

GENDER ASSIGNMENT OF RUSSIAN INDECLINABLE NOUNS

by

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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Title: Gender Assignment of Russian Indeclinable Nouns

This thesis analyzes the grammatical gender assignment of Russian indeclinable nouns. Chapter I focuses on gender and agreement in Russian nouns. Previous assignment models failed to account for the non-neuter gender of a number of indeclinable nouns. Chapter II proposes a gender assignment mechanism of indeclinable nouns, including an Absolute Semantic Criterion, a Morphosemantic Criterion Based on Hypernyms and Synonyms and a Neuter Filter. Chapter III deals with the methodology of the experiment involving ten native speakers on gender assignment of indeclinable nouns. In the experiment subjects were given sentence tokens in which they were required to select gender agreement morphemes corresponding to their perception of the gender of 62 indeclinable nouns, and they were asked to identify the gender of four out-of-context nonce nouns. Chapter IV analyzes the result of the experiment and shows that the gender assignment mechanism accounts for the actual assignment patterns by native speakers.

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CHAPTER I

GENDER AND AGREEMENT IN RUSSIAN NOUNS

1.0. Overview

This chapter aims to introduce the grammatical gender system of Russian, including declinable nouns and indeclinable nouns. Declinable nouns are assigned grammatical gender according to semantic criteria and morphological criteria. The chapter also discusses previous models that attempted to account for the gender assignment rules of Russian indeclinable nouns (see 1.4.), and points out that Corbett's model fails to include all the indeclinable nouns, and a new gender assignment mechanism for indeclinable nouns should be developed.

1.1. Gender in Russian nouns: Semantic criteria

Grammatical gender in linguistics usually deals with the concept of noun classes. It is not a universal grammatical category. Many Indo-European languages have grammatical gender, while in other language families, e.g. Uralic and some Sino-Tibetan languages, grammatical gender marking is not common. Some Indo-European languages have partially lost grammatical gender, while gender is well preserved in the Slavic group. Gender systems in Slavic languages are complicated. Some Slavic languages, e.g. Russian and Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian have subgenders

(Corbett 1988: 5-10, 1991: 165; Gladkij 1969: 110-123; Zaliznjak 1964: 25-40).¹

Previous studies have also focused on grammatical gender in Russian, using evidence from experiments. Akhutina et al. (1999: 695-712) have studied gender priming in Russian, which exhibits three grammatical genders. In the experiment the subjects heard some adjective-noun pair, after which they needed to state the target noun. They confirmed that gender priming is important in Russian. In another study, Akhutina et al. (2001: 296-326) focused on two experiments that involved 22 Russian aphasic patients. The results of the experiments demonstrated gender priming in aphasic patients, but gender processing of the patients was different from normal speakers. This thesis also uses pilot experiment to investigate how native speakers of Russian assign gender to indeclinable nouns (see Chapter III-IV).

Linguists generally agree that there are two ways in which genders of nouns are determined. Grammatical gender is assigned by semantic and formal rules. If nouns in a language are assigned to different genders due to their semantic properties, then this language uses semantic assignment patterns to classify its nouns. Corbett (1991: 8) and Aksenov (1984: 17-18) have claimed that in gender assignment systems in every language there should always be a semantic core. This notion, i.e. semantic core, was not further developed by either scholar, but it suffices here to say that semantics is an important factor in gender assignment even in a language where gender assignment rules are primarily based on formal criteria. For instance, despite the fact that Russian

¹ Grammatical subenders are considered as “agreement classes which control minimally different sets of agreements” by Corbett (1988: 5). For instance, in Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian, the masculine nouns *prijatelj* ‘friend’ and *zakon* ‘law’ show inflectional difference in the accusative singular form. Based on animacy. Zaliznjak (1964) and Gladkij (1969) proposed that Russian has three grammatical genders, and that every gender is further divided into animate and inanimate subenders.

typically utilizes formal systems to assign nominal genders, semantic criteria are used to assign gender to some nouns. Specifically, Russian grammatical gender uses animacy hierarchy in its semantic assignment. This hierarchy is described by Dahl (2000: 99):

Animacy hierarchy: HUMAN>ANIMAL>INANIMATE

In Russian, animate nouns denoting humans are given gender based on the semantic factor, namely biological sex. The rules of assignment are expressed in Table 1.

Table 1. Semantic gender assignment rules in Russian

| RULES | EXAMPLES |
|------------------|--------------------------------|
| MALE> Masculine | brat ‘brother’, djadja ‘uncle’ |
| FEMALE> Feminine | sestra ‘sister’, mat’ ‘mother’ |

It is obvious that *brat* ‘brother’, *sestra* ‘sister’ and *mat’* ‘mother’ are given masculine and feminine gender respectively according to semantic rules. Their genders do not always match the declensional types. For instance, although *djadja* ‘uncle’ has an a-stem ending *-a*, which is associated with the feminine gender. Here the semantic criterion wins over formal assignment rules. Thus *djadja* is treated as a masculine noun.

Gender conflict arises when animate profession nouns are used to express both sexes. For example, the Russian word *prokuror* ‘prosecutor’ is masculine by default. However, *prokuror* may be treated as a feminine noun for the purpose of gender

agreement when it denotes a female. Consider the examples below from the Internet:

- (1) (a) *novyj* *prokuror* *Kryma*²
new-MASC prosecutor-MASC Crimea
‘the new prosecutor of Crimea’
- (b) *novaja* *prokuror* *Kryma*³
new-FEM prosecutor-MASC Crimea
‘the new prosecutor of Crimea’

In examples (a) and (b), the noun *prokuror* refers to the same female person.

Different agreements lead to gender conflict because in this context *prokuror* is semantically feminine but it can be modified by *novyj* ‘new (masc.)’ or *novaja* ‘new (fem.)’. Schulz (1978: 64-66) also states that nouns denoting prestigious occupations that have been traditionally held by males are generally masculine in Russian, and that the addition of feminizing suffix to these nouns makes them pejorative (see 2.2 for discussion on indeclinable nouns denoting occupations).

Otherwise, the grammatical gender assignment of Russian nouns is largely based on formal patterns, i.e. morphological systems. The next section introduces the formal gender assignment rules and declensional types in Russian.

1.2. Gender in Russian nouns: Formal criteria

1.2.1. Gender agreement patterns

Modern Russian, like the other Slavic languages, has three grammatical genders,

² <http://fishki.net/1251584-novyj-prokuror-kryma.html> (March 12, 2014)

³ <http://obozrevatel.com/chronics/58762-novaya-prokuror-kryima-vyilozhila-v-set-foto-v-seksualnyih-pozah.htm> (March 14, 2014)

masculine, feminine and neuter. The morphosyntactic agreement types that are triggered by gender in Russian are adjectival agreement (long and short forms), verbal past tense, some numerical agreement (e.g. *odin* ‘one’ has three forms according to the gender of the noun it modifies: *odin* MASC, *odna* FEM, *odno* NEUT) and pronoun agreement. The following examples show gender agreement in the past tense of Russian:

(2)(a) Mal’čik xodil-∅ tuda.
 boy-MASC. go-PAST.MASC. there

“The boy went there.”

(b) Devočka xodil-a tuda.
 girl-FEM. go-PAST.FEM. there

“The girl went there.”

(c) Taksi xodil-o tuda.
 taxi go-PAST.NEUT. there

“The taxi went there.”

The examples in (2) illustrates that the past tense form of the verb *xodit’* ‘to go’ agrees with the noun in the subject position in gender, as is marked by different past tense gender suffixes $-\emptyset$ MASC., $-a$ FEM., and $-o$ NEUT.⁴ In some cases, the gender

⁴ The examples above are the usual types of gender agreement in Russian nouns. There is another type of agreement, called non-agreement by most linguistics and neutral agreement by some (Zemskaja calls it *nejtral’noe soglasovanie* ‘neutral agreement’). Consider Zemskaja’s example (1973: 258):

Matematika tjažel-o
 Mathematics. FEM.SG. difficult-NEUT.SG
 “Mathematics is difficult.”

As Russian short form adjectives takes gender agreement, this sentence is judged ungrammatical by many native speakers even in colloquial Russian. The subject *matematika* ‘mathematics’ is a feminine inanimate noun while the predicative short form adjective is neuter. The action expressed in the sentence, i.e. studying mathematics, is difficult, not the subject of mathematics itself, and the NP *matematika* does not belong to the main syntactic structure because it is a topic (Comrie 1991: 217).

of declinable nouns is easily determined by morphological endings, e.g. nominative singular forms. Gender agreement is especially helpful in discovering how native speakers assign gender to borrowing words and indeclinable nouns whose nominative endings do not belong to any of the morphological gender forms. As many Russian indeclinable nouns have unusual stems ending in |u|, |i|, etc., gender agreement provides the most convenient way to analyze the gender assignment of these indeclinable nouns, because despite the inapplicability of gender assignment based on declinable paradigms, native speakers have the linguistic competence to assign grammatical gender to borrowed nouns. Therefore the purpose of developing a gender assignment test is to find out the various mechanisms, i.e. phonological, morphological or semantic mechanisms that native speakers use in gender assignment.

1.2.2. Gender assignment of declinable nouns

Grammatical gender in Russian is very closely related to the morphological declensional paradigms. The word ‘gender’ is a misnomer because grammatical gender should be considered as a noun class (see Corbett 1991: 1-3). A number of studies on grammatical gender of Russian nouns have been done in recent years (see Kari 2000; Murphy 2000; Corbett 1988). However, there is continuous dispute about the number of nominal paradigms in modern Russian. The three-declension approach is widely adopted as a traditional description of nominal paradigms that follow the historical Slavic declension system (Unbegaun 1957, 37-71; Isačenko 1962: 86-129).

In the three-declension system, masculine and feminine nouns with the ending *-a* belong to what Corbett (1991) has referred to declension type I, which corresponds to the Proto-Indo-European *a*-stem declensional category. Masculine zero-ending nouns and neuter nouns ending in *-o/-e* belong to declension type II, which corresponds to the PIE *o*-stem declensional category. Feminine *i*-stem nouns belong to declension type III, corresponding to the PIE *i*-stem declension type (Unbegaun 1957: 37-71). See Table 2 for examples:

Table 2. Russian three-paradigm declension system

| Declension Type | Examples |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Declension I (a-stem) | <i>ručka</i> ‘pen’, <i>papa</i> ‘dad’ |
| Declension II (o-stem) | <i>park</i> ‘park’, <i>delo</i> ‘affair’ |
| Declension III (i-stem) | <i>kist</i> ‘brush’, <i>mjakot</i> ‘pulp’ |

This thesis adopts the traditional three-paradigm approach. One reason for adopting this system is its productivity. Declension I *ručka* ‘pen’ and II *park* ‘park’ are highly productive. They account for 39% and 30% respectively of all nouns in Lazova’s dictionary (1974: 942-943). Declension II *delo* ‘affair’ is less productive, accounting for 20% of nouns in the dictionary. Declension type III *kist* ‘brush’ is not productive, and accounts for 9% of the nouns in the dictionary.

In contrast, a four-paradigm declension system was proposed first by Karcevskij (1932: 65-66) Jakobson (1984: 141-143) proposed that the Russian gender system is a binary opposition system: the marked feminine and the unmarked non-feminine form,

which is further divided into two genders, i.e. masculine and neuter, that differ only in the nominative and accusative cases. Corbett's gender assignment model is based on Karcevskij's four-paradigm declension system (see Corbett 1991: 34-37). The following Table 3 is a representation of this paradigm classification.

Corbett's approach mainly considers Russian nouns as two groups: nouns with endings and nouns with zero endings in the nominative singular form. Nouns with endings are Declension II semantically masculine and feminine nouns with *-a* ending, e.g. *data* 'date', and Declension IV neuter nouns with *-o/-e* ending, e.g. *pis'mo* 'letter'. Nouns with zero endings are Declension I masculine (historically o-stem) nouns that end with stem-final hard or soft consonant, e.g. *dom* 'house', *muzej* 'museum' and Declension III is composed of i-stem feminine nouns, e.g. *kist* 'brush'.

