara shock free COP Q
'Is your mascara shock-free?'

The question in (21) invokes the stereotype that women are emotional and irrational creatures, whose mood changes rapidly and unpredictably. For this reason, they require cosmetics that can adjust to their behavior by being “shock-free,” and remaining intact even in extreme emotional distress. Crying and inability to control oneself are seen as children’s attributes, and are often favored in Japanese culture as manifestations of *kawaii* (Okazaki & Johnson, 2013). The commercial does not need to depict the circumstances that elicited the emotional response; it is understood by the viewer that women cry over a variety of trivial causes. Both interrogative constructions in (20) and (21) suggest that women possess deleterious temperamental characteristics – such as insecurity, lack of confidence, and vulnerability – leading to constant distresses that conform to the pattern of traditional gender and the ideology of *kawaii*.

Even fantastic female creatures conformed to the *kawaii* ideals by expressing naivety through their use of interrogative structures. For instance, a shampoo commercial “Je l’aime” features a mermaid surrounded by two men. They touch her hair and convey a critical stance towards her appearance, suggesting that she should eat kelp in order to have stronger hair. The mermaid produces only a single-word response, *Hontou* ‘Really?’ communicating her surprise, disbelief, and overall state of despair, as seen in the first panel of figure 11 below.

Figure 11. A mermaid in the “Je l’aime” shampoo commercial



This exchange is followed by the appearance of two better-informed, ‘real’ experts who intervene in the discussion, shouting *Uso da!* ‘That’s a lie!’ and give the mermaid a bottle of “Je l’aime” shampoo. Throughout the rest of the commercial, the mermaid does not speak, but displays the beauty of her recently washed and purified hair alongside her much improved emotional state. At the end of the commercial, she looks gratefully towards the two male figures who introduced her to “Je l’aime” shampoo, leaning seductively on one man’s shoulder, as seen in the second panel of figure 11. Thus, in the whole duration of the commercial, the female speaker uttered only a single word of surprise, while the male characters collectively uttered 35 words. Men also dominated the images in sheer number— four male critics appear to judge the physical appearance of the mermaid, and subsequently to save her from the state of misery their disapprobation has induced. The mermaid, however, does not appear to have any agency over her fate, merely following the advice of the men and seeking male protection and approval. This portrayal corresponds to the traditional stereotype of incompetent femininity, while also engaging the powerless but adorable femininity of *kawaii*.

As seen from excerpts (16)-(21), Japanese female consumers, much as their Russian female counterparts, are confronted with depictions that frame them as inquisitive and lacking knowledge, often with the help of interrogative structures. The difference, however, is that women in the Russian commercials are urged to take initiative and control over their appearances by realizing imperfections of their own accord, or with the help of female friends. In this way, Russian advertising creates the illusion that women are active agents in the creation of their distinctive beauty. In Japanese commercials, however, the agency of a woman is significantly undermined, while men are depicted as the chief decision-makers – even when it comes to a woman’s appearance, they seem to possess innate and superior knowledge. Japanese women are portrayed as easily surprised, naïve and passive, thereby satisfying the requirements of the *kawaii* persona. Even in advertising that aims to convey a postfeminist representation of

a powerful woman, the confidence depicted appears counterfeit and unnatural when combined with the highly unrealistic settings and male-dominated narrations.

2.6. Use of hortative structures in Japanese commercials

Both hortatives and imperatives are grammatical structures that invite the interlocutor to perform an action, but imperatives place the responsibility for carrying out an action on the addressee of the message; hortatives, on the other hand, convey the sentiment that the action will be performed by both the addressee and the speaker (Haspelmath, Dryer, Gil, & Comrie, 2005). While imperatives are frequently used in Russian commercials for female audiences, they are avoided in Japanese advertising for women. Imperatives in Japanese are considered a natural feature of the men's language, and (in contrast to Russian advertisements for men) are commonly incorporated in advertisements targeted at male consumers (Nakamura, 2004). In Japanese, hortatives can be formed using a verbal volitional form, or a negative invitational verbal form *–masenka*. In advertising for men, however, the hortative forms are not utilized, confirming that this is a female-oriented approach.

The excerpts (22)-(24) below present the typical usage of these hortatives in Japanese televised commercials.

- (22) *Odoroku hodo danryoku no aru awa o tameshite miyoo.*
Be surprised level elasticity GEN foam ACC try:TE-ASP:VOL
'Let's try out the foam that is so resilient that you will be amazed.'
- (23) *Atarashii Dabu o tameshite mimasen ka.*
New Dove ACC try:TE-ASP:NEG Q
'Why not try out new Dove?'
- (24) *Tokihanatou*
release:VOL
'Let's liberate (something)!'

These hortatives appear in the concluding portion of the advertisement, aiming at urging women to make a purchase. By incorporating invitational types of hortatives, these

commercials aim to incorporate female viewers within a (fictional) ‘inside circle’, creating a sentiment of collectiveness in having to tackle similar issues. For that reason, such hortative structures were always uttered by a female speaker, even when men pronounced every other word in the advertisement. For instance, in excerpt 19, the seemingly progressive utterance *tokihanatou* ‘Let’s liberate (something)!’ is the only phrase spoken by a woman in the commercial, while a man uttered 22 words, thoroughly dominating the narrative. Female viewers are thus not simply encouraged to try a particular hygiene or beauty product, but invited to participate in the enactment of femininity with a prototypical female counterpart. The rejection of this offer is thereby constructed as a rejection of feminine solidarity, and, in the case of example (25), a refusal of collective freedom.

2.7. Mimetic expressions, personifications, and metaphors in Japanese commercials

Japanese women in the analyzed commercials utilized a high volume of *gitaigo* ‘phenomenon mimetic,’ which is one of the cardinal features of hyperbolically cute women’s speech (Miller, 2004: 153). This category of words is distinct from that of sound-based onomatopoeic words and is uncommon for European languages, including Russian. In Japanese, however, although skin cannot generate a sound on its own, certain sensations associated with it can be described with the use of mimetic vocabulary. In the excerpts 25 and 26 from the two Dove commercials, *gitaigo* is utilized to convey the way women’s skin feels as they apply soap in the shower.

- (25) A: *Subesube!*
 ‘Smooth!’
 B: *Yawarakai!*
 ‘Soft.’
- (26) A: *Aaa tsurutsuru.*
 ‘Aah, so silky’
 B: *Kimochi yokute, sawacchau ne.*
 ‘It feels so good. I can’t help but touch it.’

C: *Sugoi mochimochi.*
'It's really supple.'

The use of mimetic expressions *subesube* 'smooth', *tsurutsuru* 'silky,' and *mochimochi* 'supple' by women appeals to stereotypes regarding women's emotionality and cuteness. It is further exemplified by Japanese women's use of various metaphors that compare their sensations to sweets and silky clothing items, as seen in excerpts 27-30.

- (27) *Shooto keeki no ichigo no kimochi ga wakaru.*
short cake GEN strawberry GEN feeling NOM understand
'I understand how the strawberry feels sitting on the top of shortcake.'
- (28) *Shiruku o matotteru mitaina kanji.*
silk ACC wrap:TE-AUX:NONPAST like feeling
'It's like I am wrapped in silk.'
- (29) *Sofuto kuriimu mitai!*
soft cream like
'It's like a soft cream!'
- (30) *hoippu kuri-mu mitaina!*
whipped cream like
'It's like a whipped cream!'

Women's use of sweet foods, such as an ice cream, whipped cream and a cake, as well as smooth clothing fabrics, conforms to the stereotypes of femininity and cuteness. The implicit suggestion is simple: women enjoy child-like pleasures such as eating cakes and dressing up, and therefore will enjoy body care products that resemble sweets and silky clothes. The image of cuteness is further magnified through the depiction of women talking to their (personified) body parts using sentence-final particles that are commonly used for interactional purposes and are restricted to dialogic speech (Iwasaki, 2013:4). For instance, in excerpt 31 below the Japanese woman addresses her personified hair.

- (31) *Moo sunao ni iu koto o kiite kureru. Zutto kono*
already obedient DAT say matter ACC listen:TE-give:NONPAST always this
jyootai de ite ne.
state ACC be:TE PP
'(My hair) already listens obediently to what I say. Stay like this forever, okay?'

As seen from excerpt 31, the woman encourages her hair to remain the same after the use of Dove shampoo for a long time. By doing so, she projects a cute and childish persona conforming to the stereotype that it is essential for a woman to be *kawaii* in all aspects of her being (Asano-Cavanagh, 2014:342).

2.8 Men as creators of woman's beauty in Japanese commercials

While in the Russian commercials analyzed above male figures were used to highlight the effectiveness of achieved female beauty and the enduring value of charming feminine power, in Japanese commercials, conversely, men frequently appeared as explicit innovators and creators of female beauty. Japanese advertising predominantly utilized other-centered subjectivity, in which a woman is deprived of a strong sense of agency though constantly considering other people's views and judgements. The effectiveness of advertised cosmetics is measured and demonstrated through male appraisals (frequently patronizing), such as *o-niai desu* 'it suits you', with resulting joy and satisfaction for the Japanese women depicted.

The recurrent theme of male creation and control over women's looks is explicitly seen in the advertising of *Fasio* eye cosmetic products. A series of commercials create an imaginary "Eyelashes Salon," whose director is male, and to which various women come in pursuit of beautiful eyelashes. A typical interaction between the eyelashes master and a female customer is presented in excerpt (32).

- (32) Woman: *Itsumo no onegai.*
 always GEN request
 'The usual, please.'
- Man: *Neko meiku desu ne.*
 cat makeup COP PP
 'Cat make-up, right?'
- Woman: *Meow*
 [Cat sound]
- Man: *Mata no o- koshi o.*
 Again GEN HON visit ACC
 'I am looking forward to your next visit.'

In the commercial, the eyelashes master uses the politeness suffix *desu* and the honorific structures *irasshaimase* ‘welcome’ and *mata no o-koshi o* ‘I am looking forward to your next visit’ when speaking with his female customer, thus outwardly conveying a subservient stance. In reality, however, he is presented as a successful businessperson, while the woman is portrayed as both lacking independence (even when it comes to her own appearance) and relying on a man to make her attractive. In addition, her words are limited to a single phrase in which she asks for “the usual,” and by the end of the commercial she is stripped of her humanity completely, mimicking a cat’s ‘meow’ as she transforms into a cute cat. This depiction is representative of the current gender stereotype, which links femininity to the pet-like appeal of subservient *kawaii* cuteness.

Male power over female beauty is further seen in another Fasio powder commercial that again incorporated the *matsugoya san* ‘eyelash master.’ This time, he travels by train and gives advice to a female traveler who happens to be in the same car. He offers to show her a compact powder, to which she responds with the interrogative *kore nani kashira* ‘What is it, I wonder?’ The question particle *kashira* ‘I wonder’, is traditionally considered a feature of women’s language, and serves both to index her femininity as well as highlight her proper upbringing and gentle nature. The man then applies cosmetics to the woman’s face, while explaining the product’s properties (as seen in the first panel of figure 12).

Figure 12. The eyelashes master applies make-up in a Fasio commercial for powder



On the one hand, the man is again portrayed in a nominally subordinate position, serving a woman in order to enhance her beauty. On the other hand, the woman is merely a

recipient of the benefits of his expertise, lacking in knowledge and unable to take care even of her own appearance. Rather than a servant, the man is presented as an expert teacher, helping and educating the female population about beauty. The woman is so caught up in admiration for her new, beautiful look that she almost forgets to get off train. The man once again has to educate her, saying *Shuuten desu*. ‘It’s the final stop,’ in order to bring the woman back to her senses (as seen in the second panel of figure 12). She is thus portrayed as lacking knowledge throughout the commercial, while the male eyelashes- (and apparently also powder-) master is presented as more rational and better informed in several regards. The lack of agency and understanding, elegance of style and absorbance in her looks present a combination of traditionally feminine traits alongside the characteristic features of *kawaii*.

The incorporation of a male figure as an innovator of female beauty is not limited to the products of the Fasio brand. Another popular Japanese hair product, *Tsubaki*, utilizes a similar concept. A male master holds a shampoo salon that is frequented by various women. In the commercial, he greets a customer silently, looks at the arrangement of her hair in a ponytail, and gives a positive assessment *anata ga nani yori mo utsukushii kara* ‘you are more beautiful than anything.’ While the woman is seated, the man swiftly and patronizingly pulls off her hairband as seen in the first panel of figure 13.

Figure 13. Female-male interaction in the Tsubaki shampoo salon



Elevation of men over women in advertising is considered one form of the “ritualization of subordination” – a man’s higher physical place symbolizes his social superiority (Goffman,

1979:43). After removing the hair band, the master and his female customer sit facing one another (the second panel of figure 13); the man's posture is overall relaxed, his legs are crossed and his back is leaning against the armchair. In contrast, the woman projects nervousness – sitting on the edge of her chair with her back straightened and her hands folded neatly on her lap. Finally, after a 3-second pause, the man utters a negative assessment- *mottainai* 'what a waste,' suggesting that the woman is not realizing the full potential of her hair.

The master then shampoos the woman's hair, making it softer and healthier and thus improving the woman's mood. She leaves the salon happily proclaiming *kimochi ii ne* 'It feels good.' In this way, the man not only grants the woman beautiful lustrous hair, but emboldens her with confidence so that her stress evaporates. These portrayals recycle and reinforce the stereotype that men are women's saviors and benefactors, while women are helpless and cute. In this example, her beauty is wasted until it becomes subject to his control and improvement, and meets his final approval. The result of subordinating her body and her beauty to male control is happiness for the otherwise-helpless woman.

Strict assessment and monitoring of women's beauty is also seen in a shampoo commercial for the brand "Je l'aime." In it, a male shampoo-master is responsible for taking care of and critically evaluating women's hair. As seen in the first panel of figure 14, he goes through a long line of women like a connoisseur – touching their hair with expert discernment and rendering his judgements – while the women inform him of which shampoo that they use (Je l'aime).

Figure 14. Inspection of women's hair in commercial for "Je l'aime" shampoo



While the male expert's face is seen throughout the commercials, the women are facing away, wearing identical white dresses and devoid any signs of uniqueness or individuality. By depicting women as faceless, passive objects of male judgment standing obediently for inspection, the advertisement reinforces stereotypes of female subservience and male superiority. As seen in the second panel of the figure 14, the male expert is pleased with the quality of the female hair and says, *Kono uruoi, kono kaori* 'This moisture, this scent.' His admiring stance is also conveyed through his happy smile and his satisfied gaze at the hair. He is portrayed as a knowledgeable teacher and a hair professional, while the women are portrayed as his inferior apprentices or tutees, working hard to keep up the high quality of their hair. Importantly, there are no comparable advertisements for male hair products; women are never depicted as experts or connoisseur evaluators of men's beauty or competence.

Some commercials employed more subtle allusions to male superiority, but the idea that men are creators and innovators while women are consumers and beneficiaries was persistent. For instance, in a lotion commercial for the "Sekkisei" brand, a woman murmurs the following prayer in front of her mirror, presented in excerpt 33 below.

- (33) *Onegai! Kyou no watashi no hada ga ichi nichi jyu shittori*
 request today GEN I GEN skin NOM one day during damp
uruottete, nikkuki shigaisen ni semerarete mo zenzen
 moisturize:TE-AUX:TE accurse ultra-violet ray DAT attack:PSS:TE but at all
hiyake nanka shinakute, eetto sorekara, meiku wa mochiron norinori no
 suntan EMPH do-NEG:TE HES also make-up TOP certainly perfect GEN
mama de, toumeikan ga zutto, zutto, zutto, zutto, tsuzuki masu
 as is LK feeling of transparency NOM always always always always continue POL
you ni.
 for DAT

'I am asking you. I wish for my skin to be well moisturized throughout the day, and even under the attack of the ultra-violet rays, not to tan, and also, (I wish) for my make-up to stay perfect as it is now, and (I wish) for the feeling of transparency to stay always and always and always and always.'

The woman starts her prayer with the emphatic expression *onegai!* (lit. 'request!') 'I am asking you!' calling upon the power of her lotion, as though it has some supernatural

efficacy. She describes in detail the properties of her desired skin, repeating the lexical item *zutto* ‘always’ four times, emphasizing the importance of skin transparency to her in a highly emotional, childlike manner. Even though she is not addressing another person, but merely looking at herself in the mirror, she still utilizes the politeness suffix *masu* to end her wish, personifying the lotion as her benefactor. Immediately upon completion of her prayer, a male voice-over assures the viewer that the new lotion from Sekkisei responds perfectly to her wish by providing transparently beautiful, white skin that will not tan. In his utterance, he does not use affective markers, such as repetition and mimetic expressions, or polite register, but presents the information in a concise and direct manner. The male voice is portrayed as concerned with realizing the woman’s dreams and knowledgeable about the beauty and happiness Sekkisei lotion can provide for her. In contrast, the woman is depicted as an emotive, innocent, naïve and powerless being, unable to obtain the beauty she desires on her own, and therefore having to resort to the supernatural power of a lotion (and ultimately to the male intellect that is presented as its creative source).

Thus, Japanese advertising frequently positions a woman as lacking her agency even when it comes to her own appearance. She is depicted as lacking competence, knowledge, and ability to improve her appearance on her own, and is instead dependent upon men’s support and expertise. Men are portrayed as the ultimate creators of female beauty in the roles of various salon masters and connoisseurs whose goal is to enhance women’s looks. In addition to positively changing women’s physical looks, men also craft women’s emotional states as they increase their confidence and happiness through the beautifying process. They are also the final judges and arbiters of the beauty they themselves create, and their positive evaluations of their own handiwork evince a certain hollowness. In Japanese advertisement, the feminine is a product of the male imagination imposed upon passive recipients for male consumption and admiration.

2.9 Summary

Overall, the analysis of Russian and Japanese televised commercials has demonstrated that products designed for women are marketed in a manner that reinforces existing gender stereotypes while accommodating (in limited ways) new perceptions of femininity in contemporary societies. Both Japanese and Russian women are portrayed as inquisitive and deficient of information on how to tackle issues pertaining to their beauty, attractiveness, and sexuality.

Russian commercials frequently commence with the portrayal of a miserable woman, besieged by various beauty-related problems with which she cannot cope on her own, followed by the explanation of how a certain product will help and save her. A positive judgment regarding the efficacy of the product is often connected to or justified by a man's evaluation. A woman may explicitly state her husband's increased appreciation, or it might be conveyed implicitly by a change in his non-verbal behavior such as smiling, winking, or laughing. Russian commercials for female audiences portray a double-image of idealized femininity, a novel, evolving synthesis that fuses traditional gender ideologies with more recent (post)feminist perspectives. On the one hand, Russian women are urged to be consciously aware of others (especially men and children). Indeed, others' views and behaviors determine women's usage of even basic products such as a soap or a shampoo. On the other hand, women are also encouraged to take the lead in constructing and expressing their feminine attractiveness, and to be confident in their success as architects of their own beauty. This meager influence of feminist discourse is ironically subverted, as it is strategically utilized to center the male gaze under the guise of liberation and women's personal choice.

In Japanese commercials, women are portrayed as cute, innocent, slightly naïve, and perpetually advice seeking. Men are fictionally postulated as the creators and *explicit* evaluators of female beauty. The scripted speech of female characters contains lexical and

grammatical choices that emphasize woman's cuteness and naivety, such as abundant usage of mimetic vocabulary, interactional sentence-final particles, endearing metaphors, and other subtle linguistic elements. The traditional stereotypes of women's elegance and emotionality are reproduced, while the childlike and highly incompetent depictions of women promote further the idealized powerless femininity of *kawaii*. Some Japanese commercials (more similar to Russian advertising) tactically utilized (post)feminist representations, attempting to project a strong, confident and non-*kawaii* woman. In fact, in one of the analyzed commercials, a Japanese woman even claims *watashi wa kawaii kara sotsugyou suru* 'I graduate from *kawaii*.' The implacable dominance of the male voice and the absence of female characters who would possess real power, however, make portrayals of strength in Japanese advertisements farfetched and implausible. As long as women are constrained to stances of confusion and naivety, meaningful departure from the disseminated representation of *kawaii* vulnerability will remain impossible.

Chapter 3. Russian and Japanese women's perceptions of ideal selves

In this chapter, I conduct an in-depth analysis of the discourses produced by Russian and Japanese women aged 20-30, as they articulate their visions of ideal femininity – defining the contours and limitations of modern femininity in their own words, and expressing the successes and setbacks they have experienced progressing towards their ideal selves. In this analysis, I will utilize sociological survey methods, and discourse and conversation analyses to help elucidate the multiple meanings in women's self-presentations, deploying especially the concept of indexicality (Ochs, 1992) and the notion of “footing” (Goffman, 1981). I will demonstrate how women socially construct a category of idealized femininity, and convey complex and ambivalent stances toward this category. I will also show how women embrace both the role of ‘author’ and of ‘animator’ (Goffman, 1981: 144), modulating between these voices in order to convey the spectrum of their emotional reactions to the norms and roles associated with femininity. Furthermore, I will utilize multimodal discourse analysis to investigate how not only linguistic forms, but also body language is effectively used to index the speakers' stances towards gender, creating vivid images of masculinity and femininity.

3.1 Russian women's discourse analysis

3.1.1 Participants

Below, I have summarized the demographic parameters (age, educational background and current occupation) of the 20 female Russian respondents whose utterances I will quote and analyze in this chapter. When necessary, I will also include additional information regarding the respondent's family upbringing and other personal details.

Table 2. Russian female respondents' biographical data

Pair number	Pseudonym	Age	Educational background	Current occupation
1	Valya	22	BA in Japanese	English instructor

	Anna	21	BA in Engineering (4 th year)	Student
2	Polina	20	High school diploma	Part-time worker
	Natasha	27	BA in Tourism	Tourist company director
3	Darina	25	BA in Japanese	English instructor
	Marusya	25	BA in Japanese	English instructor
4	Anjelika	26	Certificate in Design	Dance instructor
	Rita	30	Certificate in Accounting	Manicurist
5	Diana	22	BA in Japanese	Tour guide
	Olga	20	BA in Japanese (3 rd year)	Student
6	Sasha	20	Certificate in Communication	Part-time worker
	Kristina	20	Certificate in Hairdressing	Hairdresser Intern
7	Alyona	27	BA in Japanese	Housewife (1 newborn)
	Dasha	20	BA in Stomatology (3 rd year)	Student
8	Barbara	26	BA in Japanese	Salesperson
	Marina	26	BA in Economics	Marketing specialist
9	Katya	28	Certificate in Hairdressing	Housewife (3 children)
	Alexandra	30	MA in Japanese pedagogy	Japanese instructor
10	Lena	27	BS in Programming	Programmer
	Masha	30	Certificate in Art Design	Painter, designer

The conflicting images of ideal womanhood in contemporary Russian culture have been attributed to the tension between lingering Soviet rhetoric (which valorized the role of the dual mother-worker) and rapid changes in Russian society calling for the restoration of traditionally feminine ideals (Kay, 1997; Lyon, 2007). In the preceding chapter, I have argued that sexist media depictions of gender dynamics also shape women's often-contradictory self-

representations. Indeed, Russian society is replete with triggers urging women to conform to traditional gender norms and stereotypes. These messages are not limited to the televised commercials discussed above, but also permeate other social spaces: street advertisements, online social network services, and even airplane safety manuals contain a range of gender-biased representations and images. Disempowering depictions of women as incompetent in the workplace and emotionally unstable at home contribute to the formation and solidification of gender stereotypes in the minds of both men and women.

When asked about their personal images of the ideal woman, all 20 interviewees expressed the tensions and contradictions implicit in contemporary Russian femininity. On the one hand, interviewees talked about the crucial importance of independence, self-sustainability and autonomy; on the other hand, they emphasized that it was indispensable to cultivate weakness in front of men, reiterating men's authority and positioning them as 'winners' in social engagements.

3.1.2. Male gaze and duality of personae

The desire to solicit and sustain the positive attentions of the male gaze is clearly one of the reasons why female interviewees in the present analysis frequently brought up the necessity of maintaining appearance (e.g. emphasizing the application of well-chosen makeup, recommending daily exercise and dietary habits to help stay slim and fit, and insisting that a woman must never "let herself go" after having married). In these instances, women encounter and react to a male gaze that is both direct and encompassing.

The predominant influence of male gender-perceptions is encountered in a still deeper sense when interviewees described their attempts to conform to men's expectations regarding gender roles. In attempting to validate men's expectations of female dependency and weakness, women felt the need to conceal their virtues and deprecate their strengths, enforcing a kind of

double-consciousness. The practical and existential necessity of independence, autonomy and self-confidence co-existed in female respondents' minds with a marked preference to conceal these very attributes from men. They claimed that the tremendous, innate emotional (and sometimes physical) reserves of women had to be hidden from the male gaze – as though they were somehow repugnant. This finding resonates with Kay's results (1997) on the importance of modesty as a social value for Russian women, who felt the need to underestimate their real abilities in communication with men (83). Kay (1997), however, did not conceptualize this type of responses as representative of a larger phenomenon, or identify their ultimate origin in the centrality of the male gaze in Russian society.

The importance of wearing a 'mask' – one that would present a woman in an attractive and compliant light in front of men – runs through the dialogs of all 20 women. In discussing their ideals of femininity, women used the token *mužčina* ('man') 243 times, and *paren'* ('young man') 28 times, while the word *ženščina* ('woman') was pronounced only 146 times, while *devuška* ('young woman') appeared 325 times. Given the fact that the conversations were supposed to focus exclusively on women and femininity, the frequency with which 'men' as concrete and abstract entities appeared in the discourse is remarkable. Of course, discussion of ideal femininity might prompt women to discuss their relationships with men, but it is notable that they speak about men more often than work, hobbies, home life, or children – all potentially relevant to their ideals of femininity. For comparison, the token 'work' and its derivatives occurs 85 times, 'family' - 32 times, 'happiness' - 4 times, and 'career' – 2 times, demonstrating that women speak about men more frequently than about any other area of their lives when elaborating on their ideals. In addition, the term 'young woman' seems to be more preferred when talking about 20-30 year-old females, while the token 'young man' is rarely used for the same age group with the preference given to the lexical item *mužčina* 'man.' Calling even an older woman *devuška* 'young woman' is regarded a compliment, while

ženščina ‘woman’ can be perceived offensive (Johnson, 2007:125). The emphasis on youth may connote positive attributes such as beauty, health, and vigor, but it can also be deployed to construe women as juvenile and inferior.

Thus, despite the fact that women were not explicitly asked about men, but merely about their ideas concerning an ideal woman, the women were not able to distance themselves from hypothetical men’s perceptions, viewing themselves through the prism of a male consciousness. The interviewees provided positive and negative features of women’s personalities primarily based on their estimations of men’s tastes and likes. For instance, Anna (21) provides reasoning for her selection of an ideal woman’s traits, citing men’s preferences in excerpt 34.

- (34) *Ona dolžna byt’ miloj, koketljivoj, potomu što mužčinam vsjo-taki npravjatsja, kogda devuška milaja, živaja, a ne sidit tam dumaet kak vot o smysle žizni, formuly tam kakieto vyvodit.*

‘She must be sweet, coquettish, because men still like it when a woman is sweet, lively, and doesn’t just sit there and think about like meaning of life, deducing some (mathematical) formulas.’

Anna’s response in (34) indicates that the docile personality features are considered mandatory for a woman, and explicitly supplements her reasoning citing men’s preferences. Interestingly, Anna seems to consider a pensive woman immersed in her thoughts as quite unattractive for men. When describing such an undesirable woman, Anna lifted her arms and stretched them away, as if to distance herself symbolically from the taboo of a female intellectual. On the contrary, a pleasing woman, in her opinion, is lively, sweet, coquettish, and charming. She needs to constantly play along with an implicit set of rules that subordinates intelligence to affability.

Repeatedly, the ideal woman was depicted from the vantage point of the male gaze in women’s discourses, while adopting ‘dual personalities’ in the presence and absence of men was normalized and considered essential. In addition to presenting the personality features noted above in excerpt (34), almost all the interviewed women expressed an opinion that

women need to be or appear to be emotionally weaker than men. At the same time, women stressed that they must be wiser than men and apply this wisdom to make men feel secure in their masculine strength and power. In elaborating this notion, women frequently utilized a Russian proverb: *mužčina golova, a ženščina-šeja* ‘A man is a head, and a woman is a neck.’ This idiom is used to describe a women’s seemingly inferior, yet ultimately directive position – one that allows her to control the man’s vision, behaviors and attitudes (i.e. the superior male ‘head’ must follow where the inferior female ‘neck’ directs it). Kristina (20) in the excerpt (35) below uses this saying to explain how women ought to behave with men, emphasizing the importance of guiding men, while maintaining the pose of inferiority.

- (35) *Devuška dolžna kak by pokazat’, što vot ja ne mogu, vot pomogi mne, pomogi. To, što on ej pomogaet, to on kak by sebja vyše stavit, nu grubo govorja, ja vot molodets, ja vot pomagaju, vsjo takoje, a na samom dele, nu devuški oni umnee i oni kak by ljubjat i umejut mužčinami krutit’, tak skazat’ napravljat ih tuda, kuda nado. Mužčina golova, a ženščina-šeja. Devuška kak by napravljaet.*

‘A woman must sort of show that ‘look I can’t, help me, help.’ When he is helping her, he sort of puts himself higher, roughly speaking, ‘I am so great, I am helping here’ and such, but in fact young women are smarter and they like and can have a string on men to, let’s say, guide them into the right direction. A man is a head, but a woman is a neck. A woman sort of directs a man.’

Kristina frames her speech in a way that emphasizes that a woman must inhabit two personas: her true self and an artificial, inferior persona that she employs in order to make him feel valued. This duality is emphasized in the shift of her vocal pitch and volume when she says, *vot ja ne mogu, vot pomogi mne, pomogi* ‘look I can’t, help me, help.’ The slightly higher pitch, quieter volume, and the repetition of the word “help” enable Kristina to serve as an animator of the category “ideal women,” depicting the feigned helplessness of their nature. As seen from figure 15 below, when portraying a hypothesized “ideal woman” Kristina changes her body position by leaning forward to emphasize her solicitation. She places her hands on

her knees with her palms open invitingly, withdrawing the gaze from the interviewer and looking down in deference.

Figure 15. Portrayal of “a helpless woman.” Left to right: Kristina, Sasha



These non-linguistic devices employed by the speaker combine with her utterance to paint a vivid portrait of a modest, reserved, and helpless woman. From her other comments, we know that this is the dual self, the adopted persona she maintains to elicit male approval and affirm male expectations. By adopting the role of animator, Kristina is able to portray this complex category (an ideal woman displaying a partial or feigned persona to a man). As she explicitly states later in the interview, she does not self-identify with this category (ideal women); however, she clearly displays the behavior she deems appropriate. Linguistically, she produces a twofold utterance, shifting her footing through the change of vocal contours and body positioning, in order to create a depiction emblematic of the twofold personality of the feminine ideal.

To illustrate the effectiveness of the ideal woman's strategy for manipulating men's behavior, Kristina changes footing again, taking on the role of animator for a typical man. She starts with the adverbial preface, *grubo govorja* 'roughly speaking,' initiating a hypothetical man's reported thought in response to a woman's plea for help. In this shift of footing, she adopts a lower pitch – signaling that the forthcoming message is from a male speaker. Simultaneously, she lifts her hands, saying *ja vot molodets* 'I am so great,' graphically demonstrating the feeling of the man's superiority over a woman (see Figure 16 below).

Figure 16. Portrayal of “a superior man.” Left to right: Kristina, Sasha



Kristina ends her animated utterance with the hedge *i vsjo takoe* ‘and all such things,’ which is used to express the exhaustive nature of lists and to signal the difference between the footing of the animator and author of the utterance. She thus is able to return to her real position and continue articulating her own views on the subject. In actuality, she believes that women are more intelligent than men, and it is for this reason that she is able to employ dual personas to fool a man (sometimes even for his own benefit). In her view, the ability to convincingly feign incompetence is important in making a man feel cognizant of his “higher” societal position. The speaker seems not to mind the implied patriarchal relationship, perhaps, because she views this relationship merely as a play or contrivance, behind which the woman is situated in the key position (i.e. as a man’s directing “neck”).

The necessity for Russian women of sustaining dual personae can be most clearly observed in Natasha’s discourse, in which she describes the swift change, or pivot in behavior a woman must employ before and after engaging in a traditionally male domain such as martial arts. Natasha (27) stresses that when a woman is in the gym practicing karate, she is free to be equal with her male partner. In fact, equality is a precondition of respectful engagement with the art and productive training for the woman and her partner. Once the session is over, however, it is imperative that she return, quickly and gracefully, to her feminine self. For instance, on the way home from such physical exercises, Natasha insists that it must be the man who opens

the door for a woman. In excerpt (36) below, Natasha declares that she would not open the door to a building herself when she is with her male partner, even in extreme cases.

- (36) *Ja daze, kogda Danja s millionami paketov, ja vsjo ravno stoju i ždu, daze kogda dožd' idjot na ulitse, liven', ja stoju i ždu.*

'I even when Danja (i.e. name of the speaker's fiancé) is with millions of bags, I still stand and wait even when it rains outside, when it showers, I stand and wait.'

As seen from the excerpt (36), Natasha insists that even in the cases when her partner carries "a million of bags" and the rain is pouring heavily, she would not open the door by herself but rather wait for the man to do it. She later explains in excerpt (37) that encouraging chivalrous instincts in men is necessary, as it is a woman's duty and responsibility to mold a man.

- (37) *Kak by mužčinu sozdajom my. Vsegda mužčinu sozdajot ženščina, kotoraja rjedom nahoditsa. (...) Esli ty hočeš sil'nogo mužčinu, krepkogo, kotoryj uveren v sebe, uveren v tom, čto on zaščitnik i opora sem'i, to ty slabaja i ty dlja nego podderžka vo vseh ego načinanijah.*

'We are the ones who sort of create men. Always a woman creates her man. If you want a strong vigorous man, who is self-confident, confident that he is the protector and the supporter of the family, then you must be weak and you support him in all of his endeavors.'

Natasha claims that it is essential to mask the woman's true self with an alternative persona that enables the male partner to enjoy his masculinity. Natasha does not state explicitly that women are smarter than men (as Kristina did), but she expresses a similar idea: according to her, it is women who are in fact *spiritually* superior to men, and thus can afford the pretense of appearing weaker. Natasha then explains that men prefer for the boundaries between male and female domains to be clearly demarcated, simultaneously reinforcing this statement by gesturing towards two different spaces with her arms. Interestingly, Natasha is a founder and a director of a tourist company, while her husband works as a hairdresser. Despite this seemingly non-traditional (and even counter-stereotypical) distribution of occupations in the family, Natasha retains traditional views on femininity and a woman's role in interactions with her

husband. This substantiates Lyon's claim (2007) that Russian women's gender beliefs and real practices frequently do not correspond. Although Russian women often have clear and traditional beliefs regarding what women should do in a household, they nevertheless do not always put these ideas into practice in their own homes. Even, as in Natasha's case, when the occupational roles diverge profoundly from normative expectations, the framework of male-superiority and male-centric decision-making is retained and reiterated symbolically.

Another example of the dual persona is found in the discourse of Aljona (27), who after talking at length about women's need for independence and autonomy, later states that women must pretend to be weaker than men. In excerpt (38) below, she expresses the opinion that women should perform a kind of balancing-act in the precarious middle ground between a compromise and self-deprecation.

- (38) *Ženščina dolžna delat' tak, čto by mužčina byl sil'nee ejo, ne fizičeski, net, moral'no. Prosto sozdaj uslovija, čto by on čuvstvoval sebja glavoj, čuvstvoval sebja sil'nej. Ona možet byt' ne to, čto ona možet byt' i sil'nee, no ona mudree.*

'A woman must behave in a way that would make a man feel stronger than her, not physically, no, but emotionally. Just create conditions in which he feels as a head (of the family), feels stronger. She can be, it doesn't mean-, she might not be stronger, but she is wiser.'

Aljona emphasizes that a woman exercises a special wisdom in allowing the man to feel comfortable and strong. She then continues her discourse by stating that even if a woman is stronger, she must maneuver in her relationship carefully, by avoiding direct confrontation and resorting to compromise. Aljona does not utter the word "maneuver," but moves her hand in a serpentine curve (shown below in Figure 17), suggesting that a woman must flexibly adapt to changing circumstances and re-negotiate terms when necessary. The fact that she lowers her voice during this utterance suggests that the maneuvering must be covert, or at least hidden from male attention.

Figure 17. Female maneuvering. Left to right: Aljona, Dasha



In excerpt 39, Anjelika (26) also concurs that women must pretend to be weaker in order for the men to feel comfortable in their masculinity. She argues that a woman has both the ability and the responsibility to make her partner feel manly, and to this end, she must provide him with opportunities for masculine agency.

- (39) *Ona mozet byt' sil'naja. Ona mozet delat' vsjo, čto nado. (...) No s mužčinoj ona dolžna byt' slaboj, mužčine ona dolžna davat' prosto vozmožnost' byt' mužčinoj.*

‘She (a woman) can be strong. She can do anything that is needed. But with a man, she must be weak. She must just give a chance to a man to be a man.’

These twofold claims (of both subordination to and directive influence over men) diverge substantially from traditional gender ideologies, and present a more complex picture of women’s ideals and self-construals. Whenever interviewees reiterated the necessity of prioritizing male leadership in decision-making, they immediately qualified these assertions by means of an additional clause in which they reestablished their worthiness (e.g. “in reality women are smarter,” “she is wiser”). The interviewed women aimed to clarify that they did not actually believe in the women’s weakness. Rather, they merely acknowledged the necessity of appearing weak in the cultural context of contemporary Russian gender relations, both in order to bring satisfaction to their male partners as well as to achieve their own goals. These objectives range from molding an ideal man to achieving a happy and balanced relationship. It is noteworthy that (as seen in Table 2) only two women (Aljona and Katya) did not work outside the house (both were on maternity leaves). None of the women interviewed expressed a desire to stay at home and devote themselves to housework, even though they resorted to the

traditional gender frameworks of women as homemakers and subordinates in order to explicate the ideal feminine personality. This is yet another instance in which Russian women's perception of ideal womanhood differed from their actual practices.

In fact, the interviewed women conceptualized the ideal woman as one who pretends to be weaker in order to be in charge, exerting wiser or more effective autonomy. Behind the veil of feigned weakness, women professed that, far from suppressing their independence, male authority instead functions as its most effective vehicle. This thinking could be a strong source of female emotional empowerment, implicitly relying upon the supposition of women's spiritual superiority. On the other hand, it may reflect a symbolic form of compensation, in which, deprived of some measure of actual power by patriarchal norms, women valorize a limited autonomy that must operate only derivatively, effectuated through the influence they exert on their partners.

Perhaps because the (covert) directive role of women over their male partners was legitimized by putative female moral superiority, all the interviewed women suggested in some way that the purpose of women's directive action was a beneficent attempt to bring light and kindness to the whole of society. These moralistic ideas about the role of women in society, frequent in textbooks on ethics and the psychology of family life, link women's elevated spiritual values with their nurturing qualities and their motherly instincts (Kay, 1997:84). For instance, Marina (26) in excerpt 40 suggests the following mission for a young woman:

- (40) *Devuška, smysl její nesti etot svet v mir, ona dolžna byt', dolžna ukrašat' soboj i zaboťit'sja obo vseh, kto její okružáet nevažno skol'ko ej let.*

'A young woman's mission is to bring her light to the world; she must beautify (the environment) by herself and take care of everyone around her no matter how old she is.'

The generality of Marina's statement is emphasized by such lexical choices as "her mission," and "no matter how old," – creating an impression that this is every female's great

task in life. This sentiment echoes the findings of “The Perfect You” competition held in 1992, in which women often affirmed that their central task was to bring kindness and joy to the world (Kay, 1997: 84). Marina also connects the decorative function of women to such lofty ideals by stating *dolžna ukrašat’ soboj* ‘must beautify by herself’. The obligatory nature of the modal verb ‘must’ in Marina’s discourse emphasizes her conviction that women’s beauty needs to be exercised at all times. Her statement even suggests that it is the woman’s moral responsibility to appear visually pleasing, in order to share her loveliness with the society to make it a brighter place.

Another common thread in the discourse of the interviewed women is the awareness of self-worth, both in relationships and at work. While some women stressed that this awareness is self-derived and intrinsically important for maintaining self-esteem, others seemed to cultivate perceptions of self-worth primarily through (and for) the prism of male gaze. In other words, by cultivating greater self-worth, in their opinions, they would become more attractive for men. For instance, Rita (30), who works as a manicurist, explicitly states in excerpt 41 that she aspires to look luxurious, and has taken her friend as a role model *precisely because* she is able to demonstrate her worthiness through her (constant) ability to attract men.

- (41) *Ona moţet prepodnesi sebjā nastol’ko dorogo, ja u nejo etomu u us’.*
 ‘She can present herself so luxuriously, that I am learning this from her.’

Even when Rita describes the necessity for women to be engaged in activities unrelated to concerns of fashion and appearance, her reasoning returns to the centrality of the male gaze. In excerpt 42, she suggests how women’s knowledge can be appropriately applied in conversations with men.

- (42) RIT: *Nuţno dumat’ devu ke, nu no byt’ vsestoronne razvitoj. Ja ne govorju,  to ona dol na byt’ na itanoj i zau ennoj, prosto real’no-*

‘A woman needs to think, she needs to be comprehensively developed. I am not saying that she must be well-read and all-studied, but just really be-’

ANJ: *interesovat'sa*
'Have interests.'

RIT: *da, interesovat'sa ne tol'ko šmotkami i trjapkami, no i skazat' oj da ja včera-*
'Yes, have interests not only in clothes and rags, but say, "Oh yesterday I"-'

While Rita here stresses the necessity for a woman to have casual knowledge in a diversity of different spheres, she also suggests that a woman need not be deeply informed or excessively erudite, as this risks placing her into the 'undesirable' category. Her learning, it seems, succeeds to the extent that it makes her interesting, but goes too far if it challenges the epistemic authority of men or dangerously highlights her intelligence. Her negative stance to scholarly endeavors is indexed through Rita's usage of the adjectival form *zaučennaja*, which comes from the verb *zaučivat'* 'memorize' and the offensive term *zaučka* 'grind.' Rita underlines that women do not need to reach the level of a "know-all" and starts a word search by using fillers. Anjelika immediately provides a repair candidate "have interests," which Rita willingly accepts and continues her utterance. She then specifies that the "interests" should not be solely centered upon choices of clothing, but extend beyond traditionally female hobbies and preferences. She argues that in this case women should be able to boast about their lives, changing footing to a hypothetical exemplary woman who has diverse interests and capabilities. While saying, "Oh yesterday you know I-" she produces rising and falling motions with her palm, as seen in figure 18 below.

Figure 18. Feminine way of story-telling: Left to right: Rita, Anjelika



Through the shift in footing accompanied by hand gestures and high vocal pitch, Rita stresses the need for women to respect prevailing social conventions when they contribute to conversations, sustaining a feminine demeanor throughout. The fact that Rita predominantly

describes conversations with male speakers is seen from a personal anecdote presented in (43) below.

- (43) *Ja tam sižu s takimi stiletami i govorju parnju (0.1) ja korovy umeju doit'. (0.1) Per-pervoje takoje, "hy:"*

'I am sitting there with such long stylish nails, and say to a guy, I can milk a cow. First he was like, "Huh?"'

This story plays off the tensions between traditional concepts of masculinity and femininity in order to illustrate Rita's thoughts concerning ideal womanhood. She relates her experience with milking cows as an example of the diversity of her interests (the necessity of which she had previously attested). She changes the footing twice: first performing as animator to dramatize her own role in the story, and then subsequently to vocalize the man's reaction. To situate her story, Rita first explains that the conversation took place when she was looking especially attractive with her long nails stylishly polished. When talking about her nails, she holds them up for inspection, as seen in the left panel of figure 19 below.

Figure 19. Male reaction to Rita's milking a cow. Left to right: Rita, Anjelika



After a brief pause, Rita returns to direct speech in a steady, unaffected voice, "I can milk a cow." After pausing again briefly to let the interlocutor appreciate the comical nature of her story, she turns her gaze to Anjelika to describe the astonished reaction of the male listener. The ridiculousness of the situation is conveyed through Rita's touch of her temple, followed by spreading of her arms, as shown in the middle panel of figure 19. The lexical item *takoje* 'like' serves as a quotation marker signaling the shift of footing. Instead of providing a verbal reaction from her male interlocutor, she utilizes a mimetic expression *hy* 'huh' (with a

prolonged vowel [y]) to emphasize his extreme surprise. She also lifts her arms and head, and widens her eyes to animate her male friend's disbelief upon hearing that Rita is capable of cow milking. The animated man's reaction is seen in the right panel of figure 19.

Rita's performance in enthusiastically animating this anecdote actively expresses the significance for her of soliciting acceptance and approval by men. She does not merely *state* that diverse interests (i.e. in areas not limited to fashion) are necessary for a woman, but tells a story that serves as a validation of diverse knowledge and pursuits. The climax of her story is the reaction of her male interlocutor's impressed amazement and bewilderment, emphasizing that the final justification of these interests is to be found in male approval.

In describing their own conceptions of ideal womanhood, the interviewees rarely evoked explicit epistemic stances, avoiding the use of such expressions as "I think" or "in my opinion." Instead, they frequently generalized their knowledge, a maneuver suggesting that other reasonable women would share their opinions. Despite the fact that the interviewer explicitly asked women to give their *own*, idiosyncratic definition of their ideal woman, linguistically, the speakers tended to create homogeneous normative categories of women and men, without epistemic reservations. This too serves as evidence that Russian women have internalized and rigidified ideals about femininity and role of women in society, making it difficult to delineate separately their "real" individual preferences. In fact, the majority of interviewees responded negatively when asked whether they resemble the ideal woman that they had described, while only four women stated that they were describing themselves. The importance of physical attractiveness and male gaze considerations were evoked in almost all female speakers' narratives, suggesting that these notions are still strongly tied with femininity and women's roles in Russia.

3.1.3 Egalitarianism and female autonomy

All women in some capacity claimed that an ideal young woman of 20-30 years old should be confident, self-sufficient, and carefully avoid appearing infantile and immature. Through the use of idiomatic expressions, proverbs, and sayings, the speakers engaged Russian structured cultural knowledge. Three women produced a well-known Russian proverb “*Russkaja ženščina i v gorjaščuju izbu vojdjot, i konja na skaku ostanovit* ‘A Russian woman can both enter a burning hut, and stop a galloping horse,’” thereby implying that Russian women are capable of any task, no matter how hard and challenging it may initially appear. This saying is a paraphrase of two lines of Nikolay Nekrasov’s poem (1864) “Frost the Red Nose” about Russian women in the suburbs. Currently this expression has been absorbed into the lexical inventory of Russian proverbs, without reference to its origin, as a way to vividly characterize the resilient and adaptable nature of Russian women. All women’s discourses incorporated discussions of women’s strength, stamina, and independence as desirable characteristics to some extent. For instance, Aljona (27) in excerpt 44 described her conception of an ideal woman as both confident and autonomous:

- (44) (...) *ženščina dolžna byt’ uverennaja, znat’ čego hočet, stremitsja k nezavisimosti, (...) dolžna ponjat’, čto ej nado.*

‘A woman must be confident, know what she wants, seek independence, (...) must understand what she needs.’

Thus, Aljona acknowledges that a woman of the 20-30 age range should start behaving maturely, setting clear goals for herself and outlining the mechanisms for achieving them. In her view, this applies equally to both the professional and personal domains. None of the women, however, self-identified as feminists, a possible consequence of the belief that feminism is a Western European and American notion and the resulting stigmatized pragmatics of the word in the Russian language (Lipovskaja, 1997: 191). These connotations have led to frequent misinterpretations and misapplications of the term “feminist” as a “man-hater,” or an

“unfeminine, unattractive woman” – and as such, the term can be used as an insult. Upon learning that the researcher considered herself a feminist, the interviewees deployed change-of-state tokens and shifted the topic of conversation after a short pause. As seen in the National Corpus of Spoken Russian, this word frequently collocates with such adjectives as *voinstvujuščaja* “militant,” *svihnuvšajasja* ‘insane,’ and *ogoltelaja* ‘unbridled’ that give the noun phrase a negative connotation. This further confirms that the pragmatics of this term in Russian is linked to undesirable characteristics, while the semantics is frequently misunderstood. As a result, women are unlikely to self-identify as feminists or conceive of themselves in terms of active struggle for gender equality, even when they construe autonomy and self-sufficiency as indispensable virtues for women.

3.1.4 Ideal Russian women and swearing

The interviewed women had slightly divergent opinions on swearing and its appropriateness for female speakers’ usage, but all the 20 women emphasized that such vocabulary should (in theory) be avoided by all genders. In practice, however, most women claimed that emphatic swearwords would generally be more permissible if used by a male speaker. Nevertheless, women admitted that they also use this type of vocabulary. Moreover, while the majority blamed themselves for foul language, others admitted that in some circumstances swearing might be appropriate and even necessary. These responses portray both the multiplicity of opinions about swearing as well as and the gap between women’s social ideologies and their real language practices.

Nineteen out of the twenty women refuted the notion that most people who swear are male. When asked if men swear more frequently, Rita responded with a sarcastic *Ja tebjja umoljaju* ‘I am begging you,’ implying that such a belief is counterfeit. Masha elaborated that because of women’s strong emotionality, they tend to become agitated and swear more than

their more stoic male counterparts. In the excerpt 45 below, Masha expresses her opinion on the underlying difference between the female and male psyche, and construes divergent socially accepted behavior as a consequence of this dissimilarity.

- (45) *Ja sčitaju, čto mužčina dolžen bol'se sebja v rukah deržat'. Mužčiny vse-taki ne takie impul'sivnye kak ženščiny. Oni dolžny byt' normal'nymi lud'mi takimi, uravnovešennymi.*

'I think that a man must hold himself together. Men still are not as impulsive [lifts her arms] as women. [Waves her arms above the head]. They must be normal people, so, even-tempered.'

When describing the way men must behave, Masha uses the expression *deržat's sebja v rukah*, which literally means 'to hold oneself in one's arms,' implying that men should not lose their temper or act irrationally based on their feelings. The metaphor of arms is later indexed through Masha's non-verbal behavior. She does not state that women do not 'hold themselves in their arms', but rather shows it by lifting her arms and waving them from side to side to dramatize the instability of women's emotions. She lifts her arms at the word *impulsivnye* 'impulsive' and starts waving them to the sides when pronouncing *kak ženščiny* 'as women,' clearly implying that women are very impulsive and cannot control themselves. Iconicity is also noticeable in Masha's vocal shifts. She raises and lowers the volume and pitch of her voice to convey the fickle and unstable nature of women, while when speaking of men she selects a flatter tone without fluctuation to emphasize their stability. The dynamics of her hand movement can be seen in the figure 20 below.

Figure 20. "Impulsive nature of women" Left to right: Lena, Masha



After these gestures, Masha continues to elaborate on the type of character men must demonstrate, saying that they should be “normal” and “even-tempered.” This description contrasts with the previous demonstration of women’s impulsivity. The notion that men constitute the default “normal” form and that women are a deviation or “a departure from the norm” has been quite common in early discourse on language and gender (Jespersen, 1922). The stereotype of women’s changing emotionality and irrationality is frequently utilized in Russian televised commercials, solidifying gender ideology in people’s minds by naturalizing and normalizing it.