Table 3. Russian noun declension types

| | I | II | III | IV |
|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Singular | | | | |
| NOM. | <i>dom</i> | <i>data</i> | <i>kist'</i> | <i>pis'mo</i> |
| ACC. | <i>doma</i> | <i>datu</i> | <i>kist'</i> | <i>pis'mo</i> |
| GEN. | <i>domu</i> | <i>daty</i> | <i>kisti</i> | <i>pis'ma</i> |
| DAT. | <i>domu</i> | <i>date</i> | <i>kisti</i> | <i>pis'mu</i> |
| INSTR. | <i>domom</i> | <i>datoj</i> | <i>kist'ju</i> | <i>pis'mom</i> |
| LOC. | <i>dome</i> | <i>date</i> | <i>kisti</i> | <i>pis'me</i> |
| Plural | | | | |
| NOM. | <i>doma</i> | <i>daty</i> | <i>kisti</i> | <i>pis'ma</i> |
| ACC. | <i>doma</i> | <i>daty</i> | <i>kisti</i> | <i>pis'ma</i> |
| GEN. | <i>domov</i> | <i>dat</i> | <i>kistej</i> | <i>pisem</i> |
| DAT. | <i>domam</i> | <i>datam</i> | <i>kistjam</i> | <i>pis'mam</i> |
| INSTR. | <i>domami</i> | <i>datami</i> | <i>kistijami</i> | <i>pis'mami</i> |
| LOC.⁵ | <i>domax</i> | <i>datax</i> | <i>kistjax</i> | <i>pis'max</i> |
| | 'house' | 'date' | 'brush' | 'letter' |

⁵ The masculine and neuter plural nouns adopted the Late Common Slavic feminine plural oblique endings except for the masculine genitive plural forms.

The gender assignment of declinable nouns in Russian is largely based on the declensional patterns discussed above. The four-paradigm approach, which is created based on morphological declensions, is not sufficient to explain why nouns with feminine ending *-a*, e.g. *djadja* ‘uncle’ and *muščina* ‘man’, are treated as masculine gender for agreement purpose. The gender assignment model of nouns will be discussed in 1.4.

1.3. Indeclinable nouns: Declension and gender

There are a growing number of indeclinable borrowings in the Russian language. Indeclinable nouns do not inflect usually because they do not fit into Russian nominal declension system. Consider the following examples:

- (3) *taksi* ‘taxi’
- iglu* ‘igloo’
- menju* ‘menu’
- degu* ‘degu’
- aloè* ‘aloe’

The nouns above all end in vowels /i/, /u/, /è/, which cannot be matched to the nominative singular form of any declension type in either the three-paradigm or four-paradigm systems. However, there are also a large number of indeclinable borrowings that can fit into the morphological paradigms of Russian nouns but are still treated as indeclinable nouns.

- (4) *pal'to* ‘overcoat’
- metro* ‘subway’

kino ‘cinema’

radio ‘radio’

žele ‘jelly’

It is obvious that these nouns, which end in /o/ and /e/, fit into declension type II in the three-paradigm system, so they are capable of having declensional paradigms. They are not declinable, however, because they are borrowed nouns.⁶ It should also be noted that the majority of nouns that end in /o/ and /e/ are declinable.

In fact, although it is clear that foreign indeclinable borrowings do not have declensional paradigms, there are indeclinable nouns that once had paradigm patterns. One example is the word *pal'to* ‘overcoat’. In Panov’s study (1968), 3% of the participants still declined *pal'to*: they treated it as a noun in declension type II, declining it like *okno* ‘window’ (see discussion in Patton 1999:11).

The Russian National Corpus contains 19 sentences where the declinable locative case *pal'te* (preceded by the preposition *v* ‘in’) is used and 25 sentences of nominative plural/genitive singular form *pal'ta*. The following table 4 and 5 show the total number of sentences where *pal'te* and *pal'ta* appeared in different periods of the century.

Indeed, there was a tendency among the Russian upper class not to decline and hence nativize borrowed nouns ending in /e/ or /o/ in the first half of the twentieth century because the use of foreign words was considered as a sign of being well educated (see Comrie, Stone and Polinsky 1996: 118-120 for more discussion).

⁶ Timberlake (2004: 148-150) notes that very few native Russian nouns are indeclinable. They originate from other word classes: *perekati-pole* ‘tumbleweed’, *ne-tron'-menja* ‘touch-me-not’, *ja* ‘self, ego’

During the next fifty years of the twentieth century, however, foreign borrowings ending in /o/, /e/, /i/, /u/, /è/ that had already entered into Russian remained indeclinable, and the later influx of new borrowings followed the non-declension patterns (Patton 1999: 11-12) (see Table 4 and 5).

Table 4. Frequency of locative pal'te in the Russian National Corpus ⁷

| Year | Frequency of the locative <i>pal'te</i> |
|-----------|---|
| 1850-1900 | 5 |
| 1901-1940 | 8 |
| 1941-1990 | 5 |
| 1991-2014 | 0 |

Many borrowed words are easily assigned to a morphological gender because the original forms of borrowed words fit into the morphological declension type, or in some cases, Russian uses productive nominal suffixes to make them declinable:

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------|-----------------------------|
| (5) Word | Gender | Source language |
| <i>internet</i> ‘Internet’ | MASC. | English <i>Internet</i> |
| <i>abažur</i> ‘lamp shade’ | MASC. | French <i>abat-jour</i> |
| <i>modernizacija</i> ‘modernization’ | FEM. | French <i>modernization</i> |

⁷ See the following website of the Russian National Corpus for details:
http://search.ruscorpora.ru/search.xml?env=alpha&mycorp=&mysent=&mysize=&mysentsize=&mydocsize=&dpp=&spp=&spd=&text=lexform&mode=main&sort=gr_tagging&lang=ru&nodia=1&req=%EF%E0%EB%FC%F2%E5&p=1

Table 5. Frequency of nominative plural/genitive singular *pal'ta* in the Russian National Corpus⁸

| Year | Frequency of Nom.Pl./Gen.Sg. <i>pal'ta</i> ⁹ |
|--------------|---|
| 1850-1900 | 4 |
| 1901-1940 | 12 |
| 1941-1990 | 5 |
| 1991-2014 | 4 |
| Total | 25 |

In the previous examples, *internet* ‘Internet’ is assigned masculine because it ends in a consonant, equivalent to a zero ending in Russian, thus making it possible to decline within Declension type II. Russian treats the foreign suffix *-tion* in borrowed words as *-cija*, thus successfully making words with *-cija* grammatically feminine and declinable within Declension type I.

Many borrowed nouns, however, end in vowels /u/, /ju/, /i/ or /è/ which do not fit into the Russian nominal declension system, as shown in (6)(a). Other nouns are indeclinable even though they have word-final /a/, /o/, /e/, which should allow them to be treated as members of different declension types, as shown in (6)(b):

⁸ See the following website for more details:
http://search.ruscorpora.ru/search.xml?env=alpha&mycorp=&mysent=&mysize=&mysentsize=&mydocsize=&dpp=&spp=&spd=&text=lexform&mode=main&sort=gr_tagging&lang=ru&nodia=1&req=%EF%E0%EB%FC%F2%E0&p=1

⁹ The word *pal'to* ‘overcoat’ is not treated as an indeclinable noun in all the Slavic languages. Ukrainian *pal'to* and Belarusian *palito* are indeclinable like Russian. In Bulgarian, *palto* has the plural form *palta* ‘overcoats’. In Polish *palto* is also declinable.

| (6) Word | Source language |
|---|---------------------------|
| (a) <i>fugu</i> ‘fugu’ | Japanese <i>fugu</i> |
| <i>spagetti</i> ‘spaghetti’ | Italian <i>spaghetti</i> |
| <i>suši</i> ‘sushi’ | Japanese <i>sushi</i> |
| (b) <i>bramea</i> ‘Brahmin moth’ | Latin <i>brahmaeidae</i> |
| <i>loto</i> ‘lotto’ | French <i>loto</i> |
| <i>monpans’e</i> ‘montpensier lollipop’ | French <i>montpensier</i> |

There are alternative explanations that account for why these words are not declinable. The first explanation is that nouns ending with unusual vowels, e.g. *fugu* ‘fugu, river pig’, *suši* ‘sushi’, cannot be declinable in any case, because they lack morphological endings that prevent them from being members of declension types. The other alternative is that some nouns already contained morphological endings in the source language. For instance, *spaghetti* has an Italian plural ending in *-i*. It was borrowed into Russian with the plural ending, although it is treated as an indeclinable singular in Russian. The third alternative explanation is that some indeclinable nouns are rarely used in the language because they denote concepts and things that are uncommon, or that were uncommon when they were first borrowed: for example, *bramea* ‘Brahmin moth’.

The calculation of the total number of borrowed indeclinable nouns differs depending on the era when these claims were written. Graudina et al. (1976: 77) stated that there were 300 indeclinable nouns in daily use as of in the 1970s. Isačenko (1969: 48) estimated the number as 340. Thirty years later, however, Murphy (2000: 92) examined Koleskikov’s 1995 dictionary *Slovar’ nesklonjaemyx slov* and counted 1750 indeclinable nouns. For this study, I have used Uspenskaja’s 2009 dictionary

Sovremennyj slovar' nesklonjaemyx slov russkogo jazyka, which contains nearly 3000 indeclinable nouns, demonstrating that Russian has undergone a major influx of borrowings fairly recently.

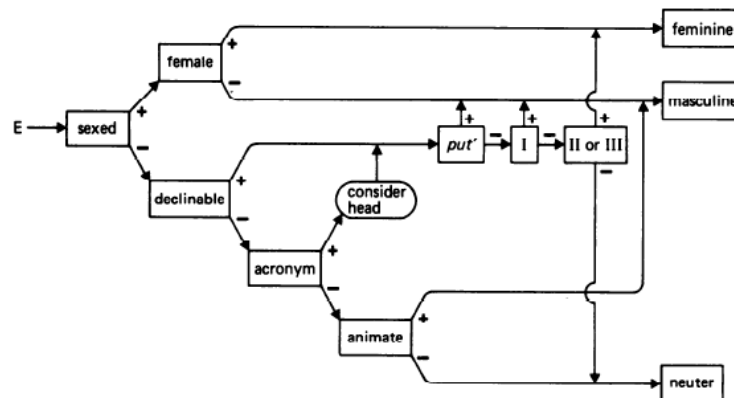
1.4. Gender assignment of indeclinable nouns: Previous models

As noted in the section above, every Russian noun is assigned a grammatical gender. Indeclinable nouns are no exception. The gender assignment of declinable nouns is based on the morphological endings in the nominative singular form. This pattern also applies to many common indeclinable nouns that end in /o/ or /e/. They are assigned neuter gender because these are also neuter nominative singular declensional endings in Russian.

Different models have been created to offer comprehensive explanations of gender assignment of both declinable and indeclinable nouns in Russian. One of the models is Corbett's gender assignment flowing chart. Consider Figure 1 below from Corbett's 1991 model. This model, which Corbett proposes for Russian, puts semantic gender assignment before morphological gender assignment. In this model E represents any noun. It is subjected to several semantic and morphological rules before being assigned a grammatical gender. An animate noun (or sex-differentiable noun) is given semantic gender based on natural sex, regardless of the fact that the ending the borrowing noun takes may fit well into a different grammatical declension type. For instance, *madam* 'madame' and *gerlfrend* 'girlfriend' are assigned morphological feminine agreement because of the semantic rule, although they both

have zero endings in the nominative singular case and could have been assigned masculine if morphological rules succeeded the semantic rule.