Similarly to Masha, Aljona also expressed her doubts about the received notion that women swear less frequently than men, claiming that women and men use swearing in similar proportions, while Katya protested this idea, using sarcastic *Da, konečno eto ženščiny bol’she, po krainej mere v Rossii* ‘Yeah, right, it is women (who use it) more, at least in Russia.’ Katya suggests that peculiarities of the social environment in Russia encourage women to use vulgar expressions more frequently. She then clarifies that this happens primarily because “Russian mentality” forces people to resort to emotionally charged vocabulary. She does not elaborate further on the topic of “mentality” or cultural peculiarity, but admits that it is still more acceptable to hear a man swear, while a swearing woman triggers concern in passers-by, as presented in excerpt (46).

(46) *Konečno, na ulitse budet diko slyšat’ kogda ženščina materitsa, da i, kogda mužčina materitsa, ty osobo prohodiš i ne obraščaeš na eto vnimanie, a kogda devuška, to ty uže kak-to smotriš, dumaesh, čto to ne to s nej, °čto kakie-to kosjaki v nej est’°.*

‘Of course, in the street it would be wildly strange to hear a woman swear. Well, when a man swears, you pass by and don’t pay much attention, but when a woman does that, you then look and think, something must be wrong with her, some issues (*kosjaki*) with her.’

Katya lowers her voice when describing people’s reaction to a woman who swears, indicating the inappropriateness of that situation. She uses the lexical item *diko* ‘wild’ to

convey how atypical and abnormal it would be to hear a woman swear in public (in contrast with men). Given that Katya herself admits to swearing, it might seem inconsistent that she cannot tolerate hearing this vocabulary coming from another woman. The difference lies in the acceptable zone of usage. If utilized inside the house, swearing seems to be less disturbing and more acceptable; in the public domain, it is only men who can enjoy this privilege without receiving a strict social judgement. In the speaker's view, a woman who swears "in the street" must have some *kosjaki* 'issues, problems.' This slang expression originally referred merely to a door or window jamb, but has since developed the novel colloquial meaning of something unpleasant and problematic. Thus, a woman who swears outside the house, in a place where she can be heard by passers-by, risks being labeled as a problematic or disruptive individual suffering from emotional or psychological disorder.

Another factor constraining the use of swearing vocabulary by women is the identity and nature of the addressee. Many interviewed women claimed that it is a taboo for a woman to swear in the presence of a man. Natasha, for instance, admits that she sometimes swears, but emphasizes that she avoids doing it in her partner's presence. In a somewhat confusing manner, despite the fact that women use swear words privately, she places swearing vocabulary firmly into the male domain, calling this type of jargon *grubaja sostabljajuščaja žizni* 'the rude component of life.' She then reasons that it is inappropriate for a woman's use because a woman is a "natural carrier of femininity, tenderness, kindness" and a "keeper of a pure origin." When describing the innate femininity and kindness of women, she brings her palms to her chest as seen in figure 21 below, indicating symbolically that the sincere qualities of women come directly from their hearts. Natasha then elaborates further on her logic, claiming that by swearing a woman loses a portion of her femininity in the eyes of a man and is reduced to his level.

Figure 21. “Natural carrier of femininity.” Left to right: Polina, Natasha



Natasha thus suggests that women’s appearance and personality are not the only objects of men’s meticulous scrutiny: women’s language is also observed and regulated by male judgment. Because of this constant monitoring, when a woman swears, according to Natasha, she “loses a part of herself in men’s eyes.” Natasha then encourages women to realize this difference between the lexical prerogatives of men and women, and thus maintain their place in relation to men, as presented in the excerpt 47 below.

- (47) *Što by mužčina sebja čuvstvoval mužčinoj, >i ty kak ženščina<. esli ty hočeš uvidet’ rezul’tatov ot mužčiny, to ty i vedi sebja podobajuščim obrazom.*

‘So that a man feels as a man, and you- as a woman, if you want to see the results from a man, then behave yourself appropriately.’

When articulating the necessity of making a man feel manly, Natasha lifts up her left hand to indicate a high level. She then adds a lower level gesture with her right hand when she rather rapidly pronounces, “you –like a woman,” as shown in figure 22. Here again she expresses the opinion that women need to possess dual personalities, behaving “appropriately” with a man in order to achieve their goals.

Figure 22. Men’s and women’s places. Left to right: Polina, Natasha.



This iconic usage of hand gestures emphasizes the woman's subordinate status to the man, while the gap between the hands suggests the degree of this subordination. This logic of subordination and its rather transparent physical demonstration is common among the interviewed women, but reflects the mainstream mentality rather than diverse individual practices. In fact, like most other respondents, Natasha confesses to swearing often. Some women even demonstrated the extensive usage of this type of vocabulary by building whole sentences out of various obscene words. Nevertheless, the interviewed women had internalized the proscriptions of Russian society so thoroughly that they criticized other women for using the same lexical items.

Anna, who similarly acknowledged sporadic usage of obscene vocabulary, suggests that women should control themselves more as shown in the excerpt (48) below.

- (48) 1 ANN: *Ja vsjo-taki sčitaju, čto da, devuške prinjato sebja bol'she kontrolirovat'.*
 'I still think that yes, a young woman is supposed to control herself more.'
- 2 *nu ne krasovo iz ust takoj miloj devočki. [Animates a swearing woman]*
 'Well, it's just not beautiful from the lips of such a cute girl.'
- 3 *[hhh]*
- 4 VAL: *[hhh]*
(0.1)
- 5 ANN: *Nu kak-to (0.1) Ponjatno, čto možno,*
 'Well, like, (0.1). Of course, you can,'
- 6 VAL: *[nodding]*
- 7 ANN: *nu, eto delo každogo,*
 'well, it's everyone's own business,'
- 8 *no ja sčitaju, čto lučše kak by,*
 'but I think that it's better like'
- 9 VAL: *[nodding]*
- 10 ANN: *po krajnej mere, starat'sja.*
 'at least try.'

Anna foregrounds the concern that vulgar language is incongruent with female beauty, reasoning in line 2, *nu ne krasovo iz ust takoj miloj devočki* ‘Well, it’s just not beautiful from the lips of such a cute girl.’ To emphasize the incompatibility of women’s appearance with the emphatic swearing, she selects language that emphasizes the cute and innocent nature of a young woman. The expression of *iz ust* ‘from the lips’ consists of the archaism *usta* ‘mouth,’ which is almost absent in spoken language, except when it is a part of an idiomatic expression such as the one that Anna employs. Because of its archaic nature, expressions containing this lexical item tend to carry a distinct literary flavor and a beautifying effect. To further demonstrate the despicable nature of a swearing woman, she shifts footing in order to act out a beautiful young woman who uses a swearword. As Anna pronounces the noun phrase “cute girl” in the first two panels in figure 23, she simultaneously enacts that image by performing a hand waving motion that stresses female naivety, purity, and beauty. Then, in dramatizing the use of emphatic swearing language, she lowers her head deviously, turning it to the side, as seen in the far right panel below. Her facial expressions also undergo a visible transformation, turning unpleasantly angry, while she opens her lips as though to utter a harsh swearword. Even though Anna did not actually pronounce the implied swearword, by adopting the role of an animator she demonstrates the inappropriateness of a beautiful young woman’s use of swearing.

Figure 23. A beautiful young woman in an act of swearing. Left to right: Anna, Valya



. Anna’s utterance is followed by shared laughter, but Valya does not take the floor and Anna continues elaborating further on her position. In lines 5-10, she summarizes her position

with an epistemic downgrade, stressing the necessity for women to at least try to avoid swearwords in their speech.

3.1.5. Summary

Through the extensive use of gestures and footing, Russian women conveyed their stances toward various categories of men and women. They effortlessly and straightforwardly defined the key notions of femininity, predominantly emphasizing women's roles in relation to men. The interviewees had clear perceptions of the ways a woman must hold herself and converse with a man. They were able to identify the phrases a woman should use, the expressions she should avoid, as well as the topics she should and should not touch upon in the men's presence. All the 20 women mentioned the necessity to have an "onsite" and an "offsite" persona in the presence and absence of a man and the skill to swiftly and flexibly shift between them adapting to the changing contexts. Thus, the women tended to perceive themselves and evaluate their self-worth through the eyes of men, and yet emphasize the importance of independence and self-sustainability. The female respondents, however, claimed that these qualities must remain hidden from men, as they may appear threatening for the male leadership.

Despite their rigid thinking, however, it is not clear to what extent Russian women actually follow the rules that are being imposed by media, advertising and other "socializing agents" (Kang, 1997). Most of the women admitted that they were far from the described ideals and needed to work harder to be more successful. Furthermore, the majority of the interviewees confessed that they indeed use swearwords frequently in interactions to express strong emotions. In Chapter 4 of the dissertation, I will further assess the gap between women's real practices and societal perceptions of femininity by examining women's speech from the corpus of spontaneous conversations.

3.2 Japanese women's discourses

3.2.1 Participants

Table 3 below summarizes demographic data for the 24 female participants, including their age, educational background, current occupation, and region of origin within Japan. Some interviewees indicated the city of their origin, while others- only the prefecture. Interviews were conducted in pairs according to the ordinal sequence presented in the table.

Table 3. Japanese female respondents' demographic data

Pair	Pseudonym	Age	Educational background	Current occupation	Origin in Japan
1.	Rika	21	BA in Literature (3 rd year)	Student	Gifu
	Natsu	22	BA in Literature (4 th year)	Student	Osaka
2.	Mana	26	BA in Law	Office worker	Tokyo
	Saya	21	BA in Dentistry (4 th year)	Student	Tokyo
3.	Ayaka	20	BA in French (2 nd year)	Student	Osaka
	Sari	20	BA in French (2 nd year)	Student	Aichi prefecture
4.	Aki	20	BA in Engineering (3 rd year)	Student	Ishikawa prefecture
	Momo	20	BA in Nursing (2 nd year)	Student	Osaka
5.	Yume	23	BA in Economics (4 th year)	Student	Osaka
	Sako	23	BA in Economics (4 th year)	Student	Osaka
6.	Shoko	21	BA in Literature (3 rd year)	Student	Akashi, Hyogo
	Eri	22	BA in Literature (4 th year)	Student	Kumamoto
7.	Mari	25	MA in Japanese Linguistics	PhD student	Osaka
	Mina	26	MA in Japanese Linguistics	PhD student	Okayama
8.	Haru	21	BA in Literature (3 rd year)	Student	Hyogo prefecture
	Yuri	20	BA in Literature (3 rd year)	Student	Kochi prefecture

9.	Hana	26	MA in Japanese Literature	PhD student	Toyama prefecture
	Tomoko	26	MA in Japanese Literature	Researcher	Tottori prefecture
10.	Aika	20	BA in Literature (3 rd year)	Student	Osaka
	Chika	21	BA in Literature (3 rd year)	Student	Fukui prefecture
11.	Satoko	20	BA in History (2 nd year)	Student	Okayama
	Ana	20	BA in Linguistics (2 nd year)	Student	Kyoto
12.	Hanami	21	BA in Linguistics (3 rd year)	Student	Fukui prefecture
	Kari	20	BA in Linguistics (3 rd year)	Student	Okayama

3.2.2 The meaning and value of *kawaii*

Kawaii has been considered an indispensable component of Japanese femininity, required in each of the diverse spheres of a woman's life (Kinsella, 1995). Its meaning and significance extend far beyond a woman's external appearance, and encompass her speech, her habits of economic consumption, and her overall ability to express feelings of feminine gratitude and happiness (Richie, 2003). As discussed above in the Chapter 1 (Introduction), scholars have translated the conceptual content of *kawaii* in a variety of different (and sometimes potentially incompatible) ways, including characterizations such as “beautiful, lovable, suitable, addictive, cool, funny, ugly but endearing, quirky and gross” (Okazaki and Johnson, 2013: 7). At the same time, the literature has stressed the intimate interconnection between *kawaii* and femininity (Burdelski & Mitsuhashi, 2010:67). In Chapter 2 on Japanese televised commercials, I have shown that many advertisers aim to create a *kawaii* persona in their persuasive appeals by utilizing specific linguistic devices. In this section, I will investigate Japanese women's own ideas on the definitive qualities of the *kawaii* persona and its perceived value to them. In the exploration of women's own voices on femininity and *kawaii*, points of consonance and dissonance with the prevailing culture will become more apparent.

As a preliminary metric, and to provide a starting-point for subsequent discussion, I asked 24 young female respondents to indicate their visions of a *kawaii* woman in an open-ended, written form (see complete questionnaire in Appendix). The prompt question (presented in Japanese) was “What kind of woman is *kawaii*, in your opinion?” and participants could write up to four characteristics in response. Participants were also asked to rate the personal importance of *kawaii*, to them, on a scale from 1-5. The results reveal a consistent pattern with respect to the core content of *kawaii*, and show that Japanese women have a clear understanding of its importance in society. However, there are also interesting divergences in the respondents’ characterizations of *kawaii*, suggesting that modern Japanese women have a complex relationship with the concept.

Seventeen out of 24 women (71%) emphasized that a *kawaii* woman frequently smiles and is always in good spirits ($\chi^2(1) = 4.167, p=0.04$). Five respondents indicated that *amae* ‘the skill of relying on other people’ makes a woman *kawaii*, while having a slender build, daintiness (*kyasha*) and ‘acceptingness’ (*sunao*) were each mentioned in four entries. Other responses concerning the components of *kawaii* included naivety, cheerfulness, friendliness, sensitivity to other people, a preference to avoid talking behind another person’s back, good fashion sense, the ability to enjoy anything, and a tendency to get shy easily. Some respondents went even further, adding that a *kawaii* woman eats a lot, has flawless white skin and large, captivating eyes, wears skirts, particularly favors pink colors, and sports a type of a haircut referred to as *pattsun* (short bob haircut with bangs). Two participants intimated that a *kawaii* persona is selfish (*wagamama*), exhibiting childish behavior and using a high pitch when speaking.

Japanese women thus seem to have a detailed understanding of what *kawaii* entails, although some of the features are contradictory, or at least in obvious tension. While most women adhered mainly to positive characteristics such as “cuteness,” several respondents

pointed out the negative side of *kawaii* by linking it to immaturity and infantilism. On average, participants rated the importance of *kawaii* as 3.9 out of a 5-point scale – making it more vital than intelligence (3.6) in the minds of Japanese women, yet less crucial than psychological stamina (4.0) and kindness (4.4). This data implies that despite the ubiquitous presence of *kawaii* in Japanese popular culture and the repetitive images of *kawaii* personas in televised commercials, Japanese women have a complex relationship with the set of characteristics that define *kawaii*.

This multifaceted relationship with *kawaii* was further investigated through interviews in which women were asked to elaborate on the importance of *kawaii* in their lives, as well as to describe their aspirations and tactics for becoming (or for avoiding becoming) *kawaii*. In these interviews, the ambivalent nature of *kawaii* became readily apparent, as women expressed mixed attitudes toward different aspects of the concept. The interviewees also treated *kawaii* differentially based upon the modality in which it was expressed, distinguishing between cuteness of appearance, cuteness of speaking, cuteness of behavior, and overall cuteness of personality. This perception of cuteness supports Asano-Cavanagh's claim (2014) that the definition of *kawaii* encompasses not only looks, but also a woman's manner of communication and conduct, and extends even further to include a woman's holistic persona. Women agreed with the notion that *kawaii* has to appear natural and sincere – while created or counterfeit cuteness is undesirable and should be avoided. In the following excerpt (49), Sari and Ayaka express their stance toward *kawaii*. Previously, Ayaka had claimed that her ideal woman is *kawairashii* 'lovely.' The researcher then asked if the interviewees if their ideal woman also possessed other aspects of cuteness. In response, both women raised a broader concern about what it means to be *kawaii*, questioning whether it is possible to deliberately make oneself cuter through effort or practice:

- (49) 1 SAR: *Meccha muri ni kawaiku suru hitsuyoo wa nai to omou.* hh (nods twice). (0.1)
‘I think there is no point in trying extra hard to be cute’
- 2 *Nanka shizenna kanji de* (nodes once)
 ‘Like it (should) be natural’
- 3 AYA: *Sore ga kawa- shizenna no ga kawaii tte iu no kana. Tsukutteru no- tsukutte*
- 4 *kawai no wa hontou no kawaii jyanai.* [hh
 ‘That is cu-. The natural is cute, I should say. The made-up, made-up cuteness
is not a real cuteness.’
- 5 SAR:
[hhhhh]

In line 1 of this excerpt, Sari uses the colloquial adverbial intensifier *meccha* ‘extremely,’ stressing the absence of any strong effort to appear cuter than one actually is. She then nods emphatically, and after a brief pause adds that natural qualities in particular are important for an ideal woman. To emphasize that being *kawaii* should come “from the heart”, Sari brings her palms up to her chest illustratively, as shown in figure 24 below. Ayaka then expresses agreement with Sari’s stance and claims that a woman can only be truly *kawaii* if she is not pretending; otherwise, the term *kawaii* can no longer appropriately be applied.

Figure 24. True *kawaii* comes from heart. Left to right: Ayaka and Sari



Thus, through their speech and associated gestures, Sari and Ayaka explicated that *kawaii* is not an achievement or accomplishment of an ideal woman, i.e., something one can become, but rather an innate quality or characteristic of personality, i.e., something one is or is not. If a woman tried to deliberately bring herself into closer correspondence with the ideals of *kawaii* cuteness, without being *kawaii* at heart, she would risk being considered *burikko* ‘fake-*kawaii*’ or “a woman who plays bogus innocence” (Miller, 2004: 149). While simultaneously stressing that *kawaii* cannot be achieved through effortful action, both Sari and Ayaka said that

their ideal woman is *kawaii* and they strive to approach that ideal as much as possible. These Japanese women appear to be in a kind of ideological double bind: they must approach their ideal but cannot do so consciously or explicitly. Thus, for *kawaii* to be achieved, they must bring themselves in line with the normative ideal in a manner that must appear effortless and unforced. Anything else will qualify as insincere and untrue.

Similarly, Chika and Aika argue that *kawaii* is a very desirable quality for a woman, and explain that it consists of a holistic integration of components including cuteness of appearance, cuteness of speech, and cuteness of motion or gesture. Aika emphasized that accumulating all these characteristics is a tremendous challenge for a woman – but stressed that if a woman succeeds, she can be considered truly *kawaii*. The crucial feature of the *kawaii* self-presentation is that it must appear supremely natural so that people will have no cause to doubt the sincerity of a woman’s cuteness. Make-up too, as women emphasized, must be applied in a way that would make a woman look naturally and effortlessly cute. When asked if Aika personally valued being and maintaining *kawaii* in her everyday life, she utilized a hypothetical positive third-party assessment to convey her stance, as shown in excerpt (50).

(50) *Wazawaza soo shiyoo to wa, so iu soburi o wazato shitari wa shinai n desu kedo, nanka a sonna iikata kawaii yo ne toka, iwareru to a, ureshii na to omoimasu.*

‘I don’t do, behave in this way on purpose, but if someone tells me, ‘Oh your way of talking is *kawaii*,’ I am happy to hear that.’

Thus, Aika views the value of *kawaii* through the prism of a third person whose positive evaluation of her she genuinely appreciates, but cannot solicit or control. After using the lexical item *nanka* ‘like,’ which in this context has the function of introducing an example, Aika changes footing in order to give a positive assessment of her own way of talking from the perspective of the hypothetical third party. She then employs the change-of-state token *a* ‘oh’, which signals surprise – and is regarded as an important component of a polite response to a compliment (because it underlines that the compliment has not been expected (Baba, 1999)).

Even though Aika reflects on a hypothetical compliment from an interlocutor that she herself has created, she still uses a linguistic item that suggests unexpectedness. By doing so, she emphasizes that one should not have self-awareness of being *kawaii*, yet merely hope to appear naturally cute. When articulating the hypothetical compliment, Aika stretches her arms in front of herself, projecting the presence of the third party who produces the positive assessment. When changing the footing to show her appreciation of the compliment, Aika brings her arms closer to her chest, saying that she would feel happy. In addition, Aika uses a self-reflexive sentence-ending particle *na*, prolonging the final vowel in order to emphasize the sincere happiness she receives from being (hypothetically) called *kawaii*.

The desire evinced by the female interviewees to be seen as *kawaii* and to be complimented accordingly, together with the previous findings regarding *kawaii*-promoting televised commercials, combine to show that this concept has a well-established niche in the Japanese society value system. Two essential facets of the *kawaii* concept that were repeatedly stressed in the women's discourse are its purity and its lack of intentionality or purposiveness. Just as children do not realize their cuteness or cultivate it intentionally, women can only be regarded as *kawaii* if they are not conscious of their cuteness and are not trying hard to appear cute. In this way, it is similar to the concept *muku* 'innocence' with its focus on complete purity. Hana argues that this kind of natural sincerity is an essential component of cuteness (excerpt 51), while purposeful infantilism does not suit women after a certain age.

(51) *Honnin ga ishikiteki ni kawaiku shiyoo to omotte, itteru tte iu no wa ma, anoo, amari yoku mieru mono de wa nai to omotte imasu.*

'If (the woman) herself consciously speaks trying to be cute, it is, well, it does not look good, I think.'

For precisely this reason, Hana criticized the female scientist Haruka Obokota, who used high pitch and lengthened word endings in a transparent attempt to appear cute. She then acknowledged that cuteness is multi-layered and asserted that a woman should not be faulted

if she speaks overly cutely without intending to do so. Hana also added that every woman has her own, distinctive cuteness, which is revealed in various ways and in diverse contexts. Though she had previously suggested that cuteness could not be self-claimed or self-assessed, Hana later commented on the type of *kawaii* that she would aspire to become, as shown in excerpt 52 below.

(52) *Fudan ni kuuru ni furumatte itemo nanka sono futoshita shunkan ga kawaii toka, nanka kooiu kuse ga kawaii toka.*

‘Even though she acts cool usually, in sudden moments she turns cute, or she has some cute habits.’

In making this utterance, Hana implicitly acknowledges that there is a variety of ways to appear and behave cute, and that cuteness does not have to be evident in every action a woman undertakes. While she suggests that constantly radiating cuteness would not fit her persona, she does appreciate less overt or frequent forms of cuteness. The emphasis here is again placed on the spontaneity and sincerity of *kawaii* behaviors, conveyed through the use of the noun phrase *futoshita shunkan* ‘sudden moments’ and the lexical item *kuse* ‘habit.’ Because a woman may be faulted for faking cuteness, Hana aims to ensure that her ideal cuteness is realized naturally—one cannot forge her unconscious habits or strategically reveal spontaneous and unexpected cuteness. This kind of pure cuteness, absolutely free of pretense or affectation, is something that Hana admires in her ideal woman and hopes to achieve.

Thus, the Japanese society pressures women to conform, without deliberate intention, to standards of cuteness that render them inferior to men in social relationships (Asano, 1996). The gender ideologies upon which the dogma of *kawaii* are based posit that feminine childishness, innocence, and cuteness are natural and innate features, and reject the claim that they are imposed by socialization pressures and gender norms. For this reason, it is unappealing to men to see the underside of their own desire reflected back by the woman who deliberately attempts to pose as *kawaii*. Women are expected to participate in their own assimilation to

gender stereotypes without being so rude as to point out to men that they are doing so. By feigning naturalness, women reinforce the male illusion that the social domination of *kawaii* norms is spontaneous and natural, and thereby flatter the male desire for power and privilege.

Hana's friend Tomoko, who also shared the opinion that *kawaii* cannot be feigned, nevertheless suggested that at times a woman may need to speak falsehoods in order to sound cute – and thereby please her male superiors. An excerpt from her discourse is presented in (53)

- (53) *Tada meue no dansee to hanashi o suru toki nanka ni, ma “shirimasendeshita” to yutta hoo ga kawaiirashii toki ga jyosei toshite wa aru kana to omoimasu. (0.1) Taboeba, kiita koto ga aru mitaina toki ni mo, “Shirimasendeshita. Hajimete desu” to itta hou ga kono hito ga yorokobu no de areba, watashi wa soo shite imasu.*

‘It is just when talking to a male superior, I think there are times when it is cuter for a woman to say, “I didn’t know that.” For example, at times, even though I have heard about it before, if I say, “I didn’t know. It’s the first time” it makes a man happy. If that’s the case, I do that.’

Thus, according to Tomoko, there are circumstances in which acting cute by concealing one’s actual knowledge or experiences is a desirable mode of behavior. In her discourse, she suggests that her behavior can be determined by the male superior’s preferences, rather than her own. If something as easy as stating, “I didn’t know” would bring him happiness, Tomoko would gladly take this opportunity in order to build a better relationship. This double standard toward *kawaii* and women who use it strategically comes from its high value in the Japanese society and the benefits that appearing *kawaii* may bring, thus making it highly attractive if practiced skillfully. In order to be a skilled practitioner, however, Tomoko must sabotage her attempts to appear knowledgeable or well informed in order to maintain the fictive superiority of the men who hold professional sway over her.

Cuteness is not the sole or even the most important criterion by which a woman’s conduct is evaluated, and should be exercised only in a limited set of contexts such as the one presented in excerpt (53). In addition to cuteness, Tomoko also suggested that a woman must always demonstrate a high level of education and culture. She emphasized in the following

excerpt (54) that even such simple actions as taking an object should be done gracefully and femininely.

- (54) *Tatoeba mono o toru toki ni gaato torazu ni, koo chanto yubi o soroete toru toka, oto o tatenai toka, soo iu nichijyoo tekina koto ni, ma soitta koto ni kuwaete kyooyoo ga aru to iu koto daiji kana to omoimasu.*

‘For example, when taking things you don’t take it roughly, but put your fingers together when taking, and not make noise, in these kinds of daily activities it is important to show your culture.’