Figure 1. Corbett's gender assignment model (Corbett 1991: 41)



The followings are Corbett's gender assignment rules (1991: 40-41) with my examples:

I. Semantic assignment

A. For sex-differentiable nouns:

1. nouns denoting males are masculine (e.g. *deduška* 'grandfather', *brat* 'brother');
2. nouns denoting females are feminine (e.g. *sestra* 'sister', *madam* 'madame').

II. Morphological assignment

A. For declinable nouns:

1. Nouns of declensional type I are masculine (e.g. *stol* 'table', *portfel* 'brief case');
2. Nouns of declensional types II and III are feminine (e.g. *ručka* 'pen', *kroviat* 'bed');
3. Nouns of declensional type IV are neuter (e.g. *solnce* 'sun', *roždestvo* 'birth').

B. For indeclinable nouns:

1. For acronyms, take the head noun; the gender is then determined according to

the morphological rules just given (that is, go back to ‘morphological assignment for declinable nouns’). (e.g. *AZS avtozapravočnaja stancija* ‘gas station’ FEM.)

2. Nouns denoting animals are masculine (e.g. *kenguru* ‘kangaroo’);¹⁰

3. Others are neuter (e.g. *taksi* ‘taxi’, *pal'to* ‘overcoat’.)”

One disadvantage of this model is that it does not mention the gender assignment of the indeclinable nouns that denote humans, e.g. *konferans'e* ‘compère’, *ëm-si* ‘Master of Ceremonies’. Moreover, if we use this model to examine the actual gender assignment of indeclinable nouns, we find there are some problems with the model.

Problem 1: Inclusiveness

Corbett’s model fails to explain the growing number of inanimate indeclinable nouns that are assigned non-neuter gender in a number of dictionaries. Murphy (2000: 56) notes that nearly 33% of Russian indeclinable inanimate nouns are non-neuter. The Academy Grammar (Švedova 1982: 469) even as far back as 1980s lists four indeclinable non-neuter nouns ending in /e/ and /i/: *kofe* MASC ‘coffee’¹¹, *penalti*

¹⁰ Jakobson (1984: 141) notes that nouns with no sex reference are of neuter gender, e.g. *nasekomoe* ‘insect’, *mlekopitajuščee* ‘mammal’. However, these nouns have generic meanings and denote genus. The non-neuter gender of animate nouns does not contradict with Jakobson’s prediction of neuter gender.

¹¹ There are many explanations that attempt to account for why *kofe* is treated as masculine gender in Russian. One explanation is that *kofe* was borrowed in the 18th century from the Dutch noun *koffie*, which is masculine.

Another explanation is that *kofe* was closely related to the forms *kofij* ‘coffee’ and *kofej* ‘coffee’, which were used in the late 17th century and were both masculine gender. These forms were presumably from Dutch. Therefore, at the time there existed three forms that denoted coffee, and the form *kofe* gradually replaced *kofij* and *kofej* (Gimpelevič 1972: 60). Isačenko also notes that in the 1912 Academy Dictionary *kofej* was the only form listed, and it was declinable. (see Isačenko 1974: 287).

Although *kofe* has been treated as masculine gender in modern Russian, some native speakers use it as a neuter noun (e.g. *xorošee kofe* ‘good coffee’) (there are at least five examples in the Corpus that show neuter agreement with *kofe*, since it looks like Declension II (see the Russian National Corpus for examples:

http://search.ruscorpora.ru/search.xml?env=alpha&mycorp=&mysent=&mysize=&mysentsize=&mydocsize=&dpp=&spp=&spd=&text=lexform&mode=main&sort=gr_tagging&lang=ru&nodia=1&req=%EA%EE%F4%E5).

MASC ‘penalty’, *tornado* MASC ‘tornado’, *sirokko* MASC ‘sirokko’.

However, this model fails to offer the correct grammatical gender assignment of many indeclinable nouns in Russian. Suppose *tornado* ‘tornado’ is an entry E. Two procedures could apply:

(1) If we suppose that *tornado* is a declinable noun since it ends in /o/, the formal gender assignment rules should apply. Thus it goes into the box ‘neuter’ in Corbett’s model and is assigned neuter gender according to morphological assignment rules.

(2) If we suppose that *tornado* is an indeclinable noun (as it is according to Švedova (1982) and a number of dictionaries, e.g. Ožegov 2003; Uspenskaja 2009), it should be assigned neuter gender according to the model.

However, *tornado* is treated as masculine gender. Thus some semantic criteria should be added to the model if the gender output of *tornado* ‘tornado’ is to be masculine.

In the Russian National Corpus, *tornado* ‘tornado’ appears in 110 sentences. In 83% of these sentences it does not take any agreement from which we can tell its gender. However, in the other 27% of the sentences it is assigned masculine by the speakers:¹²

(7) *stremitel’nyj*, *moščnyj* *tornado*
violent.MASC. strong.MASC. tornado MASC.
‘a violent and strong tornado’

Therefore, Corbett’s model should be modified or it should add more rules and

¹² See Russian National Corpus for more examples:
http://search.ruscorpora.ru/search.xml?env=alpha&mycorp=&mysent=&mysize=&mysentsize=&mydocsize=&dpp=&spp=&spd=&text=lexform&mode=main&sort=gr_tagging&lang=ru&nodia=1&req=%F2%EE%F0%ED%E0%E4%EE&p=4

criteria to account for a large number of indeclinable nouns, which are treated as masculine and feminine gender in dictionaries and by speakers.

Problem 2: Mixed gender

Another problem with Corbett's model is that it fails to explain why some indeclinable nouns are assigned more than one gender. Mixed gender is a phenomenon of gender assignment of indeclinable nouns. Some Russian nouns have mixed gender, or common gender. Some declinable nouns ending in *-a* or *-ja* have common gender. The feature that nouns of common gender share is that they denote humans. These nouns do not necessarily take the same suffix. Consider the following examples of nouns with common gender:

(8) *umnica* 'clever person'

sirota 'orphan'

zadira 'trouble-maker'

neposeda 'fidget'

sonja 'sleepy head'

Gender in these nouns is showed by gender agreement, which are usually attributive adjectival assignment, verbal agreement in the past tense and pronoun agreement:

(9) *naš* *umnica*

our-MASC. clever person-MASC.

'our clever person'

naša *umnica*

our-FEM. clever person-FEM.

'our clever person'

A number of dictionaries (e.g. Uspenskaja 2009; Ožegov 2003) treat many indeclinable animate nouns as nouns with common gender. For instance, *kenguru* ‘kangaroo’ is listed as both masculine and feminine. Nevertheless, these dictionaries often fail to determine the default gender of animate non-human nouns. Animate default gender will be discussed in the next chapter.

Different dictionaries treat the grammatical gender of indeclinable inanimate nouns. Consider, for example, the four nouns listed in Kari (2000: 93-104). I have compared them in three major Russian dictionaries in Table 6:

Table 6. Mixed gender of inanimate nouns in different dictionaries

| <i>Noun</i> | <i>Kuznecov</i> | <i>Uspenskaja</i> | <i>Ožegov</i> | <i>Meaning</i> |
|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------|----------------|
| <i>ča-ča-ča</i> | neut./fem. | fem. | neut. | cha-cha-cha |
| <i>baggi</i> | masc. | masc. | masc./fem. | buggy |
| <i>tatami</i> | masc. | masc./neut. | masc./neut. | tatami |
| <i>media</i> ¹³ | fem. | pl. | fem./pl. | media |

Russian common nouns that do not have common gender, such as *umnica* above, typically are assigned only one gender, although gender agreement can be masculine or feminine. The fact that dictionaries of modern Russian exhibit so many different variations in the grammatical gender of indeclinable nouns suggests that native speakers assign gender to these nouns very differently from each other. In Chapter II I will propose a hypothetic grammatical gender assignment model for indeclinable nouns in Russian. In Chapter III and IV I will examine how native speakers assign

¹³ This table not only shows the grammatical gender variations in some indeclinable nouns, but also displays the singular and plural agreement of the noun *media*. This problem is also an issue in English. It is originally from the Latin neuter plural form *media* (singular: *medium*).

grammatical gender to indeclinable nouns in an experiment and use the model to account for the cognitive gender assignment decisions of native speakers when they deal with unfamiliar indeclinable nouns.

CHAPTER II

GENDER ASSIGNMENT RULES FOR INDECLINABLE NOUNS: HYPOTHESES AND MECHANISM

2.0. Overview

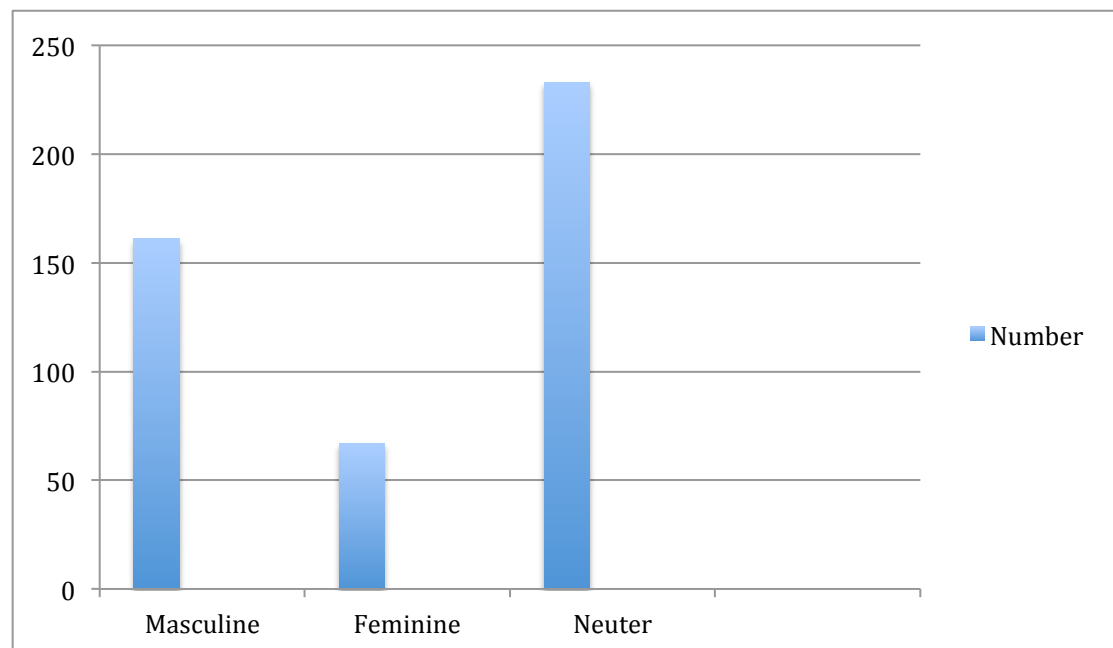
In the scholarly literature, gender assignment rules for Russian nouns often cover both declinable and indeclinable nouns with no distinction. Very few discussions about gender assignment take only Russian indeclinable nouns into consideration. In this chapter, I propose three hypotheses for gender assignment to Russian indeclinable nouns. These hypothetical rules are the **Absolute Semantic Criteria**, the **Morphosemantic Criteria Based on Hypernym and Synonym**, and the **Neuter Filter**. These rules are then developed into a mechanism for gender assignment to Russian indeclinable nouns.