Thus, through the example of the care with which one must execute even mundane actions, Tomoko conveys the idea that cultural upbringing and education should shine through every aspect of a woman’s behavior. A woman must always demonstrate a high level of culture, whether conveyed through words, through actions, or through gestures that are beautiful and refined. Such graceful gestures both bring an aesthetic pleasure to others and serve as a visible proof a woman’s worth. Tomoko’s views correspond to a traditional understanding of Japanese femininity rooted in visual sophistication and refinement (Ide, 1990). Thus, in her opinion, both the traditional values and *kawaii* properties are essential for a woman.

Interestingly, even though the interviewees criticized women who merely pretend to be cute to gain the appreciation of men or receive other benefits, they still enjoyed watching televised commercials in which women overtly portrayed stereotypically images of feminine cuteness. The female interviewees responded positively to these artificial images of cuteness in spite of the scripted nature of the advertisements. Some women even expressed a desire to attain that kind of idealized cuteness for themselves, and to be able to smile and act adorably like the women in the commercials. For instance, transcribed below in (55) is an exchange between Ayaka and Sari, in which they discuss the way a Japanese actress and model Tsubasa Honda smiles in a commercial for deodorant. Ayaka born and raised in Osaka is a speaker of Kansai dialect, while her friend Sari from Aichi prefecture speaks Nagoya dialect. Preceding this exchange in (55), Ayaka and Sari had been discussing the way the actress in the

commercial smiles, speculating on whether they would be able to appear as cute if they started using the advertised deodorant. The fact that they would thus be overtly creating or enhancing their cuteness, rather than simply and spontaneously revealing their innate *kawaii* qualities, does not seem to pose a problem.

(55) 1 AYA: *Warattetara kawaii na. Anna waraikata shitai na.*

‘It’s cute when she laughs, right? I want to laugh like that.’

2 SAR: *Nanka ne-*

‘Like-’

3 AYA: *Nanka na, nanka kitanai waraikata jyanakute na. Niko tte na, onna no ko ppoi.*

‘Like you know, not a rude laugh, but a cute laugh, girl-like.’

4 SAR: *Soo, risoo tekina waraikata yo.*

‘Yeah, it is an ideal way of laughing.’

Overall, they used the word *kawaii* seven times in reference to the women in the commercial, supporting the notion that even artificial or fictional cuteness can be appealing. In line 1, Ayaka conveys a positive stance toward the cute nature of the actress’s laugh and uses the sentence-final particle *na*, a Kansai dialectal form that corresponds to the particle *ne* in Standard Japanese. By doing so, she elicits confirmation from Sari, who in line 2 starts her utterance (*nanka ne* ‘like’), but is interrupted by Ayaka in line 3. Ayaka elaborates further on the type of laugh that she finds especially suitable for girls, using the mimetic *niko* ‘smiley.’ Finally in line 4, Sari summarizes her stance toward the cute laugh by saying that this is the ideal way to laugh. Thus, Ayaka and Sari have a very clear-cut notion of what constitutes *kawaii* and are able to recognize it easily in cultural representations such as televised commercials. As long as the representation of *kawaii* does not appear overly exaggerated, they are not repulsed by its artificiality and aspire to reproduce it in their personal lives as well. Thus, based on the analysis of the Japanese interviewees’ conversations, it seems that a woman must either be innately *kawaii* (if that is in fact possible), or be skilled enough at acting to create

a realistic and credibly cute persona. Because *kawaii* is so highly regarded in Japanese society, it is understandable that some women would aspire to explicitly enhance *kawaii* attributes in an attempt to fit in and be positively evaluated.

Rika and Natsu developed this idea further in their conversation, suggesting that women may employ a variety of techniques to become cute – even though they felt unskilled at these tactics personally. They claimed that cuteness can be helpful in number of different social contexts and that *kawaii* women get better treatment overall. An excerpt from their conversation is presented in (56) below.

- (56) 1 NAT: *Gendo ga kawaii hito wa nanka sokosoko atsukai ga chigau to omoimasu.*
'I think that people who speak and act cutely receive a moderately different treatment.'
- 2 RIK: *Nanka shuudan no naka de ikite iku ue de aru teido kawaikatta hoo ga hhh nan tte iu ka raku desu ne.*
'Like, when living in a group of people, it is, how should I put it? It is easier if you are *kawaii*.'

Both Natsu and Rika agree that being *kawaii* is a beneficial quality and that it can alleviate difficulties by securing positive feedback from society. Natsu uses the adverb *sokosoko* 'moderately' to characterize the difference in treatment that a *kawaii* and a non-*kawaii* woman would receive. Despite the fact that being *kawaii* is understood as a quality that must come spontaneously from within (rather than being cultivated or attained), it is primarily applied and evaluated in interactions with others. Whether or not a woman is *kawaii* can only be assessed from the standpoint of another party, and the ultimate reward of being *kawaii* is a better treatment by others. Thus, while *kawaii* is ideologically articulated as a construct that is innate and dispositional, it is in fact interactional and relational. For this reason, it is unsurprising that Japanese women often aspire to be *kawaii* not because they intrinsically value the associated personal qualities, but in order to "fit in" to the broader fabric of society and enjoy the benefits of cuteness. Some women explicitly stated that in contemporary Japan,

kawaii is one of the most valuable assets for a woman, and one of her most powerful tools in social relationships. Thus, unlike some other misconceptions about women, *kawaii* is a stereotype that has a positive connotation. For instance, Shoko made the following claim about *kawaii* in excerpt (57).

- (57) *Nakute anoo son o suru koto no hoo ga ooi to omou node, yappari attara toku o surun jyanai ka to omou.*
'Well, if you don't have (cuteness), you'll suffer a greater loss, so I think if you have it, you will benefit.'

Shoko in her utterance suggests that being *kawaii* is beneficial to a woman, while absence of this feature is disadvantageous. She uses the adverb *yappari* 'as expected' to stress that she has noticed this issue and thought about it before. She further expands on her strategic use of *kawaii*, suggesting that she deliberately employs a childish way of speaking when she wants to be forgiven or receive a kinder attitude from her parents, friends, or romantic partner. For instance, she claims that in these circumstances she would incorporate such lexical elements as the sentence-final particle *mon* 'because,' (which is associated with the child's register) in order to make her fault seem more forgivable. When giving an example of this kind of behavior, she uttered *datte au to yuttotta mon* 'because as I told you I would meet.' As seen in figure (25) below, in tandem with her falling intonation, Shoko also shifted her gaze downwards and away from her friend Eri's gaze – as if asking meekly for forgiveness.

Figure 25. Expression of *kawaii*. Left to right: Eri, Shoko



By consciously performing a *kawaii* persona, Shoko aims to awaken feelings of kindness and strength in her male interlocutor, imploring him for lenience and understanding.

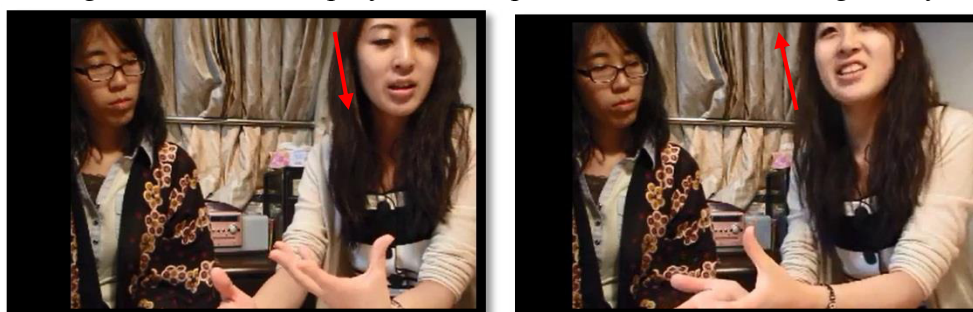
The sisters Saya and Mana express a similar hope of receiving lenience through the use of *kawaii* behaviors. Mana defines a *kawaii* woman as a person who is able to secure the liking and affection of other people skillfully (*umaku hito ni sukareru*). She then identifies specific instances in which this quality proves useful and valuable, indicating a high degree of awareness of the importance of being *kawaii* in everyday life. An excerpt from her discourse is presented in (58) below.

- (58) *Tatoeba kaisha demo shinnyuushain tte saisho haittara, shigoto toka dekinai kedo kawaisa, nanka umaku “oshiete kudasai” toka, chotto tanoshiku kaiwa dekitari toka de, kawaigatte moraeru yoo na tokoro tte iu no wa sugoi daiji dakara (0.1) jyosei toshite. Josei toshite? tte iu ka, ma, kawaisa wa sugoi daiji kana.*

‘For instance, even at a workplace, when a new person enters a company, she can’t do work, but cuteness (helps), by saying things like “Please teach me,” or by being able to converse in a fun way. The ability to get liked is really important. For a woman. For a woman? Yeah, well, I think cuteness is very important.’

Mana here reflects on the practical utility of having a *kawaii* personality. She shifts footing in order to animate the hypothetical situation of a new female employee who lacks work-related knowledge and must ask a superior for help. She initially looks downward meekly, as shown in the first panel of figure (26), but then shifts her gaze upward and starts smiling (towards the hypothetical male superior) in the second panel, as she says *oshiete kudasai* ‘Please teach me.’

Figure 26. A new employee’s obsequious cuteness. Left to right: Saya, Mana



The ascending gaze suggests the hierarchical relationship between the employee and her superior, underlining the supervisor’s higher position. As noted above, this sort of a

pleasing smile is a crucial part of appearing *kawaii*. In the survey data reported in the beginning of this section, more than 70 percent of the female respondents indicated that frequent smiling is a necessary component of the *kawaii* woman's persona. Mana also raises her vocal pitch considerably when animating the new employee's cute speech, while stretching the final syllable *sa* in *kudasai* 'please.' All of these features combine to facilitate the creation of an effective *kawaii* image. At the conclusion of her utterance, Mana affirms that this kind of behavior is strategically important for a woman. For a second, she seems to express mild doubt regarding the validity of her claim, by repeating *josei toshite* 'for a woman' with a rising intonation – but ultimately confirms her initial intuition by reiterating that cuteness is indeed very important.

As revealed in the excerpts above, women's stance toward the constellation of features associated with the *kawaii* persona is complex. On the one hand, women are expected to be *kawaii* in Japanese society and they are treated much better when they bring their words, actions, and appearances in line with these expectations. On the other hand, the requirement that the cuteness must be spontaneous and natural forces women who are not "innately *kawaii*" to work to feign or cultivate these qualities. If, however, she is suspected of insincerity or 'acting', a woman risks being labeled *burikko*, which places her in an even more vulnerable category than before. As Sako states, *genki kawaii wa ii kedo, burikko kawaii wa iran* 'I like cheerful cute, but I don't need *burikko* cute.' For many women, however, the value of attaining *kawaii* cuteness outweighs the potential risks. As noted above, the threat of the *burikko* woman is really two-fold -- she indecently exposes not only her personal insincerity and manipulating nature, but correlatively reveals the artificial nature of the whole system of social relations codified in *kawaii*.

3.2.3 The importance of kindness

Kindness was another feature that was deemed highly important by the female participants. In response to the question “What kind of a woman is ideal for you?” sixteen of the 24 interviewed women (67 percent) referenced the quality of kindness in some form. In addition, in actual conversations, each of the women without exception brought up the topic of kindness when addressing the features of idealized femininity she personally hoped to acquire. Unlike the quality of *kawaii* cuteness, which as previously discussed must come spontaneously ‘from the heart,’ *yasashisa* ‘kindness’ was framed by the interviewees as a consciously cultivated quality. The female participants emphasized that women need to actively work on themselves in order to develop greater kindness toward others. The distinctive feature of the *yasashisa* quality also involve constant awareness of and attention to the needs and feelings of other people. According to the interviewees, the ideal women would never disturb others or interfere with their goals, but would always remain attentive, kind, grateful, and considerate. When discussing kindness, women used such phrases as *kikubari ga dekiru* ‘can consider others’ feelings’, *omoiyari ga aru* ‘be very caring,’ *ki ga kiku* ‘be thoughtful of others,’ and *jibun no naka ni yoyuu ga aru* ‘have enough room inside oneself to think of others.’

Kindness is tied to “emphasized femininity” (Connell, 1987), an ideological construct that is viewed by scholars as an accommodating, subordinate complement to hegemonic masculinity (Charlebois, 2014). The force and scope of this type of femininity can be explicitly seen in the conversations of the female interviewees as they elaborated on the nature of kindness. For example, Rika and Natsu formulate their discourse in the following manner (excerpt 59).

- (59) 1 RIK: *Ki no kiku jyosei wa risouteki da na to iu fuu ni wa omoimasu.*
2 *Nanka patto ugokeru yoona jyosei wa ii na to omoimasu ne.*
‘I think that a woman who is thoughtful of others is ideal. A woman who can react fast is great, I think.’

3 NAT: *Soo desu ne. Tatoeba nomikai toka de (0.1) nan to iuka (0.1)*
'Yeah. For example, at a company get-together, how should I say-'

4 RIK: *Sarada o tori wakeru toka hhh*
'Like divides and serves the salad for everyone.'

5 NAT: *A, soo desu ne.*
'Oh yes, right!'

In the excerpt 59, Natsu and Rika co-construct a narrative on ideal feminine behavior at a company *nomikai* 'get-together.' In lines 1 and 2, Rika suggests that she sees thoughtfulness about the needs of others as a necessary component for a woman, one explicitly linked to her fast and efficient movement in response to changing situations. Natsu expresses agreement with Rika's stance and chooses to elaborate further on it by bringing up a specific context – a company after-work get-together. As Natsu is struggling to give a more specific example of efficient, thoughtful behavior, Rika again takes the floor and offers a potential context (dividing and serving a salad for everyone) in which women's ability to react quickly and adaptively would be especially appreciated. Serving food to male colleagues has traditionally been considered good etiquette for Japanese women (Lebra, 1984), while currently it is seen as a representative feature of *kyoseikyoku* 'female power' (Ogawa, 2014). In line 5 of the conversation above, Natsu accepts Rika's example and laughs, confirming their shared knowledge on this issue.

Similarly, in her discourse Mana suggests that an ideal woman is able to skillfully take care of the people around her by being very attentive to their needs. In the following excerpt (60), she elaborates on an ideal woman's kind behavior in the context of group dining.

(60) *Risoo no jyosee tte nanka tatoeba minna de gohan toka shitetemo, koo minna no jyokyoo o mitete, nanka hanashitenai hito ga itara umaku wadai futte agetari toka, nanka chotto hito no hanashi o kiite agetari toka demo jibun mo hanasetari toka, ato wa ne guai warusoo dattara guai warui no kizuitari toka, nanka chotto. (0.1) Kizukai ga dekiru to sugoi hyouka ga takai.*

'An ideal woman is for example when everyone is having a meal, she monitors everyone's state and if there is someone who is not talking, she skillfully brings the

conversation topic to him, listens to other people, but is also able to speak up. Also, if someone looks like he is not feeling well, she notices it and (helps). If you are able to be mindful of others, you are highly praised.'

As seen in the excerpt, the ideal woman is constantly aware of the emotional and physical states of other people. She needs to keep track of those who are participating in the conversation and those who are left out, and must occasionally intervene constructively to maintain a balance in which everyone has an enjoyable experience. This constant monitoring may appear distracting for a woman, but it is further compounded by the requirement that she also participate in the conversation by expressing (tasteful and appropriate) opinions. In addition to observing others' engagement at the party and contributing selectively, Mana's ideal woman must also attend to physical and emotional conditions indicated by non-linguistic cues, and help to alleviate any discomfort or distress. After Mana gives a series of specific examples, she generalizes her stance by saying that in Japan a woman's value is elevated if she is able to be thoughtful and mindful of others.

Thus, according to the female interviewees, in addition to being *kawaii*, women also must be respectful and mindful of their colleagues, honing the ability to guess their moods and desires. Despite the fact that contemporary Japanese women engage actively in work and pursue career advancement, they still are expected to play the traditional role of a supportive homemaker at workplaces and after-work get-togethers. The respondents claimed that Japanese society praises and encourages women who are able to bring their "feminine" nature into professional settings. Such gendered expectations did not appear unjust to the respondents, who rather aspired to develop these skills in order to raise their value at the workplace and improve professional relationships. Some respondents explicitly articulated the idea that women need to remember their biological sex and act accordingly, evoking traditional stereotypes and beliefs about the role of women in society. For instance, when discussing the attributes of an ideal woman, a graduate student Mari explained that she sought to master the art of acting

femininely, especially by showing weaknesses and respect toward men. The interaction between Mari and her friend Mina is presented in excerpt (1) below.

- (61) 1 MAR: *Jyosei rashisa o wasurenai tokoro ga-*
 ‘It’s (important) not to forget your feminine side-’
- 2 MIN: *Soo desu ne. Jibun ga onna tte iu koto o wasurenai yoo ni.*
 ‘Yes. So that you don’t forget that you are a woman.’
- 3 MAR: *Soo. Nanka jyosei toshite nanka koo dansei o tatetari toka-*
 ‘Yeah, and as a woman to honor a man, for example.’
- 4 MIN: *A, SOO nan da!*
 ‘Oh is that so?’
- 5 MAR: *Ma, sore wa kachikan no chigai kamoshirenai*
 ‘Well, it could be a difference in our values.’

As seen from the interaction above, Mari and Mina initially express agreement, co-constructing the dialog in lines 1 and 2. Mina shows solidarity with Mari’s stance on the importance of remembering womanliness, promptly rephrasing Mari’s statement in a more straightforward fashion. Whereas Mari had used the lexical item *jyoseirashisa* ‘femininity,’ Mina utilizes a more direct phrase *onna tte iu koto* ‘the fact that you’re a woman’ emphasizing that women should not forget their gender. In line 3, however, Mari expresses an even more old-fashioned notion – that women must honor men – using a phraseological expression *dansei o tateru* ‘to treat man with due respect,’ and suggests that an ideal woman should be able to make a man feel good about himself. To convey her stance, Mari supplements her language gesturally, raising her hand in order to dramatize the elevation of male self-esteem, as shown in the first and second panels of figure 27. When she completes her turn, Mina uses a change-of-state token *a* ‘oh,’ indicating that she was not aware of Mari’s stance. In addition, she raises the volume of her voice, suggesting that this new information is unexpected and surprising to her. Mina’s body movement also emphasizes the startling nature of Mari’s statement, as shown in the third panel of figure 27. Prior to line 4 of the excerpt, she had been looking downward

(as in first and second panels of figure 27), participating in the dialogue mainly through co-construction with Mari and expressing aligned stances. It takes Mina approximately 3 seconds to hear and process the new information regarding her friend's traditionalist stance towards men, after which she turns her head toward Mari and looks directly at her with an expression of bewilderment. She no longer speaks to the researcher, but instead directs her words to her friend, highlighting their difference in opinion. Her interjection in line 4 "Oh, is that so?" conveys her divergent stance, which Mari interprets as indicative of a difference in attitudes regarding the appropriate behavior of women towards men. In line 5, she attributes these differences to an underlying dissimilarity in their values.

Figure 27. "Honoring a man." Left to right: Mina, Mari



Mari goes on to claim that the best women (*josei no toppu*) can skillfully honor men, and affirms that she personally views this ability as laudable and useful. Mina gradually defers to her friend, shifting her stance to one of partial agreement, and finally states that she would also like to cultivate this ability, if possible. However, in a later (private) conversation with the researcher Mina explained that she was shocked to learn of her friend's old-fashioned, patriarchal beliefs. The interaction between Mari and Mina draws attention to the heterogeneity of opinions amongst Japanese women regarding gender and femininity. While many no longer support traditional gender ideology, it is still pervasive within the culture and maintains an important role in the value systems of some women. Many women also conveyed ambivalent views, expressing positive stances toward a female autonomy while simultaneously criticizing women who become too authoritative.

For example, Sako conveys a negative stance toward women gaining strength and power in relationships. First, she expresses discontent at the fact that men sometimes feel obligated to carry women's belongings, such as a purse. Her belief that this behavior is a capitulation to the whims of unreasonable girlfriends or spouses (rather than a man's autonomous choice) can be observed through her use of a causative verbal form *motaseru* 'make carry.' Through this form, she not only indicates that women compel male partners carry their bags, but also positions men as victims. She then continues her discourse by providing other examples of emasculating male subjugation to females. In Sako's opinion, a man who stands in the train with a baby-carrier while his wife is comfortably seated is a victim of female oppression. An excerpt from her interaction with the researcher is presented in excerpt (62) below.

(62) 1 SAK: *Danna san ga koo mae kake o shite yatteru no wa iya.*
'I don't like when a husband carries a front baby carrier.'

2 *Nanka josei tsuyoku natte kita tte kanji ga suru.*
'It feels like women became strong.'

3 RES: *Iwakan ga-.*
'Do you have a sense of discomfort?'

4 SAK: *Iwakan ga aru.*
'I do.'

(5 lines omitted)

10 SAK: *Mae kake mitaina no o tsukete aruiteru no o mite,*
11 *de okusan ga tonari de meccha kaimono o shitete,*
12 *danna san ga kou yatte kaimono o shiteru sugata o miteiru no o mitara,*
13 *°waa° onna no hito tte*
14 *nanka jyosei rashiku wa nai to omou.*

'When I see a husband carrying a baby in the front baby carrier and the wife who is shopping a lot next to him, while he watches her do that, I think to myself, "Wow, and that's a woman!" I think it is unfeminine.'

As seen from the interaction (62), Sako's sympathy clearly lies with husbands who are made to carry babies because of their wives' strong positions in the household. This change in gender roles presents a source of discomfort for Sako, which she voices in her criticism of

women as unfeminine for their deviance from traditional femininity. Sako's negative stance toward the growing strength of women in family and household relationships is expressed through both linguistic and non-linguistic cues. When she begins speaking about men carrying babies for their wives, she animates both the hypothetical, victimized man holding his baby, as well as her own reaction. As seen from the first panel of figure 28, she lifts her arms upwards toward her chest to demonstrate the way the man is holding the baby; through her facial expression of unpleasant surprise she then conveys how this scene makes her feel.

Figure 28. Feeling discomfort at the sight of a man carrying a baby.
Left to right: Yume, Sako.



As Sako terminates the nominalized structure (*Danna san ga koo mae kake o shite yatteru no* ‘a husband carries a front baby carrier’) with the straightforward assessment *iya* ‘unpleasant,’ ‘detestable,’ she simultaneously moves her hands slowly downwards and leans back. These gestures animate a figurative withdrawal from the enacted scene, and serve to accentuate her disagreement with such a social arrangement in which a woman appears stronger than a man (as seen from the second panel in figure 28). Her facial expression also undergoes a pronounced alteration just as she shifts footing to her past self during the encounter with the baby-carrying father. In addition to surprise and bewilderment, her facial features also communicate a feeling of unpleasantness and revulsion.

In line 2 of excerpt (62) above, Sako observes that women have gained strength in Japanese society, a phenomenon that makes her feel odd and uncomfortable, as confirmed by her response to the researcher's question in line 4. Sako's friend Yume then shows partial alignment by stating that she also dislikes when a man uses a baby carrier. She adds that while

she does not mind when a man pushes a stroller and a woman carries a baby, the opposite combination is appalling to her. After further elaboration, Sako provides another context in which it is displeasing to see a man carrying a baby: when a woman is doing a lot of shopping. Sako uses the adverbial intensifier *meccha* ‘a lot’ in line 11, emphasizing the unreasonable nature of a wife thoroughly engrossed in shopping. She depicts vividly a self-absorbed, negligent woman who exploits her husband’s kindness to avoid direct motherly responsibilities. Sako conveys a critical stance toward the woman in the scene, but and a sympathizing stance toward the man – who has been victimized by his strong wife. Sako paints a dramatic portrait of a man patiently holding the baby and watching passively as his wife buys multiple commodities, presumably for herself. As she describes the man obediently following his wife with the baby, Sako elevates her hands and produces a baby-rocking motion, as shown in the third panel of figure 28. Her facial expression in the image reveals the unpleasantness that she endured merely from considering such a situation. When conveying her feelings about the scene, she shifts footing and says, “*waa onna no hito tte*” ‘Wow, and that’s a woman.’ By prefacing this utterance with a prolonged interjection *waa* ‘wow’ in a lowered voice, Sako emphasizes the disgust she feels toward the woman and her negligence of womanly duties. In line 14, she summarizes the reason why she disapproves of the woman shopping in a store, calling this type of behavior unfeminine.

Through the examples of the two female-led couples, Sako communicates her stance of repugnance toward modern, strong women, whom she sees as *kyosei rashiku wa nai* ‘unfeminine’. Apart from compelling their husbands to carry babies, the women in her examples do not engage in activities traditionally considered unwomanly. The first woman merely sits comfortably on the train, while the second woman shops. Thus, their principle unfeminine fault lies in the subversion of male power and the domination of their husbands. Furthermore, despite Sako’s radical disapproval of strong women, her manner of speaking does

not conform to the artificial speech norms of Japan's ideal woman (metaphorically called *yamato nadeshiko* (lit. Japan's carnation) 'a woman who displays the feminine virtues of old Japan'). Though she and the researcher had never met before, Sako exclusively utilizes plain, informal structures, avoiding the more formal style (e.g. using politeness suffixes *masu/desu*) that would be considered appropriate in this setting. Furthermore, she does not employ many mitigating structures or other linguistic device aiming to convey indirectness, but rather produces concise and straightforward utterances. These atypical linguistic features might be attributed to the fact that she is speaking with a foreign researcher from an American institution. However, her style of speech does not alter markedly based on the presence or absence of the researcher. Instead, Sako's linguistic and non-linguistic behavior suggests that this upfront mode of speaking merely reflects her natural personality. Later in the dialogue, Sako confides that in the presence of her professor, she can even say the swearword *kuso* 'shit' when offering an assessment. For instance, she used this lexical item to convey a critical stance toward the food she ate with her professor, which she considered unpalatable. Thus, despite the gender non-conforming behavior seen in certain aspects of her daily life, Sako still maintains rigid perceptions of what constitutes 'feminine' and 'unfeminine' modes of speech and action, and vigorously applies these judgements in relation to other women.

3.2.4 A balanced autonomy and the male gaze

According to the interviewees' responses, the desire to be cute, kind, and attentive to others is frequently in tension with the women's aspirations for strength and autonomy. Several women noted, for example, that men might not like women who are extremely independent; others suggested that while autonomy is crucial prior marriage, it quickly becomes unnecessary afterward. Most women opined that it is critical to maintain a 'balanced autonomy' and to adjust it depending on the situation. In reflecting on their ideal selves, the vast majority of the

interviewees included independence and self-sufficiency as necessary qualities, but at the same time, they were acutely sensitive to men's preferences on these issues. Thus, just as women's desire to be *kawaii* 'cute' and *yasashii* 'kind' were shaped by the perceptions and valuations of male colleagues, superiors, and romantic partners, so too their aspirations for autonomy and independence were conditional upon male approval.. For example, Eri and Shoko discuss their ideals in the following manner in excerpt (63).

- (63) 1 ERI: *Otoko no hito mo tabun jiritsu sita jyosei wa kirai dewanai kedo, yappari-*
 'I think that Japanese men don't hate independent women, but expectedly-'
 2 SHO: *[Amaetai toka-*
 'They want to receive kindness.'
 3 ERI: *[Tayoraretai toka aru daroo na to iu*
 'They want to get relied upon'
 4 SHO: *Demo tayori sugiru to omoi toka iwareru kara-*
 'But if you rely too much, then they say, it's heavy, so-'
 5 ERI: *Soko no - choosei o dekiru reberu de jiritsu sitai na*
 'So that- I want to be able to be independent at the level when I can make
 adjustments.'

In line 1 of excerpt (63), Eri implies that men might not be entirely comfortable with a woman who exhibits excessive autonomy. To mitigate the harshness of the projected male stance, she uses a negative construction *kirai de wa nai kedo* 'not hate, but' implying that although men would not *hate* an independent woman, they also would not be especially pleased by her. At the end of Eri's utterance, she uses the adverbial item *yappari* 'expectedly', suggesting that the issue is commonplace and part of the collective awareness of Japanese women in navigating romantic relationships. Shoko cooperatively interjects during Eri's turn and provides an example of a male preference (*amaetai* 'want to be treated kindly') that might potentially be in tension with female autonomy, while Eri simultaneously provides another preferential pattern of male behavior (*tayoraretai* 'want to be relied upon'). In this way, Shoko and Eri co-create the image of a man who has different needs at different times, and whom it

is a woman's responsibility to satisfy skillfully. In line 4, Shoko suggests that over-reliance on men is also not desirable, because a man would feel burdened by the partner's constant needs. In response to this statement, Eri concludes that a balanced autonomy is ideal, in which a woman can control and adjust her behavior depending on the situation, but ultimately in conformity with men's feedback. Thus, a woman should not seek complete autonomy, but a partial autonomy that can be regulated by male desire, enhanced and subverted easily in the service of male needs and demands. When Eri conveys her stance toward female autonomy in line 5, she supplements it with an iconic hand gesture, as shown in figure 29 below. Eri first creates a circle in front of her body using her arms, and then moves them spherically, as if manipulating the volume of a space that represents the malleable breadth of female autonomy. By this gesture, she demonstrates how an ideal woman dilates and contracts her independence through occasional adjustments and maneuvers.

Figure 29. Adjusting female autonomy. Left to right: Eri, Shoko.



Thus, Eri desires to be autonomous to the extent that she is able to tune that quality to male wishes and needs. She does not aim to surrender her independence completely in the presence of men; rather she makes it less visible, obtrusive, and threatening in certain contexts, while in other circumstances she must bring it back in full fortitude. Throughout these transformations, her autonomy is always present and never completely erased, because it is in her possession and under her control. In a similar vein, the desire to achieve a well-balanced autonomy was expressed in Kari's discourse in excerpt (64) below.

- (64) 1 KAR: *Nanka ma, sonoo, dansei ga ita toshite,*
 2 *Sono dansei ni sono monosugoku izon suru wake ga nakute,*
 3 *Otagai chanto tamochi tsutsu kyooryoku shite iku mitaina.*
 4 *Beta beta tayoru yori wa chotto jiritsu sita hoo ga ii kana to omoimasu.*

‘Well, imagine that you have a man. You should not depend greatly on him. You should support each other, work together. It is better to be a little autonomous than rely on him clingingly.’

(3 lines omitted)

- 8 KAR: *Ii guai no baransu, tekido ga ichiban ii yo ne.*
 ‘A good amount of balance, moderation is the best, right?’

When talking about her ideal self, Kari laughingly affirms that independence is quality she desires, though she undermines the importance of her contribution by prefacing it with the mitigating construction *amari kankei nai to omou kedo* ‘I don’t think it’s relevant, but.’ When asked by the researcher to elaborate on her perceptions of autonomy, she situates her thoughts on independence by introducing a hypothetical male partner (*dansei ga ita toshite* ‘Imagine you have a man’). In line 2, Kari suggests that a woman should not depend excessively on her male partner, using the intensifier *monosugoku* ‘greatly’ in order to distinguish between reasonable and unreasonable forms of dependence. While reasonable dependence is seen as acceptable or even salutary, unacceptable or burdensome dependence is not preferable. In line 3, she describes the functioning of an ideal relationship between a man and a woman, emphasizing the mutual support and collaboration of their partnership. Kari then returns to her main point on female autonomy, communicating the belief that independence is preferable to excessive reliance on a man. She employs multiple softening and mitigating expressions, and structures her utterances in a comparative way (‘It is better to be a little autonomous, than rely on him clingingly’). By doing so, she implies that female autonomy may not always be optimal, but certainly presents a better alternative than burdensome dependence. Moreover, she uses an intensifying mimetic expression *betabeta* ‘clingingly’ to describe an undesirable type of female dependence on men, suggesting that a milder version of dependence may be acceptable. In

addition, she quantifies autonomy by using the adverb *chotto* ‘a little’, conveying the impression that only a small amount autonomy would truly be helpful. In response, Hanami expresses her agreement with Kari, indicating that while extreme dependence on a man is disadvantageous a woman should still do what she can on her own. Hanami tries to formulate a more cohesive or holistic explanation of female autonomy and turns to Kari for help; her friend then summarizes her previous stance on female independence in line 8, claiming that moderation is key. Without autonomy, a woman would be clingy and burdensome, while excessive independence challenges the male-centered nature of Japanese romantic collaboration. As seen in figure 30 below, Kari supplements her verbal expression in line 8 with non-verbal signals. She raises her arms and gesturally depicts a sphere, while saying *ii guai no baransu* ‘a good amount of balance.’ Similarly to Eri, Kari also creates a symbolic space to represent the extent and limitations of normatively-acceptable female autonomy, using gestures to depict the manipulations by which she balances her autonomy in different contexts.

Figure 30. Proper balance of dependence and autonomy. Left to right: Kari, Hanami



Kari concludes her utterance with an interactional sentence-final particle *yone* addressed at Hanami, who immediately aligns with her. In summary, Kari believes that a woman should possess a limited amount of autonomy, in order to be self-sufficient and so as not to burden a man. Indirectly, she conveys a critical stance toward women who engage in clingy, dependent behavior with their partners. When talking about independence, the interviewees generally tended to frame their assertions in relation to male partners

(hypothetical or actual), suggesting that independence is revealed through those interactions. Furthermore, Japanese women claimed that the ability to limit their autonomy in certain contexts is essential for successful romantic relationships.

Some women intimated that they would restrain their autonomy after getting married, explaining that after that point independence is no longer relevant or socially necessary. For instance, Ana explicitly stated that she would like to quit her job after marriage and devote herself to the family. Before marriage, however, she expressed a strong desire to become and remain self-sufficient. When her friend Satoko described the ideal woman as humble, modest (*okuyukashii*) and passive (*ukemi taisai*), Ana suggested that she would try to cultivate these qualities only *after* getting married, while presently preferring independence and activity. Her brief statement is transcribed in excerpt (65).

- (65) *Kekkon shitara soo nari tai kedo, kekkon suru made wa chanto shigoto shite jiritsu shitai.*
‘When I get married I would like to be like that (passive and modest), but until then I want to work hard and be autonomous.’

Thus, some Japanese women clearly view autonomy and marriage as mutually exclusive alternatives, expressing the opinion that one must choose one over the other. Despite the idealistic laws and policies employed by the government to promote gender equality in the workplace, the real-world economic and social pressures with which women are confronted still force many to quit their jobs after marriage or childbirth (Charlebois, 2014). Foreseeing this conflict, Ana decides that she would prefer to embrace family over career (*kekkon shitara soo naritai kedo* ‘When I get married I would like to be like that’). The demonstrative term *soo* ‘that’ in her utterance refers to Satoko’s previous description of the ideal woman as passive, modest, and traditional. In this way, Ana suggests that non-autonomous, subordinate existence will be an inescapable and necessary aspect of married life. In the limited window of young adulthood however, she would like to enjoy activity and autonomy while she can.

As noted above, the concept of a balanced or limited autonomy has been evoked by many Japanese interviewees and was framed consistently: as a valuable quality that must be regulated and adjusted in relationships with men. Despite the fact that autonomy (unlike other feminine qualities such as cuteness, kindness, and attentiveness) is supposedly a self-centered feature, some Japanese women still view it through the prism of other-centeredness. A male gaze is present in these women's discussions of autonomy, shaping their behaviors (real and hypothetical) in a way that amplifies or decreases their autonomy to suit (presumed) male preferences.

3.2.5 Ideal Japanese woman's speech

Prior to the interview, participants were asked in written form: "What are some features of an ideal woman's speech, in your opinion?" The women's responses addressed such components as vocal properties, speed of speech, lexicon, utterance structure, and overall behavior during a conversation. Out of the 24 female participants, 11 indicated that a woman's speech must be slow-paced (*yukkuri*). Politeness, along with correct usage of *keigo* 'honorific speech' was considered essential by 8 respondents, while the same number of the respondents considered calmness (*ochitsuki ga aru*) to be important. The ability to communicate in an easy-to-understand fashion (*wakari yasui*) was mentioned by six respondents, whereas four respondents stated that women should not raise their voices (*koe o araragenai*) but instead speak softly, ending their utterances with such sentence-final particles as *yone* and *desho*. Three respondents claimed that women should avoid using inappropriate lexical items, such as *wakamono kotoba* 'slang' (lit. 'young people's words') and *otoko kotoba* 'male language,' and should speak in a slightly lower tone. The use of *aizuchi* 'backchannel feedback' at appropriate moments, structuring a dialog so that it does not end abruptly, listening carefully to the interlocutor, and expressing one's own opinion were also deemed important by several

respondents. Other points mentioned by the respondents included completing sentences, avoiding sound lengthening, laughing elegantly, using few interjections, and refraining from saying unnecessary things (*yokeina koto o hanasanai*).

In the subsequent interviews, participants emphasized the importance of producing a soft and calm impression while speaking slowly, clearly and politely. For example, Sako indicates that the overall composure of one's posture, gestures, and speech is crucial to creating the desired image of a soft, pleasing woman. An excerpt from her discourse is presented in (66) below.

- (66) *Shabette te mo, nanka hyoojyoo ga yawarakai toka, hanashi shitete mo “un un un” toka jyanakute, “Uun” mitaina. (3 lines omitted). Hyoojyoo mo yukkuri ugoite, me toka mo nanka yukkuri ugoite, kuchoo mo nanka wakariyasukute, kokoro ni shimiru kanji. Hanashikata wa sonna jyosei ga suteki dana to omoimasu.*

‘Even when she speaks, her facial expression is soft, and when she talks, she doesn’t say things like, ‘yeah, yeah, yeah’, but something like ‘hmmm’. Her facial expression changes slowly, gaze moves slowly, her speech is also easy to understand, and it goes straight to heart. I think a woman who talks like that is great.’

Sako stresses that softness must be present in both facial and verbal expression. A woman should not move from one emotional state to another hastily, but gradually and calmly. She portrays an image of womanly wisdom that is not fickle, or hyper-sensitive but speaks thoughtfully and deliberately. Sako’s ideal woman is attentive and considerate in speech, providing caring responses; her every word is full of deep meaning, yet also easily accessible for quick comprehension.

As evident from the similarity of the participants’ views on womanly speech, Japanese women have a clear understanding about how an ideal woman should communicate – ranging from low-level details concerning the use from the specific phrases, vocal volume, and speed of speech, to more complex communicative strategies, such as maintaining a conversational flow, laughing appropriately, and incorporating complementary gestures. For instance, Tomoko in

excerpt (67) suggests that the way a woman speaks is important primarily because it reveals her level of education and refinement.

- (67) *Tatoeba, kaiwa o shiteite, anoo, nanka shiranai koto iwareta toki ni, “wakaranai desu” tte iu n jyanakute, chanto sore nari ni wakaranakattara, chanto kiki kaeseru da toka, “sore nitsuite kuwashiku oshiete itadakemasuka” toka, ato “fubenkyoo de wakaranai desu keredomo donna hon yomeba ii desu ka” toka. Soo iu fuuna chotto koo anoo kaiwa owarasenai yoo na kaeshi ga dekiru to sugoku sono hito kashikoi n daroo na to omoimasu.*

‘For example, when having a conversation and you are told something that you don’t know, you don’t say, “I don’t know.” Instead, if you do not know, you respond to the best of your abilities, like “Could you explain to me about this in detail?” or “I don’t know because of lacking studies (in the area), what kind of books should I read?” If a person can give these kind of responses that don’t end the conversation, I think she is very wise.’

In her discourse, Tomoko suggests that confessing deficiency of knowledge in a sophisticated manner is important in order to be perceived as intelligent and well bred. Her ideal woman is someone who shows a high degree of culture and education in all respects. Tomoko earlier suggested that in some circumstances a woman must behave cutely, feigning ignorance in a conversation with a male superior in order to flatter his knowledge and/or competence (see excerpt 53 above). At other times, however, when her ignorance is real and unfeigned, she must nevertheless show sustained interest, ask politely for help and recommendations, and avoid terminating a conversation abruptly with a simple confession such as “I don’t know.” Thus, in Tomoko’s opinion, a woman can appear wise even without substantive knowledge, if only she is able to confess her inadequacy and seek tutelage in a skillful manner. The first example of proper etiquette that she provides (*Sore nitsuite kuwashiku oshiete itadakemasuka* ‘Could you explain to me about this in detail?’) demonstrates an ideal woman’s ability to give the floor to the interlocutor. It is no longer her responsibility to speak, while the male interlocutor would likely enjoy talking in further detail about his area of specialization. Another potential response that Tomoko finds appropriate is *Fubenkyoo de wakaranai desu keredomo donna hon yomeba ii desu ka*. ‘I do not know because of lacking

studies (in the area), what kind of books should I read?’ This utterance confesses the woman’s lack of knowledge in a humble manner and requests advice on further self-improvement. It again transfers the turn to the interlocutor, both framing him as an expert and simultaneously conveying respect for his authority. Thus, for Tomoko, a woman’s education is not measured by or reflected in the depth or breadth of her actual knowledge – her education and refinement consist in the skills she has learned to manipulate conversations to sustain an interlocutor’s enjoyment, interest, and appreciation.

In addition, though the interviewees claimed that their ideal selves would avoid swearwords and vulgar language in all interactions, they nevertheless admitted that in close circles of friends those expressions are sometimes acceptable. Examples of vulgar language mentioned by the respondents can be classified into three categories: 1) traditionally male vocabulary (e.g. sentence-final particles *zo/ze*, changing the adjectival *ai*-ending to the extended *e*-ending: *kitanai* ‘dirty’ - *kitanee* ‘dirty’), 2) slang (e.g. *yabai* ‘terrific’, ‘awful’), and 3) swearwords (e.g. *kuso* ‘shit’). Many of the participants added that these words were especially undesirable for women, and if used could result in negative social sanction. The discrepancy between ideal and actual linguistic behavior became obvious when all 24 interviewees confessed that they had used the above-mentioned vulgarisms. According to the interviewees, the main utility of this type of vocabulary was in conveying a stance of close friendship, especially with male friends. For example, Shoko explained that in the company of male friends she used the sentence-final particle *ze*, whereas she avoided it zealously with female friends. Her argument is presented in excerpt (68) below.

- (68) 1 SHO: *Watashi wa amari onna no ko no tomodachi ni wa “ikoo ze” toka iwanai desu*
 2 *kedo, otoko no tomachi yattara gyaku ni memeshii kanji o-*
 3 *[dashitakunakute*
 ‘I don’t really say, ‘Let’s go ZE’ to my female friends, but to my male friends
 on the other hand (I say it), because I don’t want to give out an effeminate feel.’
 4 ERI: *[Wakaru wakaru*
 ‘I know, I know!’

- 5 SHO: *Furanku ni tsukiatte hoshikute*
6 *dakara gambaroo ze mitaina kanji de yuttari shimasu*
‘I want them to be frank around me, so that’s why I say things like ‘Let’s try
hard ZE’ and such’
7 ERI: *Jyoshikan mo denai yoo ni*
‘So that the feminine feel doesn’t come out’
8 SHO: *Soo, soo.*
‘Yes, yes.’

Shoko suggests that she uses male vocabulary strategically around men in order to be included in the group sincerely as a friend, rather than treated differently (i.e. as a woman) because of her gender. By using the sentence-final particle *ze*, she is able to discount her female gender in social interactions. She later confessed that this strategy has a negative impact as well, because once her gender has been de-emphasized, men often enjoy her company but no longer consider her as a potential romantic partner. Her friend Eri confirmed Shoko’s concerns, stating that her boyfriend was deeply upset when she casually called him *omee* ‘you’ (male language), and asked her pointedly to stop.

Furthermore, women’s use of male language is much more frequent in computer- and mobile-mediated communication than in spoken interactions. Some respondents confessed they frequently utilize the sentence-final particle *ze* in blogs and text messaging applications, even though they avoid it in face-to-face exchanges. This discrepancy supports Iwasaki’s multiple grammar model (2015), which contends that the same linguistic feature can function differently in different modalities of communication. Respondents who claimed to employ male language in virtual and written modes of interaction explained that their messages are either directed toward a large audience (e.g. multiple blog readers) or their close friends. Thus, when the speaker is not physically visible, a woman is less restricted in her language use than in face-to-face communication, and no longer feels compelled to convey a feminine persona. Women’s appropriation of male language in spoken and written discourse will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 4.

3.2.6. Summary

Just as Russian women aspire to appear as pleasing to men as possible, Japanese women also prioritize male gaze and view themselves indirectly through the prism of male attention. The primary difference lies in the nature of the images and behaviors that are considered feminine in the two societies.

Overall, the qualities that were highly appraised by the Japanese interviewees can be classified into three groups: 1) characteristics associated with *kawaii*, 2) qualities that emphasize traditional values and the female image *yamato nadeshiko* ‘a woman who displays the feminine virtues of old Japan,’ and 3) features linked with psychological strength, independence, and autonomy. The 24 Japanese women considered an ability to be *kawaii* in appearance, movements, behavior, and speech highly valuable; the emphasis was frequently placed on innateness and effortlessness, while fake cuteness was criticized. This double-edged sword puts women in a complicated situation: they either take the risk of behaving too cutely and are potentially accused of being *burikko* ‘women who forge cuteness’, or do not act *kawaii* and do not receive the associated benefits. The interviewees tended to enjoy the image of an innocent, childish cutie portrayed in televised commercials, while also claiming to emulate such a *kawaii* persona in moderation when talking to superiors, male colleagues, and in other interactions.

Japanese women also considered traditionally feminine characteristics to be of fundamental importance, especially such social virtues as kindness and attentiveness to others. They suggested that women should always strive to have ‘room in their hearts’ for others while simultaneously refraining from burdening others with their own problems. Taken together, their words and deeds should help everyone around them to feel comfortable and at ease. This stance reflects an element of emphasized femininity that seeks, above all, to accommodate men’s needs and desires (Connell, 1987). Some interviewees even spoke of a woman’s duty in

Japanese society to honor and elevate men, while others blamed women who reversed traditional gender roles in their families. Autonomy and independence were also frequently mentioned by the interviewees, especially as part of the broader objective of achieving and sustaining financial and emotional self-sufficiency before marriage. In romantic relationships, however, they suggested that maintaining a balanced independence must be prioritized, adjusting their autonomy based upon context to respond flexibly to male partners' needs and preferences.

Japanese women seemed to have a particularly rigid perception of how an ideal woman should speak, including details regarding appropriate sentence structures, speed, volume, and tone of communication. They claimed to occasionally appropriate men's language, particularly in computer- and mobile-mediated communication and in interactions with their male friends (in order to be treated equally, without respect to gender). This view differs from the interviewed Russian women's preference to restrict the use of swearwords to interactions with female friends and avoid them in mixed-gender conversations. The next chapter will further address Japanese and Russian women's appropriation of 'male' speech and discuss the possible motivations behind this phenomenon.

Chapter 4. Russian and Japanese women's real language practices

In this chapter, I will investigate the phenomenon of female speakers' appropriation of traditionally male speech, and explore the stances that women aim to convey using linguistic resources typically limited to men. I argue that the claim that women utilize swearwords and "male vocabulary" infrequently cannot be maintained when non-scripted data is analyzed. Using data on women's language in Japanese blogs and Russian spontaneous conversations, I will demonstrate the wide gap between women's actual linguistic practices and the expectations imposed upon women's discourse by societal norms. I contend that women use male language to communicate strong, emphatic stances and mark closeness with the addressee, and that in the service of these objectives they employ a great diversity of stance-marking devices. Even though Russian and Japanese women are keenly aware that the use of swearwords and male vocabulary by women is proscribed, they frequently reject and subvert these expectations in actual conversations.

4.1. Women's appropriation of 'male language' in Japanese

4.1.1. Theoretical preliminaries on the 'male' particles *zo/ze*

In the sections that follow, I will analyze women's use of the two sentence-final particles *zo* and *ze*, which are traditionally classified as masculine (Sturtz Sreetharan 2004: 280). Examples (69) and (70) below represent the way *zo* and *ze* are typically used by male speakers:

- (69) *Ashita gakkoo yasumi da ze*
Tomorrow school closed COP *ZE*
'The school is closed tomorrow, you know.' (rough sounding) (Iwasaki 2013: 303)
- (70) *Yoshi zen'in de iku zo!*
Okay altogether INS go *ZO*
'Alright, let's continue altogether!' (Nakamura, 2013: 25)

The particle *zo* is conventionally described as a pragmatic particle used to code strong assertion, or to indicate a speaker's power and high rank, while *ze* is understood as encoding strong appeal or emphasizing masculinity (e.g. Iwasaki, 2013:303, Sadanobu, 2014). Sturtz Sreetharan (2004) defines *zo* as a particle that “emphatically states an opinion, insistence, and authority,” while *ze* is used “among intimates,” expresses “friendly insistence,” and “marks asymmetrical status” (89). Even in the exceptional instances in which *zo/ze* are used by a female speaker, it has been argued that the male gender is still indirectly indexed through the coarseness conveyed, with the suggestion that in such cases women are merely taking a man's perspective (Cook, 1989: 118). Ochs (1992) claims that the gendered particles index stances directly, while indirectly indexing gender. According to Ochs' theory of indexicality, *ze* indexes coarse intensity that in turn is associated with the male “voice” (figure 31).

Figure 31. Indexing gender in Japanese (Ochs, 1992: 342)

Linguistic form	Direct index	Indirect index
<i>ze</i>	coarse intensity	male “voice”

However, Shibuya (2004) has questioned Ochs' attempt to explain the use of the male particle using the theory of indexicality, saying that it was “not attestable with the case of Japanese gendered particles” that are sex-exclusive language forms (40). According to Bodine (1975), sex-exclusive forms are used restrictedly by one gender, while sex-preferential forms are utilized by one gender more frequently than by the other. Bodine claims that European languages most frequently have sex-preferential differentiation, while such languages as Thai and Japanese have various sex-exclusive features, such as particles and pronouns (1975:138). Making use of Bodine's theory, Shibuya (2004) states that the Japanese sentence-final particles *ze* has a direct connection with gender and, therefore, is sex-exclusive (52). She argues that the particle *ze* seems to convey coarse intensity (a claim made by Ochs (1992)) precisely because native speakers know that this is a male particle, and men are stereotypically believed to have

coarseness in their character intrinsically. As a result, it is natural for Japanese speakers to connect the male particle *ze* with the expression of masculinity and roughness. In general, Shibuya questions the validity of primarily linking Japanese sentence-final particles with stances of delicate/coarse intensity, arguing that these linguistic elements began to be connected with certain well-defined stances because of their straightforward association with a particular gender. She thus claims that the direction of indexicality proposed by Ochs should be reversed for Japanese gendered particles – they directly index the speaker’s gender, while indirectly conveying various stances (2004).

Indeed, there is much evidence in support of a direct linkage between *zo/ze* and masculinity. Japanese grammar textbooks of the pre-war and war period (1918-1945) refer explicitly to *zo* and *ze* as “male” speech elements, expressing strong language ideologies that instructed Japanese women how they must and must not speak (Nakamura, 2014:180). Even today, in many modern textbooks for Japanese learners the particles *ze* and *zo* are introduced as key elements of ‘strongly masculine’ speech, and presented as essential for male students to master (Miura & McGloin, 2008:34). I argue, however, that the directionality of indexicality is fluid, with the operative contextual frame defining what content is being indexed directly and indirectly. I propose to subdivide ‘interactional frames’ (as described by Fillmore, 1982) into three types: conventional, subcultural, and discourse. Depending on which type of frame is activated in a specific context, gender may or may not be indexed.