2.1. Neuter gender: Default gender of indeclinable nouns?

Although many studies (e.g. Corbett 1982, 1990; Švedova 1970; Crockett 1976; Beard 1995) have shown that the majority of Russian indeclinable inanimate nouns are assigned neuter gender, there is in fact a growing tendency for indeclinable nouns to be assigned non-neuter gender (Murphy 2000: 100-102). It is reasonable that indeclinable nouns with word-final segments /u/, /i/, /ju/, /è/ etc. should be assigned neuter because these word-final vowels do not belong to any declension type that masculine and feminine gender is connected with. Moreover, as noted in Chapter I,

Corbett's model (1991: 41) predicts that indeclinable inanimate nouns are assigned neuter gender. With the growing number of non-neuter indeclinable nouns in dictionaries (Uspenskaja 2009; Grišina 2009) and in daily use, Corbett's model is not suitable, at least any more, to describe the grammatical gender of non-neuter indeclinable nouns. For instance, Figure 2 shows the distribution of grammatical gender of 461 indeclinable nouns listed in Grišina's 2009 dictionary. Fifty percent of the total number of indeclinable nouns are of neuter gender, with masculine and feminine gender accounting for 34% and 16% respectively (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Distribution of grammatical gender of indeclinable nouns in Grišina (2009)



Therefore it is desirable that more accurate hypotheses and rules on the grammatical gender assignment be proposed and tested. In the following sections I propose a mechanism for assigning gender non-neuter indeclinable nouns. According

to the morphosemantic criteria two subrules are developed: morphosemantic rules based on hypernyms and morphosemantic rules based on synonyms. Neuter filter is based on the fact that neuter gender accounts for the majority of the indeclinable nouns, however they differ from the hypothesis that neuter gender is the default gender of indeclinable nouns.

2.2. Hypothesis: Absolute semantic criteria

Before the hypothesis is formulated and discussed, it is necessary to distinguish two similar linguistic terms: *gender assignment* vs. *loanword assignment* (see Murphy 2000: 44 for discussion). Gender assignment refers to the linguistic competence of native speakers to decide the gender of different native nouns. This competence is primarily based on psycholinguistic factors. Native speakers find the morphological information of a particular word stored in their mental lexicon. Different types of information, i.e. phonological, morphological, semantic, help native speakers determine the gender of nouns (see Corbett 1991: 65-75).

Loanword assignment does not concern how native speakers make decisions on nominal gender; its major concern is how gender is assigned to borrowed nouns (see Murphy 2000: 45). This thesis uses the term *gender assignment* because the focus is on cognitive decisions made by native speakers who assign gender to indeclinable nouns in their mental lexicon. Therefore, our primary interest focuses on the native speakers' decision rather than on the language, which is the focus of loanword assignment.

Corbett (1991: 2-13) states that there should always be a semantic core in the grammatical gender assignment of nouns.¹⁴ The semantic core is the biological sex of the referent of the given noun. However, he did not specifically discuss the semantic core in Russian indeclinable nouns. There are three conditions according to the Absolute Semantic Criteria. In my gender assignment mechanism, Absolute Semantic Criteria are the first rule to operate.

Absolute semantic criteria:

i. MALE > Masculine

ii. FEMALE > Feminine

iii. LACK OF BIOLOGICAL SEX > Other criteria

The information about biological sex is listed to the left of the symbol “>”. The exact gender output is listed to the right of the symbol “>”. The sign “>” indicates the explicit relationship between the lexical input and the gender output. The absolute semantic criteria are applied before other possible criteria.

I shall list some indeclinable nouns for the purpose of discussing the feasibility of the absolute semantic criteria. Consider the following indeclinable nouns:

(10)*barista* ‘barista’

konferans’e ‘conferencier’

ledi ‘lady’

gerlfrend ‘girlfriend’

tofu ‘tofu’

In accordance with the absolute semantic criteria, indeclinable nouns denoting

¹⁴ Aksenov (1984: 17-18) also supports the semantic core in gender assignment. A number of languages in the Dravidian and Australian Aboriginal families use only the semantic core to determine the gender of nouns (Corbett 1991: 10-11).

males are assigned masculine gender, and indeclinable nouns meaning females are considered to have feminine gender. However, two of the examples above, i.e. *barista* ‘barista’ and *konferans’ e* ‘conferencier’, belong to nouns denoting human professions. It seems more complicated when profession nouns are involved because in many such cases the masculine gender is generic, which denotes both male and female referents.

Generally speaking, Russian nouns denoting professions have two forms of gender: masculine and feminine. For example, Russian distinguishes the biological sex of the following profession nouns, among others:

- (11) *pevec* MASC. ‘male singer’
pevica FEM. ‘female singer’
prodavec MASC. ‘male shop assistant’
prodavščica FEM. ‘female shop assistant’
tancovščik MASC. ‘male dancer’
tancovščica FEM. ‘female dancer’

Nevertheless, we also find in the modern language that animate nouns denoting professions of higher prestige that were traditionally held by men have only a masculine form, even when the referent is a woman. It should also be noted that the number of masculine profession nouns is greater than the number of feminine nouns. It is no surprise that profession nouns (especially prestigious ones) in many languages only have masculine forms, because historically women did not hold those professions. For instance, the masculine noun *prepodavatel’* ‘teacher’ may refer to both men and women:

- (12) (a) *prepodavatel’* *vošel* *v auditoriyu.*
teacher.MASC. enter.PAST.MASC. in classroom

‘The (male) teacher came into the classroom.’

(b) *ona rabotajet prepodavatelem v učilišče.*

She works instructor.MASC. in school

‘She works as an instructor in a school.’¹⁵

In the modern language, the feminine form *prepodavatel'nica* ‘female instructor’ sounds pejorative. Similar to the examples in (11), some profession nouns have both masculine and feminine forms, but their feminine counterparts are not commonly used because of register and their association with semantic derogation of women (see Schulz 1978: 64-74). Švedova (1970: 256) listed some feminine profession nouns formed with suffixes *-ša*, *-ixa* that are not productive in modern Russian because these suffixes now have derogatory meanings (see Table 7):

Table 7. Masculine and feminine profession nouns in Russian

| Masculine (commonly used word) | Feminine (rarely used) |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>brigadir</i> ‘brigadier’ | <i>brigadirša</i> ¹⁶ |
| <i>vrač</i> ‘doctor’ | <i>vračixa</i> |
| <i>doktor</i> ‘doctor’ | <i>doktorša</i> |

Therefore modern Russian tends to use generic masculine profession nouns to refer to references of the female sex. The following examples in (12) show both the spread of English profession nouns into Russian and the use of masculine form to denote both sexes.

¹⁵ Examples are cited from Dmitr’ev (2008: 784).

¹⁶ The suffix *-ša* used to mean the wife of someone. Therefore, *vračixa* used to mean a doctor’s wife.

- (12) *xaker* ‘hacker’
spiker ‘speaker’
prodjuser ‘producer’

Indeclinable profession nouns, as it often is the case with declinable profession nouns, are usually treated as masculine gender by default. Therefore, the Absolute Semantic Criterion (I) applies to *barista* ‘barista’ (even though it ends in a) and *konferans’e* ‘conferencier’. These nouns are assigned masculine gender.

Indeclinable non-profession nouns denoting human females are assigned feminine gender according to the Absolute Semantic Criterion (II). Therefore *ledi* ‘lady’ and *gerlfrend* ‘girlfriend’ are feminine.

The rules about biological sex are not applicable to indeclinable nouns with no biological sex. Therefore the Absolute Semantic Criterion (III) is used to classify these nouns into other gender assignment criteria. In this case, for example, *tofu* ‘tofu’ is clearly a noun with no biological sex. The grammatical gender of this word is determined by other criteria, such as Morphosemantic Criteria and Neuter Filter, which will be discussed below.

2.3. Hypothesis: Morphosemantic criteria based on hypernyms and synonyms

2.3.1 Morphosemantic criteria based on hypernyms

In this section I discuss the hypothesis of gender assignment based on morphosemantic criteria. In Hypothesis 1 I have developed several rules that explain the grammatical gender assignment of indeclinable animate nouns. Hypothesis 2 is mainly concerned with gender assignment to indeclinable inanimate nouns. Many

borrowed indeclinable nouns form special semantic groups (Priorova 2008: 17).

Following Priorova's definitions of semantic groups, I have classified 461 indeclinable nouns in Grišina's 2009 dictionary into 14 semantic groups in Table 8.

The general morphosemantic criteria can be described as follows:

Morphosemantic criteria: The gender of indeclinable nouns is assigned based on the semantic properties of the nouns.

I describe these as morphosemantic criteria because this rule is concerned with a semantic property and information about morphological declension.¹⁷ Corbett used the term *concept association* (1991: 16),¹⁸ which denotes that a noun is assigned to a certain gender if it is related to another noun with that gender.

Corbett's term *concept association* is the equivalent of Dimitrova's (1994: 85) term *analogy* in discussing gender assignment involving semantic factors, and Sanskaja's (1965) term *influence*. Unbegaun (1947: 128-130) used the term *semantic attractions* for the same notion (see Murphy 2000: 64-67 for more discussion). These scholars all agree that semantic factors are closely related to the gender assignment of many indeclinable nouns in Russian.

¹⁷ Nessel (2003: 77) has proposed a similar morphosemantic gender assignment rule for Ukrainian nouns. He classifies Ukrainian indeclinable nouns as a special declension type: non-declension, or declension type 6. He also argues that Ukrainian indeclinable nouns are assigned gender based on semantic factors. However, his argument is based only on several examples. In this thesis I will develop a number of subrules under Morphosemantic Criteria (see Chapter IV), and I use the experiment that is based on the judgment of native speakers to prove the validity of the Morphosemantic Criteria in Russian indeclinable nouns.

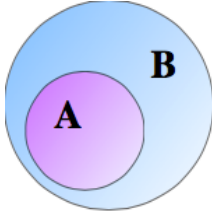
¹⁸ Corbett used an example in Dyirbal to argue that the word for "fishing line" should be gender IV in the language because its grammatical ending is typical for this gender. However, it is assigned gender I, because the word "fish" belongs to gender category IV, and "fishing line" is closely related to "fish" semantically.

Table 8. Classification of Russian indeclinable nouns by semantic group

| Group number | Semantic group | Quantity | Example |
|--------------|-------------------|----------|--------------------------|
| 1 | human | 101 | <i>konferans</i> 'e |
| 2 | musical terms | 71 | <i>bandžo</i> 'banjo' |
| 3 | products & food | 64 | <i>tofu</i> 'tofu' |
| 4 | objects | 62 | <i>taksi</i> 'taxi' |
| 5 | nation & language | 41 | <i>suaxili</i> 'Swahili' |
| 6 | animals | 37 | <i>degu</i> 'degu' |
| 7 | clothes | 18 | <i>pončo</i> 'poncho' |
| 8 | monetary units | 16 | <i>peso</i> 'peso' |
| 9 | plants | 17 | <i>aloe</i> 'aloe' |
| 10 | dance terms | 10 | <i>xoro</i> 'horo' |
| 11 | textile materials | 8 | <i>liberti</i> 'liberty' |
| 12 | unit of measure | 12 | <i>li</i> 'li' |
| 13 | wind | 4 | <i>cunami</i> 'tsunami' |
| 14 | sport | 6 | <i>penalty</i> 'penalty' |

Different subpatterns on gender assignment are developed according to the morphosemantic criteria. One of the morphosemantic criteria concerns the hypernym of a given indeclinable noun. The relationship between the gender of the indeclinable noun and its hypernym is described in Figure 3:

Figure 3. Relationship between gender of an indeclinable noun and its hypernym



Rules:

- a. $\{A\} = \{\text{INDECLINABLE NOUN}\} \neq \{\text{DECLENSION TYPE I, II, III}\}$
- b. $\{A\} \subset \{B\}$
- c. $\{B'\} \geq \{A'\}$

Rule (a) takes precedence over Rules (b) and (c). It requires that the noun A be a member of the class of indeclinable nouns. Rule (b) shows that A refers to an indeclinable noun. The symbol B represents the hypernym of A. Therefore A is the subset of B. Rule (c) is a subproposition of Rule (a), which explains the relation of grammatical information between A and B. The grammatical gender of A, i.e. A', is also considered a subset of the grammatical gender of the hypernym B. Therefore, the grammatical gender of A is equal to that of B.

There are a number of semantic categories that indeclinable nouns belong to. It is for this reason that morphosemantic subrules should be developed under the general rule. For instance, *esperanto* 'Esperanto', *urdu* 'Urdu', *hindi* 'Hindi', and *maori* 'Maori' are all indeclinable nouns denoting different languages. They belong to the semantic hypernym *jazyk* 'language' in Russian. The morphosemantic rule for the gender assignment of these nouns is presented as follows:

Morphosemantic rule:

a. $\{esperanto, urdu, hindi, maori\} = \{\text{INDECLINABLE NOUN}\}$

$\neq \{\text{DECLENSION TYPE I, II, III}\}$

b. $\{esperanto, urdu, hindi, maori\} \subset \{jazyk\}$

c. $[\text{Masc.}] \{jazyk\} \geq [\text{Masc.}] \{esperanto, urdu, hindi, maori\}$

The noun *esperanto* ‘Esperanto’ ends in o, and it looks like a native neuter noun.

However, because it is not declinable in modern Russian, the morphosemantic rule supercedes the morphological gender assignment rule.

Another group of indeclinable nouns that demonstrates the morphosemantic rules of gender assignment natural phenomena, e.g. *tornado* ‘tornado’, *sirokko* ‘sirocco’, and *cunami* ‘tsunami’. The hypernym of these indeclinable nouns is relatively simply to find, i.e. *veter* ‘wind’. The morphosemantic rule is described as follows.

Morphosemantic-rule:

a. $\{tornado, sirokko, cunami\} = \{\text{INDECLINABLE NOUN}\}$

$\neq \{\text{DECLENSION TYPE I, II, III}\}$

b. $\{tornado, sirokko, cunami\} \subset \{veter\}$

c. $[\text{Masc.}] \{veter\} \geq [\text{Masc.}] \{tornado, sirokko, cunami\}$

2.3.2. Criteria based on synonyms

The notion of concept association can be understood in two ways. The first definition is that an indeclinable noun A that is related semantically to another noun B. Therefore, A is the subset of the noun B. Their semantic relation is that of hyponyms

and hypernyms. Another approach is that an indeclinable noun A and another noun B are phonologically heterogeneous but share similar semantic meanings. Thus the morphosemantic rule of indeclinable nouns based on synonym is described below.

Morphosemantic rule:

- a. $\{A\} = \{\text{INDECLINABLE NOUN}\} \neq \{\text{DECLENSION TYPE I, II, III}\}$
- b. $\{A\} = \{B\}$
- c. $\{B'\} = \{A'\}$

This rule starts with an indeclinable noun A that does not belong to any declension type. A and B are semantically synonymous or near-synonymous. As a result, A takes on the grammatical gender of B. There are a number of examples that support this rule. The indeclinable noun *džakuzi* ‘Jacuzzi’, for example, ends in the vowel /i/, making it impossible to be declined in the morphological system of Russian. The noun *džakuzi* comes from the Italian noun *Jacuzzi*, a family name in the plural form. The grammatical gender of *džakuzi* in Russian is feminine, since *džakuzi* is closely related to its synonym in Russian *vanna* ‘bathtub’¹⁹. If we use the morpho-semantic rule of indeclinable nouns based on synonym correctly predicts gender assignment *džakuzi*:

- a. $\{džakuzi\} = \{\text{INDECLINABLE NOUN}\} \neq \{\text{DECLENSION TYPE I, II, III}\}$
- b. $\{džakuzi\} = \{vanna\}$
- c. $[\text{Fem.}]\{vanna\} = [\text{Fem.}]\{džakuzi\}$

The nouns *vanna* and *džakuzi* are often used together as a noun phrase because of

¹⁹ I have found 2, 890, 000 entries on ‘*vanna džakuzi*’ on Google.

their semantic relation. When the head noun *vanna* in the noun phrase is dropped or omitted, the grammatical gender agreement is based on *džakuzi*. Consider the following example where the gender of the verb *byt'* 'be' in the past tense is the feminine form *byla* because of gender agreement with the feminine *džakuzi*:

(13) *Džakuzi* *vpervye* *byla* *ustanovlena.*²⁰

Jacuzzi.FEM. first be.PAST.FEM. install.FEM.

'The Jacuzzi was first installed.'

The morphosemantic assignment rules based on synonyms are also applicable to recent borrowing nouns and nouns that belong to slang or jargon. A great number of English nouns have been borrowed into Russian youth slang. Murphy (2000: 69) argues that the slang word *botl* 'bottle' is analyzed as a feminine indeclinable noun, since the conceptual association of *botl* is obviously linked with its Russian counterpart *butylka* 'bottle', which belongs to declension type I and is of feminine gender. Another example is the borrowing noun *xotlajn* 'hotline'. Murphy (2000: 70) discussed this word as a borrowed English noun, She gave an example from a newspaper in which the noun *hotline* was written in English alphabet, indicating this noun was considered as a foreign word at that time. However, it is common to see *xotlajn* in Cyrillic alphabet appearing in newspapers and media languages now, which shows that Russian has accepted it as a borrowed noun. It is clear that *xotlajn* should belong to declension type II morphologically and therefore should be assigned masculine gender. However, in most cases it is treated as a feminine indeclinable noun because of its native feminine synonym *gorjačaja linia* 'hotline'. Consider the

²⁰ <http://iaprelest.ru/novye-zapisi-2/vanna-dzhakuzi>

following example:

(14) vostočnaja hotlajn²¹

eastern.FEM. hotline

‘eastern hotline’

Therefore the Morphosemantic Criteria based on synonyms should be regarded as a subrule under the Morphosemantic Rules. In the following section I will discuss the final rule for the grammatical gender assignment of indeclinable nouns, namely Neuter Filter.

2.4. Hypothesis: Neuter filter

It is widely acknowledged that inanimate indeclinable nouns are generally assigned neuter gender in Russian (Corbett 1982, 1990; Švedova 1970). Previous models of grammatical gender assignment to indeclinable nouns also support the argument that indeclinable nouns (i.e. nouns of declension type IV in Corbett’s theory, 1991: 41)) should be assigned neuter, because neuter gender is the default gender for inanimate indeclinable nouns (Corbett 1991: 35-41; Beard 1995).

The gender assignment mechanism I propose in this chapter also treats neuter as the default gender for indeclinable nouns. Indeclinable nouns are assigned neuter because either Absolute Semantic Criteria are not available or there is a lack of an obvious hypernym or synonym.

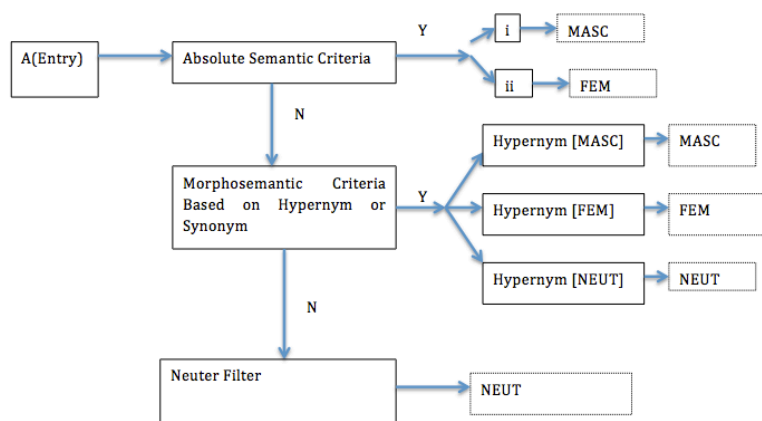
Neuter Filter: The grammatical gender of indeclinable nouns is likely to be assigned neuter when Absolute Semantic Criteria and Morphosemantic Criteria do not apply.

²¹ <http://www.sadovod.net/index.php?productID=7848>

The Neuter Filter is the third rule in the gender assignment mechanism. Semantic criteria precede the Neuter Filter. When Corbett considered neuter as the default class, he did not take indeclinable inanimate nouns that had treated non-neuter gender into account. The Neuter Filter is a part of the mechanism that explains the gender assignment of indeclinable nouns. Moreover, if neuter is the default gender, it should be the case that new indeclinable nouns are more likely to be assigned neuter gender.

Figure 4 attempts to combine the Absolute Semantic Criteria, the Morphosemantic Criteria and Neuter Filter together as a mechanism. The mechanism successfully explains the grammatical gender assignment of most indeclinable nouns in Russian.

Figure 4. Gender assignment mechanism for Russian indeclinable nouns



A: lexical entry

→ direction

Y: Yes

N: No

criteria

output

2.5. Summary

In this chapter I have discussed how each rule works to explain the grammatical gender assignment of indeclinable nouns especially that end in /u/, /ju/, /è/ and /i/. The next two chapters focus on an experiment that involves native speakers to test whether this mechanism is supported by real data. Chapter III introduces the methodology of the experiment. Chapter IV mainly discusses the result of the experiment and examines how Absolute Semantic Criteria, Morphosemantic Criteria and Neuter Filter account for the result and if variations exist among different native speakers.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY OF THE EXPERIMENT

3.0. Overview

This chapter introduces the general methodology of the experiment in which native speakers of Russian were asked to assign grammatical gender to 62 indeclinable nouns and 4 invented nouns. The main purpose of this experiment is to test the gender assignment mechanism of indeclinable nouns described in Chapter II and to examine variations of grammatical gender among native speakers. The 62 indeclinable nouns were chosen from two dictionaries: Uspenskaja (2009) and Grišina (2009). The tasks asked the participants to decline the adjectives, demonstrative pronouns and numerals that show grammatical gender agreement with indeclinable nouns.

3.1. Purpose of the experiment

In the previous two chapters I have examined the grammatical gender systems of Russian nouns and proposed a mechanism by which Russian indeclinable nouns are assigned different genders. While Russian declinable nouns may be masculine, feminine, or neuter because of morphological criteria, indeclinable nouns are assigned gender according to various semantic criteria and the neuter filter rule. However, the mechanism that was proposed previously must account for the actual patterns of

grammatical gender assignment by native speakers.

There are four major purposes of this experiment. First, it serves to test the extent of validity of the gender assignment mechanism proposed in Chapter II. Recall that three hypotheses of gender assignment rules, i.e. absolute semantic criteria, morphosemantic criteria based on hypernyms and synonyms, and neuter filter, were formulated to interpret the ways indeclinable nouns that end in /i/, /u/, /ju/, etc. are assigned to different genders. The experiment also aims to test the previous gender assignment model proposed by Corbett, in which neuter assignment was the only hypothesis for inanimate indeclinable nouns.

The second purpose of this experiment is to examine the individual differences of grammatical gender assignment of indeclinable nouns. Previous studies have shown that different native speakers may assign different genders to the same indeclinable noun. For instance, Murphy (2000: 154) shows that for the borrowed noun *kawasaki* 'Kawasaki', 31% of the participants chose neuter gender, 19% assigned masculine, and 17% assigned feminine. However, in Murphy's study the indeclinable nouns that were selected as items in the experiment were not given any linguistic context. In other words, native speakers had to choose the grammatical gender of these indeclinable nouns even when they did not know the meaning of these nouns. My study differs from Murphy's questionnaire in that every noun in my experiment is given a meaningful sentence context, which makes the participants easily guess the meaning of the nouns when they do not know the meaning of these nouns without the context.

The third purpose is to test whether the biological sex of the participants may play a role in their grammatical gender assignment of indeclinable nouns. Andonova et al. (2004:496-507) found a relationship between sex of the participants and the Bulgarian noun gender. The experiment of gender-monitoring relation times (GMRTs) showed that female subjects processed feminine nouns faster than masculine nouns. Therefore, the factor of sex actually influenced the grammatical gender processing. While variations of grammatical gender assignment exist among native speakers, it would be plausible that variations also exist among male and female native speakers. Despite Andonova's study, few studies on the gender assignment of indeclinable nouns have paid attention to potential differences based on the subject's biological sex. It is therefore one of the purposes of the experiment in this thesis.