The conventional frame encompasses the general cultural norms and values that are known to the vast majority of native speakers in a given society. Therefore, the meanings created within this frame can be understood by almost anyone familiar with the language and culture. For instance, all Japanese speakers are familiar with the fact that the sentence-final particles *zo/ze* are elements of male language. Because of this shared understanding, the particles *zo* and *ze* can be strategically used in advertising in order to create a recognizable

male character. For example, in a recent Japanese cell phone commercial a female protagonist receives and peruses a long series of text messages, one of which says *matteru ze* ‘I am waiting ze’. In this minimal context, in which no information is known about the woman or the man or their relationship, the viewer’s interpretation naturally falls back on to the conventional interactional frame: the use of *ze* signals that the message is from an assertive man (Sturtz Sreetharan, 2004: 91).

At a second, intermediate level, the subcultural contextual frame refers to the set of more specific features that characterize a delimited community of speakers in certain contexts (e.g. graduate students, carpenters) – features that may not be known to the Japanese society as a whole. Close friends or family may be especially inclined to use various linguistic forms unconventionally or even to create their own words, thereby producing a strong sense of belonging to a particular group or community. For instance, Japanese lesbians frequently appropriate male language in conversations with one another, including sentence-final particles *zo/ze*, in order to foster intimate relationships and create a feeling of inclusiveness (Abe, 2004:218). Example 71 presents an interaction between two lesbian women in a bar, as they try to remove a stain from a toy:

- (71) Employee: *Kosutte mo torennee n da.*
 ‘We can’t get rid of it even by rubbing.’
 Customer: *Nanika iro ga chigau zo.*
 ➔ ‘Hey, the color is somehow different ZO.’ (Abe, 2004:217)

Not all Japanese people are aware that lesbians use a variety of traditionally masculine language features in conversations with one another. A Japanese person unfamiliar with this sub-cultural practice on hearing lesbians utilize *zo/ze*, might think that they are trying to self-identify as ‘men’ or to emphasize masculine traits of character. In fact, Japanese lesbians both deliberately avoid using feminine language and incorporate conventionally male speech in order to articulate independent identities and express powerfulness (Abe, 2004:218). Thus,

zo/ze in the subcultural contextual frame can be used to create powerful female identities that are unrelated to many aspects of male gender manifestation. In addition, sentence-final particles serve as a tool to treat an interlocutor as an in-group member and convey female solidarity.

Finally, the lower-level, or ‘discourse frame’ comprises the stances chosen by speakers in a given interaction. In such cases, knowledge of the whole conversation as well as participants’ relationships are both essential for the correct decoding of the meaning in linguistic forms. At this level, using Kiesling’s terminology (2009), interior indexicality is operative, as speakers engage in stance-taking activities that construct their persona for a particular conversation. For example, in a private email correspondence, a Japanese female writer produced the following sentence, using the sentence-final particle *ze*: *mata kondo sukaipu shiyoo ze*. ‘Let’s skype again ZE!’ (Iwasaki, 2013: 329). *Ze* here was employed not to mark masculinity or to convey powerfulness, but rather to create a nonchalant, relaxed tone in a personal letter, and to emphasize the closeness of the relationship (Iwasaki, 2013:329).

Distinct grammatical and lexical features within interactional frames are uniquely suitable for specific genres or modalities of communication (i.e. blogs versus spoken conversation) (Matsumoto, 2015:290). I argue that as a result of the interaction between the three frames (conventional, sub-cultural, and discourse) and defined genres associated with particular grammatical and lexical features, women are able to convey a diversity of stances, construct nuanced personae, and build relationships with readers, all while avoiding the creation of male “voice” in their discourses.

4.1.2. Use of *zo* and *ze* in spoken data

In the televised commercials analyzed in chapter 2, women occasionally utilized several linguistic forms that are traditionally associated with masculine language, but predominantly conformed to the ideals of traditional femininity and cuteness. No tokens of *zo/ze* were detected.

In the 12 hours of recorded, face-to-face communication analyzed in Chapter 3.2, Rika (21) was the only individual who used the particle *zo*, and she employed it only once. It occurred during a discussion of the third commercial viewed by the participants, which featured a young woman turning into a cat after having received *neko meiku* ‘cat make-up.’ Both Rika and Natsu, expressed their discomfort at the sight of the thick, grotesque eyeliner, finding such strong make-up inappropriate for the woman’s delicate facial features. In discussing the commercial, Rika conveyed her critical stance toward the woman’s appearance, saying *Sore wa kowai zo mitaina* ‘I was like that’s scary ZO.’ Here *zo* is embedded into the headless, utterance-final pronominal construction. The pronominal form *mitai-na* ‘be-like’ without a head noun is used in informal interaction to invoke emotional subjectivity, quote interpretive thoughts, and constructed speech (Fujii, 2006). Here, it serves as a mitigating expression, somewhat alleviating the strong stance conveyed through the use of *zo*. By marking her utterance with the particle *zo*, Rika emphasized the shock that she felt in the moment in the past when she first saw the woman’s revised appearance. Being scared is a quality strongly dissociated with masculinity, and even incompatible with ideal notions of courageous manhood. Thus, in light of the stance-mitigating strategy used as well as the contextual information surrounding Rika’s utterance, it is evident that Rika does not appropriate the particle *zo* in order to sound manly. Instead, she does so to communicate her emphatic stance toward the woman with the “cat make-up,” while also marking the closeness of the relationship she shares with her friend. The conventional meaning of the particle is irrelevant in Rika’s utterance, while its meaning is being shaped within the discourse frame.

During a subsequent interview with the researcher, when Rika was explicitly asked if she ever added *zo* or *ze* to utterances in her daily life, she claimed *Tsukenai desu ka ne. Tabun tsuketa koto nai n janai kana* ‘I think I don’t add (these particles). I don’t think I have ever added them.’ Even though she had used the particle *zo* only 10 minutes ago, she did not seem

to recollect ever having done so. Her response thus illustrates that speakers frequently employ certain linguistic elements unconsciously and may not always be able to give accurate self-reports (Trudgill, 1972). Rika later remembered, however, that she frequently used *zo/ze* when text messaging with her close friend, claiming that to her *zo* and *ze* were features of the male language in oral, but not electronic communication. Her friend Natsu suggested that in electronic communication (such as texting) she needs a device that would emphasize her assertions (*shuchoo*) without eliciting confirmation from the interlocutor. For this purpose, she finds the particle *zo* especially useful.

All 24 Japanese interviewees claimed that they tried to avoid using male language in their speech because it would paint them in a negative light before the eyes of society. Out of the 24 interviewees, however, 20 women admitted that they sometimes used the sentence-final particle *zo*, while 10 women confessed that in addition to *zo*, they also use *ze* mostly in their conversations with close male friends and especially in electronic messaging applications and blogs. Most women were able to identify at least one close friend (or relative) with whom they sometimes used *zo* and *ze* when texting for emphatic purposes. For example, Natsu (22) suggested (in excerpt 72 below) that she uses these particles when texting with her brother in order to convey closeness.

(72) *Koredake kudaketa kotobazukai ga dekiru ootoo mitaina kanji no ishiki ga moshikashitara aru kamoshirenai.*

‘I think that maybe I have an awareness that this is my younger brother, with whom I can use such a strongly casual style.’

Thus, Natsu used traditionally male language in electronic communication with her brother in order to convey an interpersonal stance of close friendship, showing that with him she does not need to follow the societal norms of etiquette. With the help of the sentence-final particles *zo/ze*, she was able to communicate in an open, nonchalant manner. Thus, women’s use of traditionally male language is seen as more suitable within the genre of electronic

communication, while spoken discourse is not a hospitable environment for such linguistic appropriation. This divergence in the use of male language across modalities might perhaps be attributed to a paramount significance of social norms of conduct in Japanese society – norms that sometimes lessen in stringency with more informal modes of interaction.

4.1.3. Analysis of blog corpora

Since the beginning of the 21st century, blogs and electronic diaries have gained tremendously in popularity, exhibiting informal features that make them compatible with the appropriation of traditionally ‘male’ linguistic elements *zo/ze* by women. This communicative modality is especially intriguing from the standpoint of sociolinguistic analysis of sentence-final particles, because these lexical features are usually thought to be used for interactional purposes and to be exclusively restricted to dialogic speech. In contrast, written texts are generally held to lack them (Iwasaki, 2015:163). Blogs thus present a unique environment for sentence-final particles: a hybrid genre combining features of both written and spoken registers, making private information instantly available online for public readers.

The image of womanhood that emerges from blogs produced by female writers differs markedly from the artificial, scripted representations of women developed by advertisers. By examining the occurrences of traditionally masculine linguistic features in women’s blogs, I will demonstrate the underlying differences between the actual language that women choose for self-expression and both a) the idealized women’s language depicted in media and b) women’s perceptions of normative language use. I argue that the ‘male’ particles are not used to index masculinity, as previously suggested (Cook 1989; Ochs 1992), but instead employed to convey strong emphatic stances, and create a sense of solidarity, community, and a special ‘bond.’ Despite the tight linkage of *zo/ze* and normative masculinity within the conventional

frame, in the environment of online blogs other social meanings become apparent, while conversely the traditional meaning of masculinity fades in prominence.

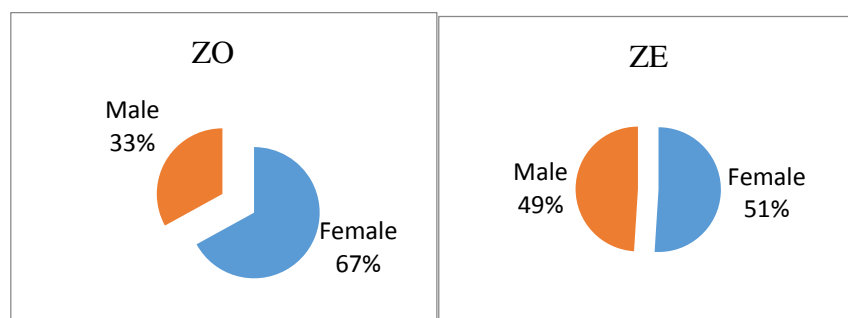
These processes may be facilitated by the distinct interactional contexts in which blog writers operate. In contrast to female participants in spoken discourse, female bloggers have less of an imperative to consider the possible interpretations of their utterances by interlocutors, or to follow social norms and conventions generally. For example, in spoken conversation, female speakers may be expected to moderate strong assertions, to solicit confirmation, or to defer to the judgment of superiors. In blogs, women have a higher degree of control, presenting what is effectively a sustained monologue to interested readers. Moreover, female bloggers may have a very different set of perceptions and concerns with respect to their audience. In conversation, women may have to speak to one or more specific interlocutors simultaneously, and may need to calibrate their utterance or their stances precisely based upon their antecedent relationships. In writing a blog, the author effectively constructs their own audience (interestingly, much as media representations construct their viewership) and the reader is invited to participate in a one-sided dialogue on the author's terms. Such considerations may explain why blog writers feel at greater liberty to impinge upon social norms that they might habitually respect in speech.

Because conventional social restrictions are lifted for blog writers, they are able to express their sentiments more vividly than in conversations. The contextual meaning of *zo/ze* in blogs primarily removes their gendered aspect while maintaining their function of strong emphasis; this allows female writers to convey stances of confidence and certainty through the appropriation of traditionally 'male' particles. In spoken conversation, a woman utilizing these particles might convey meanings that would be interpreted very differently by her interlocutors. The ambiguity of subversive or alternative usage of *zo/ze* may thus bear undesirable consequences for a female speaker. In blogs, however, they are shielded from such criticism.

The present study includes analysis of 200 recent blogs written in 2015 from the online collection of internet blogs *Goo Burogu*. The entries used for analysis were sampled randomly from the total *Goo Burogu* corpus, with the only inclusion criterion being the presence of *zo/ze*. The gender of the blog writers was inferred based on the user's profile information. If gender information was lacking in a profile, then the associated blog was excluded from analysis. Naturally, there is no method to check the validity of the blogger's claims regarding their gender. However, the primary goal of the analysis is to assess general trends associated with gender and the use of *zo/ze*, rather than assess the gendered features of any one blogger's communications. As such, in the absence of compelling reasons to think that users are systematically misrepresenting their gender in the *Goo Burogu* corpus, it seems reasonable to treat the reported gender as accurate. Prior to conducting any comparisons between male and female bloggers, it is necessary to determine the base rates of female and male participation in the blogs collated by *Goo Burogu*. In order to do so, 100 blogs were randomly sampled from the corpus as a baseline group. In this sample, 51 bloggers identified as female and 49 identified as male. This suggests that the number of female and male bloggers in general population of *Goo Burogu* blogs does not differ substantially.

Analysis of the sampled blogs utilizing *zo/ze* reveals that, contrary to conventional expectation, women outnumber men in usages of *zo* and are roughly equivalent in usages of *ze*. (see graph 3 below)

Graph 3. Gender distribution in usage of *zo* and *ze* between blogs.



Analysis of the specific usages of *zo* and *ze* in these discourses suggests that female writers do not deploy these sentence-final particles in order to convey masculinity. These findings are in conflict with previous theorizing (Cook, 1989: 118), according to which *zo/ze* effect the creation of a male persona on the level of indirect indexicality. Many female writers in the analyzed blogs used *zo* and *ze* to articulate stances pertaining to their desires, intentions, accomplishments, setbacks, and successes. By using *zo* and *ze*, female speakers were able to communicate confidence, emphatically expressing their decisions to perform various actions. For instance, one woman's blog frequently summarized her children's daily activities using pictures and short descriptions. After a vivid depiction of New Year's Eve, this mother ended her entry with the following statement (excerpt 73):

- (73) *Ashita mo tanoshii koto ga matte iru zo.*
 Tomorrow also fun thing NOM wait:TE-ASP:NONPAST ZO
 'Tomorrow fun things are also waiting ZO.'

In this excerpt, with the help of *zo*, the writer conveys her confidence and excitement about the children's upcoming schedule in an emphatic manner. Far from creating a masculine persona, her female identity as a mother is strongly conveyed. In this way, the particle *zo* contributes to the articulation of a protective motherly persona, who is actively involved in the upbringing of her children.

In the analyzed blogs, *zo/ze* frequently co-occur with evaluative adjectives (such as *omoshiroi* 'interesting,' *warui* 'bad,' *ii* 'good,') that project the speaker's stance to a certain object, action, event, or behavior. In the following example, a woman writes about her private life, complaining about her partner and expressing an urgent desire to leave him. However, she understands that he will experience great suffering if she acts upon this desire. Her contemplations are presented in excerpt (74) below.

- (74) *Watashi ga sonzai o kesu? Demo sore o shite shimattara, kare*
 I NOM existence ACC erase but that ACC do:TE-MOD:COND he

wa mi o kirareru omoi ni naru no wa
 TOP self ACC cut-POT thoughts DAT become NML TOP

wakatte iru kara watashi ni wa sonna zankokuna understand:TE-
 ASP:NONPAST because I DAT TOP this kind cruel

➔ *koto, dekinai. Yasashi sugiru ZO, watashi.*
 thing do-POT:NEG kind excess ZO I

‘To disappear? But if I do that, I understand that he will have agonizing thoughts, so I
 ➔ cannot do such a cruel thing to him. I am too kind ZO.’

The particle *zo* here is self-evaluative, reflecting the author’s conclusion that she cannot pursue a desired course of action because of her excessively kind personality. In this case, *zo* does not stress masculinity at all, in spite of its meaning within the conventional frame. In fact, the writer here emphasizes her kindness, a traditionally feminine characteristic. Thus, it appears that in electronic communication through blogs there is no mandatory link between *zo/ze* and masculinity. Female bloggers do not index male identity by using *zo/ze*, nor are they trying to speak like a man – rather, they appropriate male language in order to convey powerful emphatic stances toward oneself. In such cases, the discourse frame (involving the context of communication between the speaker/writer and her audience, and her specific intentions in a given communicative act) is brought forward, while the conventional meaning is rendered practically irrelevant. Thus, different functions of a linguistic form are highlighted depending on the interactional frame, in which it appears (Iwasaki, 2015; Taylor, 2010).

Within specific discourse frames, *zo/ze* may also convey the writer’s strong intention or wish to perform a specific action. In these contexts, *zo/ze* often help to articulate the author’s inner voice, aimed at urging herself to undertake a challenging task. In the text preceding the next excerpt, a female writer talks at length about her interest in golf. After describing her last visit to the golf course, she makes the following statement (excerpt 75), emphasizing her determination to play golf next time.

- (75) *Ashita* *mo iku zo.*
 Tomorrow also go zo
 ‘I will go again tomorrow ZO.’

In excerpt 75, the female blogger does not project herself as a male speaker, or adopt a masculine persona by adding *zo* to her utterance, but rather conveys her strong determination to play golf again as soon as possible. *Zo* in blogs is frequently addressed to oneself rather than other readers, and has a self-motivational function. The examples presented above show that it is essential to analyze *zo/ze* in blogs within the discourse frame, remaining sensitive to the particular meanings a writer conveys to her online audience as she explores the freedoms brought by computer-mediated communication. This kind of assertive self-expression may not be deemed appropriate for women in face-to-face conversations, but blogs are a welcoming platform for various forms of disclosure.

Furthermore, some women utilized features of male language to an even greater extent, incorporating them in hashtags that label their posts. This explicit annotation strongly suggests that *zo* and *ze* are essential components of their writing style, and that these particles are deployed deliberately, rather than incidentally. For example, a woman named Chako concludes a blog post with the hashtag *da ze*. The copula *da* is considered a moderately masculine feature and the sentence-final particle *ze* is characterized as strongly masculine (Miura & McGloin, 2009:34). In comparison to *zo* that is self-evaluative and self-motivational, *ze* is more other-oriented, creating an impression that the writer is talking to a reader.

In one of Chako’s blogs using this hashtag, she narrates her emotional response to the family situation surrounding the approach of her daughter’s university entrance exams. After informing the reader that examination admission cards have arrived, she turns her attention to her personal feelings, as seen in the excerpt (76) below, in which she utilizes *ze* at the conclusion of each statement.

(76) ➔ *Tooi ze. Jyukēn kaijyō wa erabenai shi, shikata ga nai ze. Gambaru*
 far ze exam place TOP choose:POT:NEG and way NOM be:NEG ze Try hard
shika nai ze. Demo haha wa nanimo shite yarenai ze. Hagayui ze.
 only be:NEG ze but mother TOP nothing do:TE do:POT:NEG ze impatient ze

➔ ‘It’s far ZE. But you can’t choose an exam location, so nothing to be done ZE. You can only do your best ZE. But a mother can’t do anything ZE. I am so impatient ZE.’

By adding the sentence-final particle *ze*, Chako emphasizes her impatience and vexation in every sentence. Whereas *tooi* without a subsequent particle would merely communicate the fact that the test location is far, *tooi ze* underlines that the distance is onerous and expresses the mother’s feelings of annoyance at the situation. The reader can easily sense her feelings of dissatisfaction in the next sentence as she admits that nothing can be done to change the situation. Chako continues to convey her critical stance toward the entrance test procedures by repeatedly completing her utterances with the particle *ze*. In the last sentence, she summarizes her feelings (*Hagayui ze*. ‘I am so impatient ZE’), a fact which has been thoroughly communicated to the reader throughout her blog entry – in large part because of the repetitive particle use. As in the previous excerpts, the use of the particle *ze* does not portray Chako as having a manly character, suggest that she is speaking in a manly fashion, or imply that she is expressing a man’s perspective. In fact, she is worried about her child, displaying concerned and nurturing behaviors that are conventionally associated with femininity and feminine social roles. Thus, the conventional meaning of *ze* in this blog is almost completely suppressed, while the discourse frame predominates and informs the readers of the writer’s stance.

Unlike Chako, many blog writers avoided profligate or repetitive use of masculine particles, but employed them judiciously in strategic places in order to highlight their feelings and associated stances. For example, Haru utilizes *ze* only in the title of a blog entry, which announces, *Yatto kesa todoita ze*. ‘Finally it arrived in the morning today *ze*.’ Haru is keenly interested in music, and frequently writes about her experiences at concerts and live

performances. By appending *ze* to her blog entry's title, she conveys the intensity of her affective stance so that the readers can understand the importance of the parcel that has just arrived. Later, in the body of the blog, the readers find out that the long-awaited item is a CD that she ordered online and that is now ready for a pick-up from a convenience store. Through the title, the readers are able to infer immediately that Haru has been looking forward to receiving this item and is now excited about its arrival. The particle *ze* makes the title more emphatic and significant by conveying the writer's feeling of anticipation, while simultaneously signaling the close relationship between Haru and her readers. Again, the conventional frame of interpretation for masculine particles is not activated in the minds of the readers, while the discourse frame is prioritized.

In segments of blog entries with reported speech, however, the conventional meaning of *zo/ze* remains prominent, especially in attributing to a male third person's speech or thought. For instance, a female high school student describes her father's utterance in the following manner in excerpt 77.

- (77) *Tekitoo ni rokuga shita bangumi wo mite-itaru chichioya*
 Random DAT record do-PAST program ACC watch:TE-ASP:COND father
- ➔ *kara hiruhan iku zo to iu denwa ga kakatte kita node iku*
 from lunch go ZO QT say phone call NOM ring:TE come:PAST because go
- koto ni shimashita.*
 NML DAT do-PAST

'I was watching some show that I recorded when my father called, saying 'I am going
 ➔ to lunch ZO', so I decided to go (with him).'

By using *zo* in direct speech the female writer makes it easy for the readers to distinguish her utterances from her father's words. Further, by adding *zo* to her father's words, the student conveys a stance that is instantaneously linked to authoritative masculinity. *Zo* projects a stance appropriate for her father, thereby enabling the readers to visualize his personality. Thus, the

conventional frame dominates the construction of meaning in such instances, and signals that the utterance belongs to a confident male speaker.

4.1.4 Interim summary

The analysis thus far has shown that both *zo* and *ze* appear frequently in blogs created by women, a phenomenon that does not conform to the notion of idealized *kawaii* femininity presented in advertisements. Women in blogs use traditionally masculine linguistic features in order to convey various positive and negative stances, emphasizing their strong will and conviction. Based on the written and spoken discourses analyzed above, the conventional frame of interpretation for these particles does not always dictate their meaning. In computer-mediated communication, as well as in some conversations, women are able to appropriate ‘male’ language forms to convey stances unrelated to masculinity. This research demonstrates that the sentence-final particles *zo* and *ze* have lost their strong linkage to the male gender in informal computer-mediated communication, such as blogs. When *zo* and *ze* are utilized in quotations as a part of reported speech, however, they mark the third person’s speech as male, while conveying the writer’s attitude toward or about him. Thus, women’s use of these sentence-final particles is a compelling example of the widening gap between women’s linguistic representation in media and their real language choices in discourse.

4.2. Women’s appropriation of ‘male language’ in Russian

4.2.1. Theoretical preliminaries on Russian swearwords

Unlike Japanese, the Russian language does not have sentence-final particles associated with male and female speech. Russian spoken language, however, contains a variety of swearwords that function as highly emphatic markers. Similarly to *zo* and *ze*, these emphatic markers help the speakers to convey their stances of strong determination, demonstrating their

resolution to perform a certain action (or lack of it). In addition, they alter the emotional tone of discourse, often with the effect of making speech highly expressive. According to Zemskaja (1993), these types of words are especially characteristic of Russian men's speech: men often utilize derogatory forms for emphatic purposes, while women select hyperbolically emotional vocabulary to convey emphatic stances, avoiding swearwords (131). It is argued that younger women, however, may utilize the vocabulary traditionally associated with male speech when amongst close female friends, while refraining from its use with men. Zemskaja calls this phenomenon "speech intimatization", suggesting that both men and women may use swearwords and vocabulary of a low register in order to signal closeness with the interlocutor (122). For instance, a woman requesting an object from her female friend may use the low register lexical item *hrenovinka* 'thing (general) (lit. horseradish)' to mark their close relationship (122). Zemskaja argued that this "speech intimatization" is not utilized in mixed-gender conversations and is abandoned if the conversation is joined by a representative of a different gender.

In the data presented in chapter 3.1, the 20 Russian interviewees insisted that this type of vocabulary should be avoided by all genders, yet asserted that swearing was more permissible for male speakers. In spite of recognizing and affirming the prohibition on the use of swearwords, women admitted that they also use this type of vocabulary to some extent, blaming themselves for foul language use. Their answers revealed the disparity between gender language ideologies and real language practices, a topic which I will further investigate in this section.

4.2.2. Data

The data analyzed in this section is comprised of conversations from the National Corpus of Spoken Russian. This is the largest corpus of contemporary spoken Russian language

containing more than five million words. It allows searching for a specific lexical element and provides speakers' demographic information and overall context. Specifically, I investigated the sub-corpus of spontaneous conversations, which includes male-to-male, female-to-female and mixed-gender conversations. In total, there are 675,203 words in 705 conversations that include at least one male speaker, and 1,113,214 words in 1260 conversations that include at least one female speaker. Scripted conversations from movies and televised shows were intentionally excluded in order to analyze women's real use of language.

I analyzed the following five words, representing vulgar, coarse and derogatory items that differ in intensity, arranged in ascending order from relatively lesser coarseness and to extreme coarseness: 1) *čjort* 'devil, deuce,' 2) *blin* 'damn,' 3) *blja* 'damn,' 4) *bljad'* 'damn (lit. slut).'¹ and 5) *pizdets* 'fuck' (lit. 'vagina'). The first, fourth and fifth items (*čjort*, *bljad'* *pizdets*) can be used in their literal meaning as an insult, but these instances were excluded from the sample, given that the goal of the research was to observe the use of the swearwords in their emphatic function rather than in their direct meaning. Each of the five words can be used flexibly in almost any position within an utterance as an emphatic stance marker. The first lexical item *čjort* 'devil' is a relatively mild vulgarism, often used to mark frustration. The second item *blin* 'damn' is a common vulgar colloquialism, also relatively mild on the scale of vulgarity. The third item *blja* 'damn' is considerably stronger in its coarseness, representing a contracted version of the fourth item *bljad'* 'damn (lit. slut).'² The lexical item *bljad'* (due to its literal meaning) is a relatively strong swearword inappropriate for polite contexts. As a contraction of *bljad'*, *blja* inherits significant coarseness and is also a harsh emphatic marker. Its contracted form, however, makes it less vulgar than the complete version *bljad'*. Finally, *pizdets* 'fuck' is morphologically formed by the addition of the suffix *ets* to the root word *pizda* 'vagina (vulgar)'. This swearword is used as a strong emphatic marker to convey a variety of

distinct emotions; in most of these instances its original meaning is subordinate if not entirely absent.