The fourth purpose is to reexamine the validity of mixed gender, which is sometimes described as a gender assignment pattern in dictionaries. As Russian declinable nouns are assigned to only one grammatical gender form in dictionaries²², indeclinable nouns should be no exception. However, dictionaries tend to include more than one grammatical gender for some indeclinable nouns. For instance, *viski* 'whisky' is treated as either masculine or neuter in Grišina (2009), while it is considered as masculine in Uspenskaja (2009). The description of mixed gender shows an unstable grammatical gender assignment pattern of indeclinable nouns. The

²² The exceptions include profession nouns, such as *vrač* 'doctor' and *professor* 'professor' and nouns of common gender, i.e. *sirota* 'orphan'. Profession nouns that have masculine morphological endings can take feminine agreement, as we discussed in previous chapters. The grammatical gender of nouns of common gender in Russian depends on the biological sex of the semantic referent. Therefore *sirota* is semantically masculine and feminine, depending on the context. All other declinable nouns are assigned grammatical gender according to their morphological endings (except a few animate nouns, i.e. *djadja* 'uncle', which is subject to the Absolute Semantic Criteria over morphological assignment rules.)

experiment thus aims to probe whether the mixed gender attributed to certain nouns in dictionaries is accepted among native speakers.

3.2. Method

3.2.1. Participants

Ten adults (5 female, 5 male) were recruited to participate in the experiment. All of the participants were Russian native speakers. All female speakers finished their bachelor's degree in Russia. All male participants were college students in Russia from age 24 to 30. The average male age is 27.5. The age of the female participants ranged from 26 to 43. Four of the female speakers are from 26 to 33, and one is over 40. The average female age is 31. Two female participants were graduate students in Russia, one was working as a Russian teacher in Russia, and the other two females were currently living in the United States. All but two participants described Russian as their only language used at home and in school, while two participants considered Russian as the language that they used more frequently²³. All participants reported that they had not participated in related study before doing the experiment²⁴.

3.2.2. Materials

²³ Of the two female participants who resided in the United States, both reported that they had been living in the country no more than two years. One participant stated that she used Russian around 60% of an average day, while the other reported that she tended to use Russian for 50-55% of a day. They also described their English proficiency as advanced level.

²⁴ As a pilot study, I recruited my participants through personal contact. Most of them are students from a university in Moscow, Russia. Due to the time limit, I also recruited two native speakers who currently resided in the United States. I also recruited a female Russian instructor who was over forty and was residing in Blagoveshchensk, Russia. The participants who lived in Russia completed the experiment via Skype.

The indeclinable nouns used were selected from the dictionaries of Uspenskaja (2009) and Grišina (2009). 62 indeclinable nouns that end in different vowels /i/, /e/, /è/, /o/, /u/, /j/, /u/, /a/ were chosen. Among the 62 nouns, 17 were animate nouns, and 45 were inanimate nouns. Apart from nouns that end in /i/, /u/, /j/, /u/, /è/ that cannot be assigned gender morphologically, I also included nouns with final segments in /o/ and /e/ that are assigned non-neuter gender, indeclinable nouns that end in /a/ or /ja/²⁵, and indeclinable nouns with a consonant as their final segments.

Four of the inanimate indeclinable nouns are described in Uspenskaja (2009) and Grišina (2009) as having mixed gender:

(15) *incognito* ‘incognito’ MASC./FEM.

status-kvo ‘status quo’ MASC./NEUT.

demo ‘demo’ FEM./NEUT.

xačapuri ‘a kind of Georgian bread’ MASC./NEUT.

Two indeclinable acronyms were also included in the experiment because of their non-neuter assignment:

(16) a. *MID*

Full name: *Ministerstvo inostrannyx del* ‘Ministry of Foreign Affairs’

Gender: MASC.

b. *FIFA*

Full name: *Fédération internationale de football association* ‘International Federation of Association Football’

Gender: FEM.

According to the Absolute Semantic Criteria, animate indeclinable nouns denoting animals should be treated as either masculine or feminine gender according

²⁵ Three nouns that end in *a* in this experiment are treated non-feminine: *lingva franka nova* ‘Lingua Franca Nova’ MASC., *fua-gra* ‘foie gras’ NEUT., and *čixuaxua* ‘chiwawa’ MASC./FEM.

to the context in which the noun is used. Many animate indeclinable nouns used in the experiment are treated as both masculine and feminine in the dictionaries (see 17(a)); however, a few animate nouns are assigned only one gender in dictionaries, i.e. either masculine or feminine (see 17(b)).

(17)(a) *čixuaxua* ‘chiwawa’ MASC./FEM.

šimpanze ‘chimpanzee’ MASC./FEM.

emu ‘emu bird’ MASC./FEM.

(b) *kivi* ‘kiwi bird’ FEM.

bramea ‘bramea butterfly’ FEM.

3.2.3. Task description

3.2.3.1. Agreement pattern as the theoretical basis

The most effective way to examine the actual grammatical assignment patterns that exist in the mental grammar of native speakers is by providing them with tasks involving gender agreement, as in Zaliznjak (1964: 25-40), Gladkij (1969: 110-123) and Corbett (1991: 105-144). However, there is no widely accepted definition of agreement. For this study, I adopted the following definition proposed by Steele (1978: 610): “The term *agreement* commonly refers to some systematic covariance between a semantic or formal property of one element and a formal property of another.”

Grammatical gender agreement in Russian is exhibited primarily by attributive adjectives, demonstrative pronouns, past tense markers, predicative short form adjectives and certain numerals. Table 9 demonstrates the agreement types that are adopted in this experiment.

The gender agreement class relies on the fact that native speakers should know

the grammatical gender of nouns for the purpose of successfully making agreements. One hypothesis of mental storage of grammatical gender is that the information about grammatical gender belongs to the lexical entries of nouns. (Corbett 1988: 10).

Table 9. Gender agreement patterns used in the experiment

| Gender | Attributive adjective | Short form adjective | Past tense | Demonstrative pronoun | Numeral |
|------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| Masculine | <i>-yj/-oj</i> | <i>-Ø</i> | <i>-Ø</i> | <i>ètot</i> ‘this’ | <i>odin</i> ‘one’ |
| Feminine | <i>-aja</i> | <i>-a</i> | <i>-a</i> | <i>èta</i> ‘this’ | <i>odna</i> ‘one’ |
| Neuter | <i>-oje</i> | <i>-o</i> | <i>-o</i> | <i>èto</i> ‘this’ | <i>odno</i> ‘one’ |

3.2.3.2. Experiment tasks

The experiment consists of two parts.²⁶ The first part contains 62 indeclinable nouns in printed sentences.²⁷ The participants were asked to fill in the blanks in sentences, using the provided words separately in parentheses to make appropriate forms to show grammatical gender agreement with the indeclinable nouns in sentences. Each sentence had a meaningful context, and the words in parentheses were mostly attributive adjectives, with also a few short form adjectives, verbs in the past tense, demonstrative pronouns and the numeral *odin* ‘one’. Consider the

²⁶ The participants completed the two parts of the experiment as a whole either in a classroom setting or on Skype. All of them completed these tasks under the supervision of the author. The average time for completing the experiment was 16 minutes.

²⁷ An aural experiment would be inappropriate because Russian vowel reduction rules would make it impossible to hear whether the front vowel was *-a* or *-o*, if unstressed, or *-‘a* or *‘e*. This experiment also provided the subjects with visual stimulus.

following sentence from the experiment:

(18)(a) *Aljona napisala _____ (otličnyj) _____ èsse.*

Aljona write.PAST.FEM,SG, excellent.MASC.SG.ACC. essay

‘Aljona wrote an excellent essay.’

(b) *FIFA _____ (dolžen) sotrudničat’ s ètoj organizacije.*

FIFA should.MASC.SG. cooperate with this organization

FIFA should cooperate with this organization.

(c) *Čto včera _____ (soobščit’) MID?*

What yesterday announce Ministry of Foreign Affairs

What did Ministry of Foreign Affairs announce yesterday?

In the sentence above, the participants were required to put the word in parenthesis, i.e. attributive adjective in the dictionary masculine singular form *otličnyj* ‘excellent’, in the correct grammatical form to agree with *èsse* ‘essay’. In (18(b)) the default form of the short form adjective is also masculine, e.g. *dolžen* ‘must’. In (18(c)) the default form of the verbal past tense is the masculine form, e.g. *soobščil* ‘announced’.

The participants were also asked to rate each noun in question with 1, 2, 3 or 4, according to lexical frequency²⁸. The number 1 indicated that the subject never used or encounter the word in written or colloquial contexts, so that the word was new to them. The number 2 meant that the subject seldom used or encountered the word, despite the fact that they knew the lexical meaning of the word. The number 3 indicated that the subject sometimes used and encountered the word. The number 4

²⁸ The method of assigning the frequency rate of indeclinable nouns was used in the experiment of Murphy (2000: 133). In her experiment, Murphy asked the participants to report the lexical frequency of indeclinable nouns by using numeral rating. Unlike this study, Murphy used 5 numbers to distinguish the lexical frequency.

meant that the subject often used and the word. Statistic analysis of the lexical frequency of indeclinable nouns among the participants will show whether frequency is a metalinguistic factor that influences native speakers in assigning grammatical gender to indeclinable nouns. Moreover, the more a subject encounters an indeclinable noun (that is, if they assign 3 or 4 to a noun), the more likely they are to see gender agreement with the noun.

The second part of the experiment asked the participants to assign grammatical gender to four nonce nouns by using the attributive adjective in the correct form they consider. The given attributive adjective is the masculine dictionary form of *krasivyy* ‘beautiful’. The four nouns end in different vowels:

(19) **bemi*

* *astju*

**deša*

**fugo*

The purpose of conducting an experiment on the gender assignment of invented noun is to examine whether phonological factors, i.e. the final vowel of an invented word, are related to gender assignment, and whether neuter gender as treated as a default gender.

The experiment is related to Murphy’s Moscow Experiment (2000: 129-150).²⁹ However, it is different from the Moscow Experiment in many ways. Murphy only used inanimate indeclinable nouns in her experiment and she asked native speakers to

²⁹ Murphy’s Moscow Experiment was primarily based on the Leningrad Experiment, which was conducted by Andrews et al (1993). The Leningrad Experiment dealt with not only indeclinable nouns that were used very commonly, but also many declinable nouns with soft consonant stems, e.g. *šampun* ‘shampoo’. (See Murphy 2000: 129 for more information.)

assign agreement without any linguistic context. That is to say, if a participant did not know the semantic meaning of an indeclinable noun, he or she nevertheless had to assign a gender. The present experiment provides rich context in every sentence. Therefore the participants know the meaning of the nouns when they do the experiment. This minimalizes the possibility that the participants may guess the grammatical gender without knowing the meaning. In fact, as shown in Chapter II, semantic criteria are important parts in the grammatical gender assignment of Russian indeclinable nouns. Knowledge of lexical meaning may affect how grammatical gender is assigned among native speakers.

3.3. Shortcomings and conclusion of the methodology

3.3.1. Potential shortcomings

The experiment serves as a pilot experiment for studying Russian grammatical gender assignment of indeclinable nouns, and several shortcomings in the experiment should be pointed out for future improvements. First, the number of participants is very small in this experiment: ten native speakers are not enough to represent the actual gender assignment mechanisms used by native speakers of Russian. Second, the participants were not selected randomly. Most of them were graduate students with a good educational background. Others were instructors of foreign languages, and therefore they may have been more aware of grammatical issues than the average native Russian speaker. Further experiment in the future should include subjects with a great variety of ages, geographical location and educational background.

Nevertheless, despite these shortcomings, the pilot experiment is helpful in identifying the gender assignment patterns among a small group of participants, and the results can test the gender assignment mechanism proposed in chapter II. As noted above, by providing full sentences, the experiment also has the advantage of providing linguistic contexts, matching the way indeclinable nouns are generally used in the real language. Results that show assignment choices that native speakers make in contexts are more persuasive than those based merely on selection of agreement morphemes without linguistic contexts.

3.3.2. Conclusions

In this chapter I have discussed the gender assignment experiment of this pilot study in which ten native speakers participated and assigned grammatical gender to 62 indeclinable nouns that mostly end in vowels by providing correct grammatical forms of adjectives, demonstrative pronouns and certain numerals and verbs. The theoretical basis of the experiment is that grammatical gender agreement should reflect the gender of indeclinable nouns, and by choosing an appropriate attributive adjective form we can find the grammatical gender that indeclinable nouns are assigned by native speakers. The participants were also asked to provide four invented indeclinable nouns with an attributive adjective that shows the grammatical gender of the invented indeclinable nouns. The next chapter presents that data analysis of this experiment, and describes how the gender assignment mechanism will work based on the data we have.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF THE EXPERIMENT

4.0. Overview

This chapter analyzes the result of the gender assignment experiment among ten native speakers. The main purpose is to examine to what extent the assignment mechanism reflects the psycholinguistic gender assignment of native speakers. I use the data from the experiment to discuss how the gender assignment mechanism, i.e. Absolute Semantic Criteria, Morphosemantic Criteria Based on Hypernyms and Synonyms, and Neuter Filter, work in the actual gender assignment by native speakers of Russian. I also rely on the data for four nonce words to discuss how grammatical gender is treated by native speakers when they do not know the lexical meanings of indeclinable nouns. The result provides preliminary support of the hypothesis that the gender assignment mechanism generally shows how native speakers assign grammatical gender to indeclinable nouns.

4.1. The Absolute Semantic Criteria

The notion of animacy plays a very important role in the grammatical gender assignment of animate indeclinable nouns. Neuter gender should be ruled out as a default gender because the major consideration is the biological sex of the noun referent. The Absolute Semantic Criteria state that nouns denoting males are treated

as masculine in gender and nouns denoting females are treated as feminine in gender.

However, we should also pay attention to the following questions:

(1) Are indeclinable occupation nouns considered masculine by default?

(2) What is the default grammatical gender of indeclinable nouns denoting animals?

Švedova (1982: 239-240) states that animate nouns are masculine by default.

Isačnko (1984) notes that nouns denoting genus have neuter gender, e.g. *nasekomoe* ‘insects’. Therefore, *kenguru* ‘kangaroo’ and *emu* ‘emu bird’ are masculine. Corbett’s gender assignment model is also based on this masculine default opinion. However, these nouns have feminine agreement where they refer to a female (see Švedova 1982: 240 for examples):

(20) *kenguru kormila*

kangaroo fed-FEM.

‘The kangaroo fed.’

I have used data from the experiment to test the Absolute Semantic Criteria and to answer the questions above. The experiment included 16 animate nouns from Uspenskaja’s 2009 dictionary and Grišina’s 2009 dictionary, including the information on their grammatical gender.³⁰

(21) *bramea* FEM. ‘Brahmaeidae’

čixuaxua FEM. ‘chihuahua’

konferans’e MASC. ‘conferencier’

flamingo MASC./FEM. ‘flamingo’

³⁰ Mixed gender is marked by a slash. The dictionaries do not treat all animate nouns denoting animals as nouns of mixed gender.

referi MASC. ‘referee’
šimpanze MASC. ‘chimpanzee’
snupi MASC. ‘snoopy’³¹
libero MASC. ‘volleyball libero’
kivi FEM./MASC. ‘kiwi bird’
èmu FEM./MASC. ‘emu’
frau FEM. ‘madam (German)’
xostes FEM. ‘hostess’
degu MASC./FEM. ‘degu’
gërlfrend FEM. ‘girlfriend’
madam FEM. ‘madam’

As Table 10 shows, 100% of the participants selected feminine gender for all the nouns that denote female humans: *frau*, *xostes*, *gerlfrend*, *madam*. There are some variations among the participants in assigning gender to the indeclinable occupation nouns. Speakers tend to select masculine gender in sentences where biological sex is not referred to, as in the sentence with *konferans’e*, where 100% of the speakers selected masculine. This seems to confirm the idea that masculine gender is the default gender for indeclinable occupation nouns. We cannot rule out another possibility that the subjects tended to consider *konferans’e* as having a male referent. All of the participants selected masculine gender for the noun *libero*, even it is

³¹ The noun *snupi* ‘Snoopy’ was not found in the three major dictionaries (Uspenskaja 2009; Grišina 2009; Ožegov 2003). The noun, which denotes a male cartoon dog in Charles M. Schulz’s comic series *Peanuts*, was listed in Russian National Corpus as a masculine animate noun:

ostavat’sja odin snupi
 stay one-MASC. Snoopy
 ‘to let one Snoopy stay’

See the following site of the Russian National Corpus for more examples:

http://search.ruscorpora.ru/search.xml?env=alpha&mycorp=&mysent=&mysize=&mysentsize=&mydocsize=&dpp=&spp=&spd=&text=lexform&mode=main&sort=gr_tagging&lang=ru&nodia=1&req=%F1%ED%F3%EF%E8

referred to a female in the sentence:

(22) *V volejboljnoj komande ona byla _____ (otličnyj) libero.*

In volleyball team she was-FEM. _____ (great) libero.

‘On the volleyball team she was a great libero.’

Table 10. Gender assignment to animate indeclinable nouns

| Noun | Masc. | Fem. | Neut. | Mixed | Frequency ³² |
|--------------------|-------|------|-------|-------|-------------------------|
| <i>frau</i> | 0% | 100% | 0% | 0% | 2 |
| <i>xostes</i> | 0% | 100% | 0% | 0% | 2.5 |
| <i>gerlfrend</i> | 0% | 100% | 0% | 0% | 2.5 |
| <i>madam</i> | 0% | 100% | 0% | 0% | 2 |
| <i>libero</i> | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 1.5 |
| <i>konferans'e</i> | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 2 |
| <i>referi</i> | 30% | 60% | 0% | 10% | 4 |
| <i>snupi</i> | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 1.5 |
| <i>šimpanze</i> | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 3 |
| <i>flamingo</i> | 80% | 0% | 0% | 20% | 2 |
| <i>kivi</i> | 0% | 70% | 0% | 30% | 2 |
| <i>èmu</i> | 80% | 0% | 0% | 20% | 2 |
| <i>čixuaxua</i> | 20% | 50% | 0% | 30% | 2.5 |
| <i>bramea</i> | 20% | 80% | 0% | 0% | 1 |
| <i>kolli</i> | 20% | 70% | 0% | 10% | 3 |

The fact that all speakers chose masculine for the noun may be related to the fact that in neutral and official register (as shown in the sentence) masculine gender agreement pattern is commonly used to denote both male and female referents. In colloquial speech, speakers may assign feminine agreement to indeclinable nouns of profession. Another indeclinable noun *referi* that denote a female was included in the experiment in a colloquial sentence. The result of the gender assignment of *referi* is rather different from that of *libero*: most of the speakers (60%) selected feminine in

³² The frequency column shows how often the nouns are used by the participants in their judgment. 4 means that they use the noun very actively. 3 means that they often use the noun. 2 means they sometimes come across the noun, but rarely use it. 1 means they never use or know the noun. It is true that some speakers are more familiar with certain nouns than other speakers. The average frequency is listed using the following numbers: 1, 1.5, 2, 2.5, 3, 3.5, 4.

gender, while 30% choose masculine and 10% consider it possible to be marked masculine or feminine gender for agreement purpose:

(23) *Vot ____ (naš) referi Anna Petrova.* ³³

Here ____ (our) referee Anna Petrova.

‘Here is our referee Anna Petrova.

The results show that indeclinable occupation nouns are treated as masculine gender for agreement purpose by default. When these nouns refer to females, they are still treated as masculine, as shown in masculine gender agreement patterns in neutral register, and they may be treated as feminine gender, as shown in feminine gender agreement patterns in colloquial speech.

The default gender of indeclinable nouns denoting animals seems more complicated than nouns of profession. The indeclinable nouns denoting animals were all given in neutral contexts on the test except for *snupi*, which was treated as masculine gender by all the participants because they were familiar with the male cartoon dog it denotes. 80% of the speakers selected feminine gender for *bramea* because it ends in /a/, which looks like a declinable feminine noun. Those who considered it feminine reported after the experiment that they did not know this noun is indeclinable (the average frequency of this noun is 1).

The results for other nouns show that phonology may one of the factors that determine the default gender. Nouns that have final segment in /a/ are more likely to be considered as default feminine gender, like *čixuaxua*, which 50% of the speakers considered feminine. Animal nouns that end in /i/ are more likely to be treated as

³³ Many speaker may know that nouns ending in /o/ are masculine in some languages (e.g. Italian).

feminine, as in *kolli* and *kivi*, for which 70% speakers selected feminine. Nouns that end in /o/ and /u/ tend to be treated as masculine: 80% speakers treated *emu* and *flamingo* as masculine by default.

However, because of the limited number of animal nouns and the data available, it is not clear that phonology of the final segment plays a definitive role in the default gender assignment. Murphy (2000: 159-163) attempted to show that phonology may affect the gender assignment of indeclinable inanimate nouns. However, Murphy fails to establish the relationship between phonology and the actual gender assignment. For instance, in her study although 26% of the participants chose masculine for **bru*, 24% selected feminine. It is not sufficient to state that nouns ending /u/ are most likely to be masculine because the difference in the number of speakers who chose either masculine or feminine was small. It may be true that individuals may make assignment decisions based on a number of factors, e.g. semantic, phonological or morphological (see the discussion below), and it is very difficult to only take phonology into account because of the existence of other factors.

4.2. The Morphosemantic criteria based on hypernyms and synonyms

Chapter II discussed the hypothesis of gender assignment for some indeclinable nouns based on morphosemantic criteria. If an indeclinable noun is closely related in meaning to a hypernym or a synonym, then it is likely to be assigned the grammatical gender of the hypernym or synonym. The results of the experiment confirm these morphosemantic criteria. See Table 11:

Table 11. Gender assignment to inanimate indeclinable nouns (1)

| Noun | Masc. | Fem. | Neut. | Mixed | Frequency |
|-----------------------|-------|------|-------|-------|-----------|
| <i>tornado</i> | 80% | 0% | 20% | 0% | 3.5 |
| <i>xačapuri</i> | 90% | 10% | 0% | 0% | 3 |
| <i>kapučino</i> | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 3.5 |
| <i>kaffe latte</i> | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 3.5 |
| <i>kaffe o lè</i> | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 2 |
| <i>viski</i> | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 4 |
| <i>brendi</i> | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 2 |
| <i>sake</i> | 50% | 30% | 20% | 0% | 2 |
| <i>šimmi</i> | 80% | 0% | 20% | 0% | 1 |
| <i>xoro</i> | 70% | 0% | 30% | 0% | 1 |
| <i>èsperanto</i> | 70% | 0% | 30% | 0% | 2.5 |
| <i>lingva nova</i> | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 1.5 |
| <i>xindi</i> | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 2 |
| <i>reno</i> | 70% | 0% | 30% | 0% | 2.5 |
| <i>vol'vo</i> | 80% | 0% | 20% | 0% | 3 |
| <i>ferrari</i> | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 3 |
| <i>bentli</i> | 90% | 0% | 10% | 0% | 2.5 |
| <i>Soči</i> | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 4 |
| <i>Solt-lejk-siti</i> | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 2 |

The nouns in the table have four different final segments in /o/, /e/, /i/ and /a/, and they are treated as non-neuter nouns by most speakers. 80% speakers selected masculine gender for *tornado* ‘tornado’, since it is closely related to the generic noun *veter* ‘wind’. In contrast, 20% speakers considered it neuter. Their decision was clearly influenced by the morphological gender assignment patterns: the word-final letter o looks like the o-stem neuter ending. All of the speakers selected masculine gender for *kapučino* ‘cappucino’, *kaffe latte* ‘latte’ and *kaffe o lè* ‘café au lait’. They apparently treated these nouns as masculine because they are closely associated with the masculine hypernym *kofe* ‘coffee’.