4.2.3 Analysis of spoken corpora

Despite the common perception that men would be the primary users of all the five aforementioned lexical items, analysis based on the National Corpus of Spoken Russian reveals very different results. The findings are summarized below in Table 4, indicating the number of conversations in which female and male speakers used the lexical items and the percentage of these conversations out of the total number of conversations involving (respectively) female and male speakers. Instead of computing the overall number of tokens, I counted the number of conversations in which the swearwords were used. This avoids the possibility that outlier conversations with a large number of swearwords would bias the results. Overall, there are more conversations in the National Corpus of Spoken Russian with at least one female speaker than conversations with at least one male speaker. For this reason, it is important to consider the relative percentage of conversations using the target lexical items separately for each gender, and to conduct proportion tests.

Table 4. Distribution of Russian vulgar emphatic terms between genders

Lexical item	Female speaker (N of conversations; %)		Male speaker (N of conversations; %)		Statistical results
<i>čjort</i> ‘devil, deuce’	58	4.6%	30	4.3%	$\chi^2(1)=0.359$, p=0.549
<i>blin</i> ‘damn’	217	17.2%	83	11.8%	$(\chi^2(1)=12.56$ 7, p=0.00039
<i>blja</i> ‘damn’	28	2.2%	17	2.4%	$\chi^2(1)<0.001$, p>0.99
<i>bljad’</i> ‘damn (lit. slut)’	21	1.7%	19	2.7%	$\chi^2(1)=1.229$, p=0.268
<i>pizdets</i> ‘Fuck’	17	1.3%	12	1.7%	$\chi^2(1)=0.0446$, p=0.833
Total number of conversations	1260	100%	705	100%	

As seen from Table 4, both Russian female and male speakers utilize vulgar expressions in their speech with a relative frequency depending on the lexical item. Statistical tests demonstrate that only the term *blin* ‘damn’ differed significantly between the two groups, showing a higher proportion amongst female speakers than male ($\chi^2(1)=12.567$, $p=0.00039$). *Čjort* ‘deuce’, *blja* ‘damn’, *bljad* ‘damn’, and *pizdets* ‘fuck’ did not differ significantly in the proportion of conversations involving male and female speakers. This finding contradicts the notion that swearwords belong to the domain of male language. Thus, the present analysis suggests that in contemporary Russian it is no longer uncommon for women to use swearwords as emphatic markers in their speech. As the data shows, swearwords can be used to convey both negative and positive stances, depending on the contexts, as well as to index the level of closeness between the speakers.

The analyzed swearwords frequently conveyed negative stances of frustration, disturbance, and disappointment. If they were utilized at the beginning or in middle of an utterance, these items often marked the introduction of an undesirable event. If utilized at the end of an utterance, they frequently summarized the speaker’s negative feelings about the topic of conversation. For example, in the following conversation (excerpt 78) two women, Dasha (20 years old) and Alla (22 years old) are discussing the new building in which they are going to study.

- (78) A *komp* *tam net, na Tsvetnom, net! Čjort! No zato inet est’, vsjo ok!*
and computer there no on Tsevnom no devil no rather internet be all okay

‘But they don’t have a computer there, no! Deuce! But at least the internet is there, everything is okay!’

By utilizing the derogatory expression *čjort* in an emphatic capacity, the speaker conveys her critical stance toward the infrastructure of the building where she will have to teach. In addition, Dasha uses an array of contracted forms, such as *komp* instead of *kompjuter* ‘computer’ and *inet* instead of *internet* ‘internet’, which are considered slang expressions. The

swearwords, colloquialisms, and slang expressions, alongside the emphatic nature of her speech, combine to convey an interpersonal stance, marking Dasha's relationship with Alla as a close friendship.

Stronger than *čjort* 'deuce' in its vulgarity, the swearword *bljad* 'damn (lit. slut)' also serves as an emphatic device to convey the speaker's acute negative emotion toward a certain event or person. Its usage by female speakers is common in situations of complaint. The conversation below (excerpt 79) between two female speakers, Lita (19 years old) and Panika (18 year old), presents a typical example.

- (79) 1 LIT *V električke smotrju, vot sčitaj gde-to metrov sto prošla, da.*
In train see here count somewhere meters hundred walked yes
- 2 *Smotrju vse džinsy vot tak vot! Vse v grjazi.*
look all jeans here that here all in dirt
- 'I notice in the train, you know, by then I had walked around 100 meters already. I see my jeans are all terrible! All in dirt.'
- 3 PAN *Ty ne odna takaja.*
you not one such
- 'You are not the only one like that.'
- 4 LIT ➔ *Dumaju, bljad' čjo takoje? Možet, u menja pohodka ne tak. Znaesh,*
think damn what such maybe by I:GEN walking not so know
- 5 *vot tak vot... Prjam po ljažki. Užasno!*
here that here really until thigh terrible
- ➔ 'I think to myself, damn what happened? Maybe, I walk wrong. You know, I can't believe it... Up to my thighs. Horrible!'

In lines 1 and 2, Lita provides factual information about an incident in which her jeans were stained. In line 3, her friend Panika expresses alignment with Lita by conveying solidarity (*Ty ne odna takaja*. 'You are not the only one like that'), suggesting that she has been in a similar situation. Lita is thus encouraged to continue her story in line 4, this time adding her affective stance toward the situation by using the swearword *bljad* 'damn' in the reported

thought ('I think to myself, damn what happened?'). In doing so, she is able to convey the frustration she experienced when she noticed dirt on her jeans, thereby adding immediacy to her utterance. In this excerpt, Lita communicates a traditionally feminine concern about her appearance through the use of 'male' language, employing a swearword in order to emphasize her strong emotions. Furthermore, in line 5 Lita uses a lexical item of low register *ljažki* 'thighs' instead of the more neutral equivalent. Her final lexical item in line 5 *užasno* 'horrible' summarizes the way she felt on the train. By utilizing language that underlines the informality of the setting, Lita accomplishes two goals simultaneously: she directly conveys a negative stance towards the accident that happened to her while indirectly marking her relationship with Panika as close.

The analyzed swearwords are also frequently used to introduce an unavoidable, disadvantageous side of an object or event that otherwise possessed positive characteristics. In excerpt (80), Manja (female, 22 years old), who is a gymnastics instructor for children, is telling Ksenia (female, 23 years old) about her new group of students. After she mentions that enrollment for this year is especially high, she begins sharing her concerns about the associated consequences, commencing her utterance with the coarse item *blin* 'damn.'

(80) *U menja poslednee vremja što-to stol'ko narodu. Ja vrode radovat'sja dolžna.*
 by I:GEN recent time something so people I perhaps rejoice must

➔ *Blin, oni tam ne umeščajutsja, im tam tesno.*
 damn they there not fit they there tight

'Recently, I have so many people. I should be glad, I suppose.

➔ Damn, they don't fit there. It's too tight there.'

By utilizing the swearword *blin* 'damn', the speaker conveys her stance of dissatisfaction with some of the negative consequences of high enrollment, even though she regards this as a positive development overall. Besides the emphatic marker *blin*, she does not use any other coarse or vulgar expressions. Without this swearword, her utterance might fail to

express Manja's attitude toward the insufficient classroom space, merely presenting it neutrally as an issue, with which she needs to deal. The use of *blin* thus allows her to communicate to Ksenia her concern and emotional investment.

Similarly, in excerpt (81), Masha (female, 25 years old) uses the coarse emphatic item *blin* to express her frustration about a defect in an article of clothing she has purchased. Masha describes the beauty of the skirt, but stresses her strong discontent that it is exceedingly short.

(81) *Ya pravda poslednij raz jubku na vypusknnoj odevala, v smysle to platje bylo, no*
I really last time skirt on graduation wore in meaning that dress was but

➔ *v principe odin hren... blin, no ona pravda takaja koroten'kaja, no s drugoj*
in principle one horseradish damn but she really so short:DIM but from other

storony mne že ne poltinnik! Ja poka molodaja, simpatičnaja vrode.
side I:DAT EMPH not fifty I still young pretty seems

‘To be honest, last time I wore a skirt, it was for the graduation, I mean that was a dress,
➔ but in principle same shit. Damn, but it is actually really short, but on the other hand, I am not 50 yet! I am still young, pretty, it seems.’

Masha utilizes a mixture of lexical devices that are traditionally linked to male and female language, as she adopts both coarse (male) vocabulary and diminutive suffixes associated with feminine speech (Zemskaja, 1993:124). She first justifies her recent purchase by stating that she has not worn a skirt for a long time and thus needs to do so. Then she uses the swearword *blin* to convey her concern about the skirt, which she suggests is potentially indecent because of its length. In addition to the swearword *blin*, she also uses the vulgar expression *odin hren* ‘same shit (lit. same horseradish).’ By using the emphatic marker *blin* and the vulgar expression *odin hren* Masha communicates that her stance toward the new acquisition is dubious, while also marking her relationship with her friend as intimate. In these ways, she clearly draws upon linguistic elements traditionally associated with male speech. When describing the skirt itself, however, she uses the adjective *koroten'kaja* ‘short’ with a diminutive suffix *-en'k*, which softens her speech and further emphasizes the small size of the

skirt. Masha then extends her turn, adding further rationalization for her purchase of the skirt by arguing that a short skirt is still appropriate at her relatively young age. She uses the colloquialism *poltinnik* ‘fifty,’ which in informal speech may refer either to 50 rubles or to 50 years of age (depending on the context). Taken as a whole, Masha’s utterance shows how Russian women utilize a variety of linguistic devices, both coarse and mild, depending on their attitude toward the subject of the narration and the relationship they wish to cultivate with the interlocutor.

The swearwords examined in this corpus analysis can serve not only as markers of negative affective stances such as frustration or doubt, but also as positive markers of excitement, joy, and delight. For instance, after using *blin* ‘damn’ to communicate her frustration with the shortcomings of her skirt, Masha later utilized *blin* to convey a positive stance toward the very same item, recalling her delight when she first saw it at the store. Her utterance is presented below in the excerpt (82):

(82) *A ja včera kupila sebe takuju prikol’nuju jubočku, koroten’kuju, ot talii*
and I yesterday bought self:DAT such cool skirt (dim.) short (dim.) from waist

do podola gde-to santimetrov 35, sama ot sebja ne ožidala, oranževgo tsveta,
to hem somewhere centimeters 35 myself from self not expect orange color

➔ *očen’stil’nuju modnen’kuju. Blin, ja kak ejo uvidela, srazu vljubilas’.*
very stylish fashionable (dim.) damn I once her saw immediately fell in love

‘And yesterday I bought such a cool skirt for myself. It’s short, from waist to hem around 35 centimeters. I didn’t expect that from myself. Orange color, very stylish,

➔ fashionable. Damn, when I saw it, I fell in love at once.’

As seen in excerpt (82), Masha again combines gentle and coarse linguistic elements. She begins with a detailed description of the skirt, appending a variety of diminutive suffixes such as *-en’k* and *-čk* to the nouns and adjectives pertaining to it in order to convey her fascination. Instead of the dictionary form *jubka* ‘skirt’, she uses the diminutive version *jubočka*, communicating her fondness for the new acquisition. Similarly, instead of the

standard form *modnaja* ‘fashionable,’ Masha uses its diminutive version *modnen’kaja*, thereby emphasizing the positive characteristics of the skirt. Masha then employs the swearword *blin* ‘damn’ as a stance-marking device, confessing that she fell in love with the skirt at first sight. Here *blin* introduces and intensifies the speaker’s feeling of admiration for the skirt, emphasizing the overall emotionality of her statement. Excerpts (81) and (82) also demonstrate that women employ traditionally ‘male’ vocabulary even in discussions of conventionally ‘feminine’ subjects.

Furthermore, the corpus analysis contradicts the notion that women stop using swearwords with mixed-gender interlocutors, or when initially female-to-female conversations are joined by men (Zemskaja, 1993). For instance, in the following conversation (excerpt 83) between Dmitriy (male, 19 years old) and Marina (female, 20 years old), the female speaker uses a swearword as an emphatic marker when they suddenly meet at the university.

- (83) 1 Dmi: *Privet, Marin!*
 hi Marina:VOC
 ‘Hi Marina!’
- ➔ 2 Mar: *Oj, blja Dim napugal- to oj!*
 oh damn Dima:VOC scare:PAST PP INJ
 ‘Oh damn, Dima you scared me oh!’
- 3 Dmi: *Ja ž tebe skazal “Privet, Marin” i vsjo!*
 I INJ you:DAT say:PAST hi Marina:VOC and all
 ‘I just said to you, “Hi Marina” and that’s all.’

Coarse vocabulary thus does not seem to be limited to single-gender (female-only or male-only) interactions, but occurs in mixed-gender conversations as well when speakers aim to communicate emphatic stances. The relationship between Marina and Dmitriy is unclear, but based on the contextual information, it can be deduced that they are close university friends. In line 2 of this excerpt (83), Marina expresses her surprise with the swearword *blja*, as well as the interjection *oj* ‘oh’ in both the initial and final positions. In so doing, she dramatizes her change of state at Dmitriy’s unexpected approach. Here, Marina does not convey a negative

stance toward Dmitriy himself, but toward the unexpected situation that caused her discomfort. Furthermore, prior to meeting Dmitriy, Marina had been talking to her female friend Katya (20), with whom she also used the swearword *blja* emphatically in a similar context. Thus, the defining factor in the use of coarse language does not seem to be the gender of the interlocutor, but rather the relationship that exists between the speakers. The use of swearwords does not conform to normative expectations that coarse language ought to be restricted to male speakers, but instead shifts to suit the stance that a speaker desires to convey toward her interlocutor, in conjunction with her overall persona.

Some women even utilized several swearwords consecutively in order to communicate highly emphatic stances. For example, in the following dialogue (excerpt 84), Tatyana (23 years old) is helping Anastasia (19 years old) to find an appropriate jacket, but Anastasia is not pleased with the store's selection. In response to Anastasia's hesitation, Tatyana uses two swearwords sequentially in order to show her impatience with her female friend:

- (84) 1 ANA: *Ja ne nadenu.*
 I NEG wear
 'I won't wear it.'
- ➔ 2 TAT: *Pizdets, bljad' Klava. Nu koroče, ja ne znaju, dumaj esli čego.*
 fuck damn Klava well fast:COMP I NEG know think:IMP if what:GEN
 'Damn fuck woman. Okay, faster, I don't know, think about it'
- 3 ANA: *Oj, slušaj, v njom... V njoj žarko!*
 Oh listen:IMP in he:PREP in he:PREP hot
 'Oh listen, in it... In it, it's hot!'

In line 1, Anastasia expresses her disliking of the jacket and her refusal to wear it. Her friend Tatyana conveys a divergent stance in line 2, highlighting her annoyance by using two swearwords consecutively. Both *pizdets* 'fuck' and *bljad'* 'damn' are strong swearwords, so when used together the message conveyed is extremely emphatic. Furthermore, Tatyana uses the proper noun Klava immediately after the sequence of swearwords. Because Klava is not her friend's name, it can be inferred that it is used as slang vocabulary to refer to all women,

thereby encompassing female stereotypes. Anastasia's slow shopping and hesitant behavior prompts Tatyana to call her a derogatory name. By using two swearwords consecutively and employing an offensive indexical term, she expresses a high level of frustration and impatience toward her friend's behavior. Her next utterance *nu koroče* 'okay faster' then compels Anastasia to decide on her shopping preferences more efficiently. In order to distance herself from the female stereotypes of indecisiveness and irrationality, Anastasia tries to provide reasoning for her hesitation and after a short pause, she states that the jacket is excessively warm for her. Thus, through the use of the consecutive swearwords *pizdets* and *bljad*', Tatyana conveys a strong negative stance toward her indecisive friend, pushing her to make a choice more quickly.

4.2.4 Summary

The analysis of Russian conversations from the National Corpus of Spoken Russian has provided evidence that both female and male speakers utilize coarse and vulgar vocabulary. Swearwords are no longer gender-preferential feature that is mostly used by male speakers, as it was suggested earlier (Zemskaja et al., 1993). Emphatic usage of swearwords allows speakers of *both* genders to communicate positive and negative stances, while indirectly conveying interpersonal relationships (Ochs, 1992). Moreover, swearwords are merely one of the many resources that women utilize to express their feelings and opinions. Depending on the stances they desired to convey, women combined conventionally 'male' and 'female' modes of speech, incorporating both emphatic, coarse vocabulary and softening expressions. By doing so, they were able to add emotionality to their narration, explicitly communicate their feelings, as well as create individual styles and identities. Though the actual conversations of Russian women evidence a wide range of emphatic, stance-marking devices, the examination of televised

commercials in chapter 2 did not reflect such variability. Instead, in advertising materials women's speech was universally portrayed as soft, unassertive, and lacking confidence.

Both Russian and Japanese female respondents in chapter 3 expressed an acute awareness that 'male' language should be avoided by women. This perception, however, was rejected or ignored in women's real discourses. Thus, there are wide and important differences between societal norms, women's perceptions of ideal femininity and feminine language, and their actual linguistic practices. In the final, concluding chapter of this dissertation, I will elaborate further on the discrepancies and tensions between representations, ideals, and realities, and discuss implications for the changing gender representations in Japan and Russia.

Chapter 5. Conclusion

Through a cross-cultural investigation of gender in contemporary Japanese and Russian, this dissertation has grappled with the different encodings of femininity across multiple modalities: focusing specifically on media representations, women's perceptions, and women's real language practices. Throughout this study, the confluences and divergences between the different forces shaping the expression of gender in language have become increasingly apparent. On the one hand, gender ideologies continue to have a normative influence, promulgated through marketing and advertisements and instilled in women from an early age. On the other hand, women's growing autonomy increasingly allows them appropriate language for their own purposes – accommodating, evading, or even straightforwardly rejecting traditional expectations regarding gendered language in the service of their own self-expression and stance-marking. In between these forces lies the still-contested ground of collective and personal ideals. In the consonance and clash of ideology and autonomy, women form their ideals in distinct ways, with diverse implications for their use of language and their response to other people's language use.

Crosscutting this three-level analysis of language (in ideologies of the society, ideals of members of the society, and practices of discourse participants) is the important potential of inter-cultural comparisons. Only by directly posing the similarities and differences between gendered language in multiple linguistic contexts as an object of study are we able to appreciate the generalities and continuities in linguistic behavior, as well as correctly assess the unique opportunities and hindrances for women posed by specific historical and social circumstances.

In this concluding chapter, I will summarize the main findings and contributions of this dissertation to the field of gender linguistics, highlighting the importance of comparisons both

intra-culturally (across levels of ideologies, ideals, and practices) and inter-culturally (between languages and forms of social organizations).

5.1. Televised advertisements in Russian and Japanese societies

Advertising of both Japanese and Russian ‘beauty products’ prioritized male gaze as the ultimate arbiter of a woman’s success and the final measure of her worthiness. Although the presence of the male gaze in commercials has frequently been debated by feminist linguists (e.g. Lazar, 2002), the present dissertation illustrates how its characteristics, roles, and representations differ cross-culturally. In Russian advertising men are portrayed as the covert, passive appreciators of women’s good looks – they are the final audience, for which beauty is constructed and maintained, but do not create or even necessarily understand it. In contrast, in Japanese advertising men are frequently the sole creators and explicit connoisseurs of female beauty. Women are not mysterious creatures in the ideological language of Japanese media, creating and manipulating their special beauty in order to please or manipulate male evaluators. Instead, they are passive objectives that male experts shape to their own purposes. In brief, the male involvement in the analyzed Japanese televised commercials is much more salient than in Russian commercials, resulting in the creation of dissimilar idealized femininities.

Russian advertising of beauty products deploys something of a “boomerang” representation of both female autonomy and the male gaze. Women create their appearances primarily with the goal of flattering men’s esteem and satisfying men’s preferences. Happiness and satisfaction redound upon women as a result of their effect upon men, rather than emerging directly from their creation of beauty. Men, for their part, do not merely observe beauty that either may or may not appear. Their appreciation and evaluation are the ultimate cause of beauty, impelling it forward on its course; they are also the final point of return, or distal objective, of beauty-making processes.

The importance of male gaze in visual culture has long been noted, as eloquently and succinctly summarized by Berger (1972): “Men look at women. Women watch themselves being watched at. This determines not only most relations between men and women but also the relation of women to themselves. The surveyor of woman in herself is male: the surveyed female. Thus she turns herself into an object- and most particularly an object of vision: a sight” (47). This theory of seeing is applicable to representations of women in Russian advertisements, which portray women constantly monitoring their looks, examining themselves through the male prism of objectification and sexualization. Of special importance, however, are the specific forms in which power relationships are embedded within the structure of the “boomerang” effect. It is women who must labor and cultivate their beauty – and they are encouraged to identify with process of the production of beauty even when they are not the primary or direct beneficiaries. Men merely gaze. Their gaze conjures up forms commensurate with its ideals and priorities. This process involves a double-deception on the part of both men and women: it conceals from women the subordinate and derivative nature of their autonomy in the construction of feminine beauty, and it conceals from men their causative (and potentially oppressive) force in dictating norms of beauty to women.

Despite the fact that feminism as a term is highly unpopular in Russian society (Johnson, 2007:29), women’s real status as wage earners necessitates that advertisers create images portraying working, self-sufficient, “modern” women. To do so, without jeopardizing consistency with patriarchal norms, they strategically incorporate and subvert elements of (post)feminist discourse – often in simplistic ways and in minimal doses. ‘Beauty ads’ targeted at Russian women manipulate representations of female confidence and autonomy by linking beauty with guaranteed success in romantic relationships, more steadfast friendships, and greater overall appreciation by others. These putative linkages are impressed upon the audience through various linguistic and non-linguistic cues, which simultaneously highlight women’s

skills and construe their utility solely in terms of their effectiveness at seducing and charming men. Self-oriented concerns are de-emphasized and displaced, as women are depicted enjoying attention and positive assessments from men and (more rarely) children and friends. Meanwhile, traditional feminine ideals are reiterated through ubiquitous presentations of women “as devoted and nurturing, as emotional and instinctual, and as indecisive and unpredictable” (Lazar, 2014:206). In Russian advertisements, women feature prominently in the roles of mothers, homemakers, wives, and objects of male sexual desire. These depictions prioritize other-centeredness insofar as women realize their potential and achieve self-fulfillment only derivatively through pleasing people around them (predominantly men) (Lazar, 2002). Women are urged to take responsibility in order to create beauty and encouraged to take charge of their looks in order to acquire and sustain the male gaze. This ideological directive constitutes a form of ‘double-entanglement’ (McRobbie, 2004), which simultaneously pretends to empower women by lauding the supremacy of their beauty while necessitating that they subordinate their own ends and concerns. Undergirding this entanglement is an appeal to women’s “innate feminine self,” which invariably refracts their gaze away from self-oriented aspirations and bends it onto the ultimate objective of the preferences of others. This process results in an oxymoronic “self-oriented other-centeredness” in which the cultivation of the self is itself a service to others. Women are tasked with being their own, most stringent monitors and regulators: they must conform in thought, word, and deed to the selves they are expected to be in relation to men.

Russian advertisers struggle to accommodate themselves to the reality that women are often economically and financially independent (through sporadic infusions of subverted post-feminist ideals) while also promulgating traditional values. Similarly, Japanese advertisements seek to integrate conventional gender norms with contemporary social developments, but the specific forms and mechanisms by which this combination occurs are different. The Japanese

advertisements analyzed in this dissertation integrate three major components: *kawaii* cultivation, traditional feminine ideology, and microscopic injections of postfeminist thought. *Kawaii* cultivation is the most prominent and most often reiterated trope in the media representation analyzed above – women are consistently portrayed as innocent, naïve, pure, and child-like. Japanese ‘beauty ads’ ascribe immaturity and infantilism to women as innate qualities, implying that these attributes are natural, desirable, and inescapable. Because the femininity of *kawaii* is based largely on childlike behaviors and attitudes, women in the Japanese commercials are not as overtly sexualized as women in Russian commercials. They are, however, reduced in their perceptions and intellect to the capacities and aptitudes of children, lacking understanding of basic phenomenon and bereft of the ability to perform even simple tasks adequately (e.g. washing hair or applying makeup). In place of their vacant cognitive faculties, an entrepreneurial male figure must be inserted in order to reveal their potential and actuate their full feminine beauty. Men in advertising act, while women appear (Berger, 1972: 47). Men speak and pass judgment, while women remain silent and receptive. These representations reinforce traditional notions of female submissiveness, dependency, and weakness, reproducing and recycling portrayals of women’s innate difference from (and inferiority to) men (Nakamura, 2004:136). In addition to the contemporary ideology of *kawaii* and the rhetoric of traditional femininity (which complement and inform each other), postfeminist ideals are dispersed in the commercials in strict moderation and frequently under male supervision. These subverted, postfeminist sensibilities are layered on almost as an after-thought, and seem either patently insincere or transparently ingratiating. Women may be presented as female robots, armed with immense power in fantastic surroundings but stripped of any emotion. Alternatively, female protagonists may claim that they have “graduated” from *kawaii* while still exhibiting *kawaii* behavior (and being rewarded for doing so). What women may not do is present themselves as authentic, powerful, and beautiful in themselves. In all

cases, women's voices are barely heard, while male voices dominate. The desperate attempt to fashion a modern woman who is at once strong, *kawaii*, and traditionally feminine results invariably in failure. The tensions between these disparate characteristics tear the meaning of the narrative apart at its ideological seams.

The comparative analysis of televised commercials in Japanese and Russian contexts has revealed that gender is indexed differently in different cultures, creating images of femininity that are uniquely relevant and appropriate. These observations contest the existence of any unitary or universal theory of gender and language, arguing instead that language can both construct and deconstruct gender. In case of the advertising, language plays a crucial role in constructing varied and culturally specific depictions of idealized femininity. Often, the same or similar linguistic devices are manipulated very differently in Japanese and Russian contexts to create normatively appropriate femininities. Both Japanese and Russian advertisers clearly perceive language as an essential tool to construct pleasing femininities that satisfy social norms and stimulate economic consumption.

However, as noted above, language can also be used to deconstruct or reformulate conceptions of gender. While advertisers possess vast resources, and often use them to saturate social spaces with their ideologically grounded appeals, they cannot monopolize all spheres of linguistic production. In women's language use in articulating their own ideals of femininity, and even more so in their appropriation of male language in actual discourse, the meaning of gender can be contested and renegotiated.

5.2 Japanese and Russian women's discourses on ideal femininity

The prevalence of the male gaze in Russian advertising recurred in the discourse of Russian women as they articulated their ideals about femininity. Russian interviewees insisted that women must possess a dual persona: an "onsite" identity in the presence of a man and an

“offsite” real identity in his absence. This concept is similar to the Japanese concepts of *ura* ‘private face’ and *omote* ‘public face’ in its duality representing the division between the inner true self and a persona created in public. *Ura* and *omote*, however, is not a gendered concept and is less specific than the dual persona described by the Russian interviewees. The onsite and offsite persona reiterated by the Russian women is applicable exclusively in interactions with the opposite gender. The interviewees asserted that such an arrangement serves the purpose of making a man feel masculine, which is conceptualized as a woman’s duty; for this reason, the pretense of weakness and the adoption of overtly ‘feminine’ behaviors were not only perceived as normative but also as strategically wise. By shifting between these two personas flexibly, Russian women believed they are able to manipulate their feminine power to achieve success in romantic relationships. The deceptive or artificial source of this power and control in relationships was further justified through the conviction that women’s innate wisdom and emotional strength are superior to men’s abilities.

With respect to power in relationships, Russian women (and arguably men) again seemed to be caught within a form of ‘double-entanglement’ (McRobbie, 2004). Precluded from overtly contesting for power, Russian women believe that they are able to wield authority anyway by manipulating men’s desires for autonomy, masculinity, and sufficiency in the role of breadwinner or provider. In so doing, however, they must take overt or covert action to flatter men’s sense of power, and may be unable to adjudicate disagreements candidly. At the same time, they perpetuate stereotypes about women that have deleterious effects in relationships as well as more broadly within society. Lastly, they are burdened with the effortful task of balancing incongruent self-identities, without either revealing manipulateness or allowing their “authentic” self-image to be corrupted by the pretense of powerlessness.

Overall, Russian women tended to believe that gender involves both innate and constructed components. On the one hand, they argued that women are innately different from men in possessing characteristics such as kindness, the desire to keep the family hearth, and an inalienable beauty, inside and out, that brightens and decorates every environment. On the other hand, Russian women explicitly argued that femininity is created in the presence of men in order to satisfy male ego and maintain a nourishing relationship. Thus, their views are reminiscent of certain perspectives in cultural feminist theory that emphasize the difference between men and women (Tannen, 1990; Gilligan, 1982), at times claiming women's superiority over men (Holmes, 1993). However, the essential core of feminism – struggle for equality – is absent in Russian women's discourses. The interviewees claimed that independence and autonomy were necessary for women, but also asserted that the importance of these values to women should be concealed from men. A strong woman challenges a man's sense of superiority, his confidence that he is the head of the household, and his faith in his ability to function as a provider. Because these components of traditional masculinity are so crucial for Russian men, challenging them by asserting strength and autonomy can make a woman less attractive. The small demonstrations of powerlessness that women described (e.g. waiting for a man to open the door, allowing a man to carry her bags of groceries) were symbolic rather than real. None of the Russian participants indicated that they wanted to quit their jobs or financially depend upon men; they insisted rather that it was important to maintain the appearance of gender-normative behavior. The results of the present research thus echo Lyon's argument (2007) that Russian women have a rigid perception of gender roles, yet do not practice them in their lives. Present results also indicate that Russian women value the symbolic representation of gender, and try to preserve gendered rituals even when their roles in society are far from traditional.

The pronounced difference in self-perceptions in the presence versus the absence of men extended to women's notions about language use as well. The Russian interviewees considered swearwords permissible under certain conditions in same-gender (all-male or all-female) groups, but unacceptable in mixed-gender conversations with men. The interviewees felt that use of swearwords would diminish their feminine beauty and correspondent value in the eyes of men. Insofar as they deploy conscious strategies to adjust their behavior in same-gender versus mixed-gender company, Russian women exhibit a consciousness that gender and gendered behavior are constructed rather than innate.

In contrast to the Russian interviewees, Japanese interviewees did not explicitly claim that womanliness could be fabricated in order to satisfy the male gaze. Instead, they emphasized that true femininity is innate and spontaneous. The characteristics that they deemed important for a woman included the ideals of *kawaii* and traditional ladylikeness, in addition to modern attributes such as independence and autonomy. Despite the fact that true *kawaii* can only be instinctive and intrinsic, the interviewees provided numerous examples of instances in which they sought to actively create an image of innocence and naivety (e.g. by downplaying their real knowledge). This intentional conformity to *kawaii* suggests that Japanese interviewees, much like their Russian counterparts, believe that women "perform femininity" (Coates, 2004). In comparison to Russian women, who are conscious of their attempts to utilize a pretense of powerlessness for strategic aims, Japanese women face a more complicated task. They must maintain an appearance of cuteness and femininity not only to others, but also to themselves. The normative structure of the ideology of *kawaii* places a harsh judgment on those who are perceived to cultivate artificial or unnatural cuteness (Miller, 2004). To the extent that women internalize these ideals, they must pursue *kawaii* cuteness while simultaneously deflecting their own consciousness from the process of this pursuit. In other words, they must maintain an intentional blindness at the core of their concept of femininity. As argued in

Chapter 3 above, the purpose of this blindness is to conceal from Japanese women and men the coercive force of gendered ideology, and to instead invest the processes of conformity with a feeling of naturalness and unavoidability.

Furthermore, the Japanese interviewees asserted that gender-normative behavior must extend beyond romantic relationships to encompass many male-female interactions, such as those at workplaces and universities. Some women even suggested that it is a woman's duty to "elevate" men, making them feel honored and respected. Several women expressed a desire to quit their future jobs after getting married in order to become stay-at-home wives and mothers. Moreover, the language deployed in these responses implies that the need to elevate men is not a voluntary lifestyle choice, but a normative expectation the interviewees would apply to other women as well. The interviewees repeatedly lauded extreme, almost telepathic thoughtfulness (especially in the service of male interests) as a central and indispensable virtue for Japanese women. This type of accommodating femininity could in part result from women's subordinate position at the workplace and the lack of equal promotion opportunities there (Charlebois, 2014: 35); in highly masculinized workplaces, the ability to cultivate the esteem and favor of male colleagues may be essential (Nemoto, 2012). According to 'dominance' theory, male privilege and power do not primarily consist in the exploitation of individual women by individual men, but in the operation of a system of regular oppression in which everyone is involved, regardless of intentionality or desire (Bucholtz, 2014: 30). Significantly, more Japanese women than men are employed through "part-time" contracts that receive reduced benefits (39 percent of women in contrast to 13 percent of men), while women's opportunity to rise to leadership positions is scarce (Global Gender Gap Report of the Economic World Forum, 2016: 11).

The Japanese interviewees exhibited strong convictions about how an ideal woman should talk, including her intonation, pitch, volume, register, and overall manner of speech.

They insisted that women should avoid using swearwords and male language, while admitting its permissibility amongst close friends. With close friends, they use male language in order to mark in-group belonging and remove certain connotations of their female gender. Poststructuralist feminist scholar, Judith Butler writes, “If I am a certain gender, will I still be regarded as a part of a human?” (2004:2). In Japanese society, however, the female gender is often problematized and may even be seen as an inferior or defective type of human being. Thus, emphasizing fully human qualities and traditionally feminine traits conjointly may pose difficulties (Nemoto, 2008) – and for this reason women employ various communicative strategies when they desire to remove connotations of gender from certain interactions. The Japanese interviewees claimed that in circumstances in which they want to be treated as friends, rather than women, they employ traditionally male vocabulary, while it would be unacceptable to do so in contexts in which gender cannot be erased (such as romantic relationships). Thus, although male language in Japanese is not a neutral default, it is nevertheless used as a resource for some women to engage in conversations with close friends without emphasizing womanhood. In informal conversations, neutral linguistic forms (such as *watashi* ‘I’) are considered feminine (Miura & McGloin, 2008: 34), and would thus not afford a woman a means of distancing herself from the societal connotations of her gender. Therefore, women resort to traditional men’s language not with the intention of projecting themselves as men, but with the aim of sounding more neutral and less feminine. In so doing, they are effectively ‘masculinizing’ their speech in order to be treated apart from traditional gender norms. Because of the overbearing influence of gender norms in Japanese society, this privilege is possible only with very close friends or relatives and inconceivable in most other situations.

As previously discussed, remarks reflecting pervasive stereotypes about gender were ubiquitous in the media coverage of Haruko Obokata’s putative discovery of STAP cells (which was later discovered to be a fabrication). Even in the political arena, sexist remarks are

commonplace. For example, in a 2014 meeting of the Tokyo Metropolitan assembly, assemblywoman Ayaka Shiomura, became a victim of sexist remarks from male congressmen after arguing for better government support for pregnant women. Their comments included *Hayaku kekkon shita hou ga ii n jyanai ka* ‘Shouldn’t you get married?’ and *Umenai no ka* ‘Can’t you bear a child?’ According to 2016 Kyodo News survey, 60 percent of assemblywomen admitted that they have also been harassed by their male colleagues. Thus, because gender in Japan is frequently emphasized and problematized even in situations that presume its irrelevance (Ogasawara, 1998), women may strive to eliminate or attenuate the connotations of gender by using male language in contexts when it is feasible (such as in communication with close friends). In other cases, however, this language strategy is deemed highly inappropriate and can potentially result in social judgement.

5.3 Japanese and Russian women’s linguistic practices

Both Japanese and Russian women were hesitant to appropriate male language in spoken discourse, and did so only in limited circumstances in which criticism or penalties were unlikely. In addition, women in both cultures endorsed the sentiment that the use of male language is unfeminine and should be strictly avoided in most mixed-gender conversations. However, both Japanese and Russian women utilized characteristically male lexical items and constructions frequently in their real linguistic practices.

As revealed in the analysis of blog data in Chapter 4, Japanese women incorporate male vocabulary much more extensively in electronic communication, usually in order to emphasize strong emphatic stances. Here, the traditional association of the sentence-final particles *zo* and *ze* with masculinity is no longer relevant. In contrast to spoken conversations, in which women may use these linguistic features to “de-gender” the interaction and adopt a more neutral tone, female bloggers appropriate traditionally male language in order to convey powerful emotions,

such as the desire (or refusal) to perform a specific action. Because indirectness, modesty and elegance are considered the hallmarks of lady-like or feminine speech, language regarded as suitable for Japanese women lacks robust and flexible linguistic resources that could be used for emphatic functions. In contrast, traditionally male speech is replete with lexical items and constructions equipped for straightforwardness and the expression of strong emotions (Lebra, 1984; Nakamura, 2014). Online, ordinary non-lexical mechanisms for communicating emotion (e.g. through prosody and gesture) are also lacking, so women must avail themselves of alternatives in order to convey the sincerity and intensity of their stances. Because male language is suited to emphatic expression, it proves especially useful for women in underlining the strength of their assertions.

In spoken conversation, a strong stigma adheres to a woman using male language, placing her at risk of being considered uneducated, uncultivated, rude, and ignorant (Miller, 2004). Apart from computer-mediated communication and interaction with close friends, “gender deviant behavior does not go unnoticed and may incur social sanctions” (Charlesbois, 2014: 24). In blogs, however, a writer can construct her own readership, or write purely for herself, disregarding the complexity of human relations that have to be accounted for in spoken discourse. Social norms in blogs are de-emphasized and the author has the liberty to write with less concern for others’ judgments. Thus, in electronic media such as blogs, women can choose to incorporate male language to convey their feelings in an emphatic manner, and will not risk being socially condemned. Furthermore, blogs are highly self-oriented, focusing on topics that are of interest to the writer and often express the writer’s personal attitudes, making the use of emphatically strong language elements essential.

Women exploit the unique potential of online environments, activating interactional frames encompassing lexical and grammatical features that would not be appropriate in spoken discourse. Through the use of these features, writers are able to mark their stances in a number

of ways, crafting personas that communicate thoughts and feelings effectively – on terms that they themselves establish with their readers. Rather than indexing rough intensity indirectly by using *zo/ze* as suggested by Ochs (1992), Japanese women in blogs are able to index a range of emphatic stances using ‘male’ language, while not conveying inappropriate vulgarity or masculinity in the least. The conventional link between linguistic forms and masculinity in blogs is almost completely effaced, while new (feminine) meanings possible in ways that are precluded in spoken conversation. In understanding the function of male language in blogs and online communication generally, it is the discourse frame that must be investigated. Only by understanding the stances that female writers aim to convey, and the relationships they create with their readers, will we be able to appreciate the ways in which ‘male language’ is indexed and the functions it serves.

Analysis of Russian conversations demonstrated that women also subvert and ignore the traditional norms of the women’s language, but do so in ways that differ markedly from those of Japanese women due to their different cultural and linguistic contexts. In particular, women used swearwords in a variety of contexts, as revealed by corpus analysis, even though the usage of these lexical items contravenes both explicit gender norms in Russian society as well as Russian women’s self-reported ideals. Despite female interviewees’ perceptions that swearwords were especially unacceptable for use in discourse with male interlocutors, the analysis showed that this is not a restriction by which women abide in practice. Furthermore, though Russian interviewees claimed that swearwords are particularly inappropriate for women in public places, corpus investigation provided no evidence that public settings discouraged their use. In fact, the analysis showed that Russian women and men do not differ significantly in their use of most swearwords, while the swearword *blin* ‘damn’ is used significantly more frequently by women than by men.

These dissonances between thought and reality demonstrate that gender-based rules have a strong influence on Russian women's perception of "correct" gendered behavior, even when most women knowingly deviate from the ideal. Similarly to Japanese women – who utilize male language in blogs to convey emphatic stances – Russian women also use swearwords as strong emphatic markers. "Female-friendly" emphatic markers that do not involve swearwords carry less evocative power and thus cannot satisfy a wide range of potential stance-making demands, forcing women resort to more powerful language resources. As construed by dominance language theory, forms that are traditionally perceived as 'male language' represent expressions of high epistemicity and emphasis (Spender, 1990). Thus, if women desire to convey strong stances, they often must utilize linguistic elements associated with male language. They, however, do not convey masculinity indirectly as suggested by the theory of indexicality (1992). In fact, the similar frequency with which women and men currently utilize these features suggests that in reality swearwords are no longer male-gender preferential features. These emphatic markers, however, are still linked to 'male language' in people's minds due to prescriptive gender ideologies disseminated into the society through a variety of channels.

Of course, real behavior often diverges from our ideals, but it is instructive to consider the reasons why Russian women violate gender norms in their use of swearwords. Gendered ideals of language use in Russian society, as in Japanese, restrict the range of stances that women can express, and limit their ability to communicate their thoughts and feelings sincerely. Women are not allowed to express themselves vulgarly, emphatically, or assertively because they are not supposed to be vulgar, emphatic or assertive creatures. In rejecting normative rules regarding language use, women therefore reject not merely a regulation of their lexicon, but also the underlying constraints upon the range of stances they are permitted to adopt and communicate.

5.4 Gender as a social construct

As Butler (2004) concludes, “Terms such as ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ are notoriously changeable; there are social histories for each term; their meanings change radically depending upon geopolitical boundaries and cultural constraints upon who is imagining whom and for what purpose. That the terms recur is interesting enough, but the recurrence does not index the sameness (...)” (10). The performance of ‘feminine’ (and ‘masculine’) linguistic and non-linguistic behavior is a result of socialization processes that dictate how men and women should act in accordance with their gender (Coates, 2011). The socialization processes, and the underlying ideologies of gender that they inculcate and enforce, are not invariable and universal but time-varying and culture-dynamic (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). This dissertation corroborates the theory of social construction and performativity of gender (Messerschmidt, 2010; Connell, 1987), viewing ‘femininity’ as a fluid and culturally sensitive construct (Schippers, 2007). The research presented above exhibits clear dissimilarities between the idealized femininities created in the Russian and Japanese cultures by comparatively analyzing televised commercials, non-scripted interviews, and corpora of conversations and blogs. The differences exposed in the idealized Japanese and Russian femininities highlight the fact that gender ideologies are deliberately constructed, enforced, and maintained.

In Chapter 2 on Japanese and Russian televised commercials, I delineated specific linguistic and non-linguistic mechanisms of gender construction by outlining how men’s and women’s scripted language in advertising produces and recycles stereotypes about women. In Chapter 3, through the analysis of Russian and Japanese women’s discourses, I explored women’s perceptions of ideal femininities and demonstrated that they are frequently constructed on the foundation of socially preferred gender-normative behavior. Finally, examination of women’s linguistic behavior in blogs and naturally occurring conversations in Chapter 4 revealed that gender stereotypes were frequently subverted by gender non-

conforming language practices in women's actual discourses. Japanese women's continued avoidance of male language in spoken conversations suggests that normative expectations regarding language use still have a strong influence on women's speech. In blogs, however, where dialogical constraints are lifted, women can employ an array of linguistic choices motivated by the stances that they aim to convey. Similarly, Russian women subvert gender norms in their actual conversation by extensively utilizing swearwords that are considered exclusive to male language.

The present dissertation has demonstrated that there is a considerable gap between socially imposed notions of gender and gender-normative behavior, on the one hand, and women's actual language use on the other, in both contemporary Russian and Japanese societies. Between the normative realm of ideology and the reality of women's actual self-expression, the space of women's collective and individual ideals are forged. Clearly, women's ideals are impacted by normative expectations, directly imposed by social approbation and promulgated unceasingly in media representations. However, the results of the present study also provide evidence for a reciprocal and continuing interaction between women's ideals and their evolving linguistic behavior. This finding suggests that in both Japanese and Russian cultures, notions and ideals of gender are undergoing transformations that may ultimately have far-reaching implications, as women utilize the language that is deemed socially inappropriate.

Thus, women in both countries are moving toward freer gender expression, and away from the socially imposed language canons. For example, the long-term ramifications of the use of traditionally male interactional particles in online discourse by women writers can be considerable. Online avenues of expression such as weblogs, social media outlets, and discussion forums simply did not exist for previous generations of Japanese women. However, present generations will grow up pervasively using traditionally male linguistic features to express themselves. Even if social prohibitions against spoken use of male language remain

strong for some time, Japanese women writers will grow accustomed to expressing strong stances straightforwardly in ways that were not previously permissible. It would be wrong to underestimate the potentially liberating effect that these modes of linguistic expression offer, and their resultant effects on the social construction of gender in Japan.

5.5 Contributions

Rather than using a single framework, the present dissertation explored various feminist theories and gendered language models, investigating their cross-cultural applicability. In conclusion, a social constructionist approach for viewing gender and its manifestation in women's speech seems most appropriate and useful. Nevertheless, previously established 'dominance,' 'difference,' and 'deficiency' models – as well as stance and indexicality frameworks – also informed the research with insights on perceptions and interpretations of gendered language. The unique contribution of this dissertation to the literature on gender linguistics derives from its cross-cultural, three-layered data analysis: comprised of televised commercials, interviews with women, and conversation and blog corpora (i.e. at the level of ideology, ideals, and practices). Analysis of commercials targeted for Japanese and Russian audiences revealed gender stereotypes and ideologies circulating in the two societies, while the latter investigation of women's perceptions and actual language choices exposed the ways women position themselves in relation to the dominant gender ideologies. The dissertation findings add to our understanding of the constructed nature of femininity, its components, and its significance in both Japanese and Russian societies. The findings also highlight the culture-sensitive, nuanced construction of gender, and reveal the cultural inhomogeneity of its manifestations.

The dissertation also contributes to the study of feminist linguistic theories, gender, language and media. The fact that both Japanese and Russian women utilize 'male' vocabulary

in contexts of free expression suggests a similar cross-cultural pattern. Women's appropriation of male vocabulary can be indicative of both the loosening of gender norms and women's desire to move toward modalities of speech that do not constantly highlight their femininity. Only examining and contrasting language use at multiple levels (ideological, ideal, and practice) allows us to appreciate the ways in which different channels of linguistic expression evolve in tandem and mutually inform one another. Focusing on self-reported ideals alone, or on media representations, would clearly miss intriguing emergent phenomena in women's actual language use; conversely, neglecting the importance of normative representations of language use would fail to appreciate the power these expressions exert on women and their behavior.

A cross-cultural approach is equally essential, in that it allows for a nuanced understanding that avoids potential pitfalls and over-generalizations. In the absence of cultural comparisons, it would be impossible to determine which aspects of gendered representations and language use (if any) are likely to remain invariant and which are most likely to develop in response to historical and social change. Moreover, within a single cultural context, it is difficult to disambiguate the correlated effects of economic, political, and social transformations in order to properly trace the causal relationships underlying alterations in language use. It is important to acknowledge that the type of femininity that is idealized in Russian and Japanese televised commercials differ, as well as women's perceptions of what constitutes 'feminine' and 'unfeminine' behavior. Furthermore, Japanese women utilize 'male' vocabulary predominantly in computer-mediated communication, rather than in spoken conversations, whereas Russian women appropriate 'male' speech primarily in conversations. These differences uniquely shape the development of gendered language in ways that would be difficult to understand through the lens of any one linguistic culture, however intriguing and fertile. For these reasons, cross-linguistic research is valuable in its ability to produce results that are of appropriate generality and specificity.

5.6 Limitations and directions for future research

The present study is qualified by several major limitations, each of which ought to be carefully addressed in future research. First, this dissertation only investigated the patterns of women's representation in 'beauty ads.' Because they focus on female beautification, they are likely to emphasize features associated with femininity. For this reason, they are useful domain from which to extract and examine elements of reigning gender ideologies concerned with appearance, beauty, and sexuality. However, media representations encode normative expectations regarding gender in many ways and across disparate domains. In the future, it will be beneficial to analyze a broader sample of advertisements, including appeals targeted at both genders, in order to determine if and how women are portrayed differently in other contexts. It would also be beneficial to examine commercials oriented to male audiences in order to facilitate explicit statistical comparisons of men's and women's scripted modes of speech and behavior.

Another crucial limitation concerns the limited age range of the interviewees recruited and analyzed in current study (all of whom were between 20-30 years of age). This range represents an important, but very limited, subset of the female population. Their perceptions and ideals regarding femininity do not necessarily represent the views of women in other age groups. In addition, the number of interviewees is limited to 20 Russian and 24 Japanese women due to time constraints associated with detailed multi-modal analysis. In future work, however, a larger sample size will be crucial, and will enable comparison of common views on ideal femininity across different age cohorts. I also aim to improve the study of Japanese blogs by increasing the sample size and investigating additional elements of traditionally male language, besides sentence-final particles. In a similar vein, I hope to examine other linguistic elements associated with male language in Russian, expanding the analysis beyond the domain of emphatic markers. Finally, this dissertation considers only Japanese and Russian cultural

contexts, but future work can profitably incorporate multi-modal, comparative analysis of other languages. In this way, valuable culture-specific as well as cross-linguistic inferences can be made, contributing to the study of gender, language, and media by exploring how gender is manifested and transformed throughout time and space.

Appendix

Questions asked during the interview

1. What features does an ideal woman for you have in your opinion?
2. How does she speak and behave?
3. Is it permissible for an ideal woman to swear? How about for a man?
4. What are some other features that you think are necessary for a woman?
5. How close are you to the ideal woman that you described?
6. Have you ever encountered such a woman?
7. What features does an ideal man have in your opinion?
8. Have you ever been puzzled by some representations of women in media? What are some of them?

Questionnaire used for the study with Japanese women

1. お名前 (Your name)
2. 年齢 (Age)
3. 職業 (Occupation)
4. 趣味 (Hobby)
5. 最終学歴 (Your highest degree)
6. 母の職業と最終学歴 (Mother's occupation and highest degree)
7. 父の職業と最終学歴 (Father's occupation and highest degree)
8. 夢の仕事 (Your dream job)
9. 女性らしいという人はどのような性格の特徴があると思いますか。 (What kind of personality features does a feminine woman have in your opinion?)
10. 可愛い女性とはどのような女性ですか。 (What kind of woman is *kawaii*?)

11. あなたはどんな女性が理想的だと思いますか。 (What kind of woman is ideal in your opinion?)

12. 理想的な女性の話し方にはどのような特徴があると思いますか。 (What kind of speech characteristics does an ideal woman have in your opinion?)

13. 女性にとって以下の特徴はどのくらい大事ですか。 (0 – 全然大事じゃない。 5 – とても大事) (For a woman, how important are the following characteristics? 0- not at all important, 5- very important)

- 可愛さ (Cuteness) 1 2 3 4 5
- 心理的強さ (Psychological strength) 1 2 3 4 5
- 優しさ (Kindness) 1 2 3 4 5
- 頭の良さ (Smartness) 1 2 3 4 5
- その他 (Other) (_____) 1 2 3 4 5

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