In the experiment native speakers of Russian also tended to choose different genders for the same noun based on different hypernyms. All the participants selected masculine gender for *brendi* ‘brandy’ and *viski* ‘whisky’, which belong to the category of *napitok* ‘drink’ and *alkogol’* ‘alcohol’. When asked about their decision after the experiment, six speakers considered *napitok* as the semantic category and 4 treated both nouns as two types of alcohol. The two generic words *napitok* and *alkogol’* in Russian are masculine nouns, and therefore the result of *brendi* and *viski* is the same gender assigned by the speakers. In contrast, 50% of the speakers chose masculine gender for *sake* ‘sake’³⁴ because of the masculine hypernym *alkogol’*, while 30% speakers selected feminine gender because they considered *sake* to be a kind of *vodka* ‘vodka’. Twenty percent of the participants chose neuter gender for *sake* because of the influence of the morphological neuter ending /e/. Therefore, different opinions regarding the hypernyms and synonyms may trigger different gender assignment results of the indeclinable nouns, as well as morphological influence.

The results for other nouns reveal the similar phenomenon. Most of the participants (80%) considered *šimmi* ‘shimmy dance’ and *xoro* ‘horo dance’ to be masculine because the hypernym *tanec* ‘dance’ is masculine. Likewise, the majority of the participants selected masculine gender for *xindi* ‘Hindi’, *èesperanto* ‘Esperanto’, and *lingva franka nova* ‘Lingua Franca Nova’ because of the semantic category of the

³⁴ Uspenskaja’s 2009 dictionary of Russian indeclinable nouns and Grišina’s 2009 dictionary of foreign words in Russian both give the gender of *sake* as feminine.

masculine noun *jazyk* ‘language’³⁵.

It is therefore no surprise to find that the majority of the participants selected masculine gender for *reno* ‘Renault’, *vol’vo* ‘Volvo’, *ferrari* ‘Ferrari’ and *bentli* ‘Bentley’ because of the masculine semantic hypernym *avtomobil* ‘automobile’. It should also be pointed out that *reno*, *ferrari* and *bentli* are family name of the cars’ male inventors. Morphological assignment rules continue to influence native speaker’s gender assignment decisions, as 30% of the speakers selected neuter gender for *reno* and 20% considered *vol’vo* to be neuter. For the nouns *Soči* ‘Sochi’ and *solt-lejk-siti* ‘Salt Lake City’, all of of the native speakers selected masculine gender because these nouns are related to the masculine hypernym *gorod* ‘city’.

The obvious morphosemantic subrules from Table 10A is listed as follows. The subrules are modeled according to the Morphosemantic Criteria Based on Hypernym and Synonym. The indeclinable nouns take the grammatical gender of the declinable nouns that reflect their semantic relations to a hypernym.

veter ‘wind’ [Masc.] > X [Masc.]

xleb ‘bread’ [Masc.] > X [Masc.]

kofe ‘coffee’ [Masc.] > X [Masc.]

³⁵ The fact that the indeclinable nouns denoting languages are treated as different genders on the basis of hypernyms can be found in the other East Slavic languages. Nessel (2003: 72-76) states that Ukrainian indeclinable nouns that denote languages are of feminine gender because of the feminine hypernym *mova* ‘language’. Therefore, in Ukrainian *esperanto* and *xindi* are feminine gender. Similarly, in Belarusian the indeclinable nouns *maaory* ‘Maori’, *xindzi* ‘Hindi’ are feminine nouns because of the hypernym *mova* ‘language’ (Lukašanca: 2010).

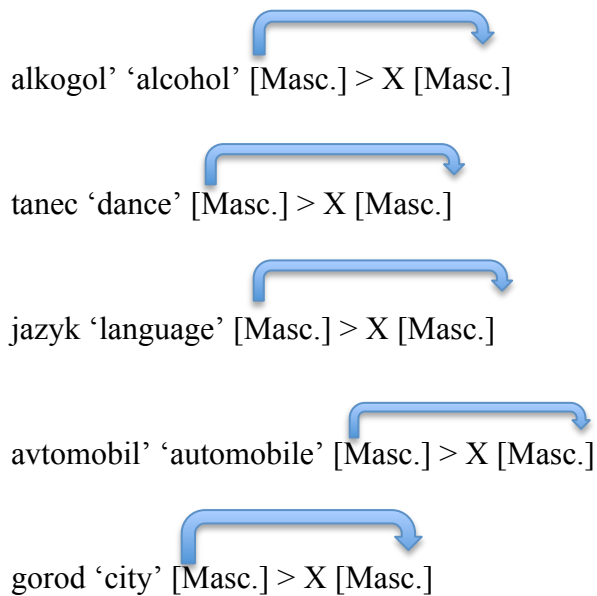


Table 12 shows that native speakers do not necessarily assign neuter gender to unfamiliar indeclinable nouns (with frequency number 1 and 2). Five of the native speakers selected neuter gender for *brokolli* 'broccoli', and 40% considered *kol'rabi* 'kohlrabi' to be feminine. The average frequency for these nouns is 1.5, which suggests that many of the speakers were not completely familiar with such nouns. Four speakers selected feminine gender for *brokolli* and *kol'rabi*, probably because of the feminine hypernym *kapusta* 'cabbage'. Uspenskaja (2009) also gives feminine gender to these nouns, and the word *kapusta* was mentioned in the entry explanations. All of the participants selected feminine gender for *alma-mater*, probably because it is related to the concept of *mat* 'mother', which is feminine. Likewise, all native speakers considered *dividi* 'DVD' as masculine because of the masculine synonym *disk* 'disk'.

The result also shows that where there seems to be no strong correlation between indeclinable nouns and a possible hypernym or a synonym, native speakers tend to

assign neuter gender to nouns. For instance, while 40% of the speakers assigned feminine gender to *frisbi* ‘frisbee’, probably because of the hypernym *igra* ‘game’, another 40% considered it to be neuter, while the other 20% chose masculine. There is also a positive correlation between lexical frequency and the assignment of non-neuter gender. The average frequency of *frisbi* is 3 among the speakers who assigned feminine to the noun. In contrast, those who assigned neuter to *frisbi* gave it as 1.5 frequency. Similarly, 60% of the speakers selected masculine gender for *penal'ti* ‘penalty’ probably because it is related to the masculine noun *štraf* ‘punishment’. The average lexical frequency for masculine *penal'ti* is 3.5. The other 40% of the participants selected neuter gender: the average lexical frequency for that group is 2.5. Fifty percent of the participants selected feminine gender for *kiridzi* ‘Japanese cyrillization’, probably because it is related to the feminine hypernym *zapis* ‘writing’.

Table 12. Gender assignment to inanimate indeclinable nouns (2)

| Noun | Masc. | Fem. | Neut. | Mixed | Frequency |
|-------------------|-------|------|-------|-------|-----------|
| <i>avenju</i> | 0% | 80% | 20% | 0% | 2 |
| <i>strit</i> | 0% | 100% | 0% | 0% | 2 |
| <i>brokolli</i> | 20% | 30% | 50% | 0% | 1.5 |
| <i>kol'rabi</i> | 20% | 40% | 40% | 0% | 1.5 |
| <i>alma-mater</i> | 0% | 100% | 0% | 0% | 3 |
| <i>dividi</i> | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 4 |
| <i>frisbi</i> | 20% | 40% | 40% | 0% | 2 |
| <i>karri</i> | 40% | 0% | 60% | 0% | 3 |
| <i>penal'ti</i> | 60% | 0% | 40% | 0% | 3 |
| <i>kiridzi</i> | 20% | 50% | 30% | 0% | 1.5 |

Thus, this pilot experiment suggests that morphosemantic criteria based on hypernym and synonym apply to all inanimate indeclinable nouns that have a strong semantic relation to their declinable hypernym or synonym. Indeclinable nouns tend to be treated as masculine, feminine and neuter simply based on the grammatical gender of their hypernym or synonym. However, the experiment also shows a correlation between gender assignment and frequency, and that lexical frequency may influence the actual gender assignment. Therefore, different extents of familiarity with specific indeclinable nouns tend to lead to different results in grammatical gender assignment.

4.3. The neuter filter

As noted in 2.4, some previous studies suggest that neuter gender is the default gender for inanimate indeclinable nouns (see Corbett 1991: 40-41, Crockett 1976). Moreover, Švedova (1970: 258-259) pointed out that masculine and feminine gender for inanimate indeclinable nouns are very rare. She listed four nouns as evidence, including the masculine noun *penal'ti*.

This study attempts to demonstrate that neuter gender is a choice that native speakers make when semantic rules do not apply. In other words, the neuter gender is a solution to the assignment of gender to indeclinable nouns only when they fail to meet Absolute Semantic Criteria and Morphosemantic Criteria. A previous study even suggests that neuter gender is not the default gender of inanimate indeclinable nouns. Murphy (2000: 151-154) used Russian to show that neuter gender is not the default

gender in an experiment involving the grammatical gender judgment of nonsense indeclinable nouns. In her study, native speakers did not always assign neuter gender to unknown indeclinable nouns. For the nonce *matinu³⁶, 27% of the subjects selected neuter, 21% selected masculine, and 18% selected feminine, while an additional 30% refused to select a grammatical gender. Her experiment also indicated that native speakers felt uncomfortable assigning grammatical gender to indeclinable nouns that were completely unfamiliar to them. Moreover, her results do not indicate that neuter gender is the default gender, because that were the case, at least half of the participants should have selected neuter for nouns, with which they were unfamiliar with, rather than declining to select a gender, as 30% did.

Neuter indeclinable nouns account for more than 70% of the indeclinable nouns in Russian (see Uspenskaja 2009 and Grišina 2009). Several reasons account for the fact that neuter gender is the predominate gender of indeclinable nouns in number. First, the majority of indeclinable nouns in Russian end in /o/ and /e/. The two segments are identical to Russian nominal morphological endings –o and –e. Their neuter gender is mainly because of morphophonological reasons. In Russian declinable nouns, 87% of the nouns are either masculine or feminine gender, and only 13% of nouns are neuter (Polinsky 2008: 42). The gender mechanism of Russian indeclinable nouns shows systematic assignment patterns. Non-neuter assignment accounts for around 30% of indeclinable nouns. In addition, the Neuter Filter rule is ordered after the Absolute Semantic Criteria and Morphosemantic Criteria Based on

³⁶ The asterisk indicates that the word does not exist in Russian.

Hypernym and Synonym in the gender assignment mechanism that I discussed in Chapter II. This means that indeclinable nouns are treated as neuter gender only when there is a lack of semantic motivation (i.e. the Absolute Semantic Criteria or Morphosemantic Criteria).

The result of applying the Neuter Filter shows that indeclinable nouns that end in /e/ and /o/ are more likely to be treated as neuter gender (see the following table). For instance, all of the participants treated *mango* ‘mango’, *demo* ‘demo’ and *èsse* ‘essay’ as neuter gender. While it is the case that *mango* and *èsse* is related to masculine *frukt* ‘fruit’ and neuter *sočetanie* ‘composition’, the subjects preferred morphophonological reasons to morphosemantic assignment. When asked about the decisions on the gender of these nouns, all of the subjects reported that they selected neuter gender based on the final vowels /e/ and /o/ rather than the hypernym or synonym. In addition, while *demo* and *metro* are closely related to *demostacija* ‘demonstration’ and *metropoliten* ‘subway’, they are treated as neuter clearly because of the final vowel /o/. Therefore, the final phonological segments of indeclinable nouns ending in /e/ and /o/ are likely to be treated as neuter because /e/ and /o/ look like declinable neuter nouns.

However, there is ambiguity in the neuter assignment of the indeclinable nouns ending in /i/, /u/ and /ju/. For instance, 90% of the speakers treated *safari* ‘safari’ as a neuter noun. This may be because *safari* does not have a suitable semantic category—it is not animate and cannot be easily related to a declinable hypernym or synonym. On the other hand, *safari* is a hypernym to *putešestvie* ‘travel’, which is

neuter. It may also be related to the feminine noun *pojesdka* ‘trip’. A similar case is found in the indeclinable noun *xobbi* ‘hobby’. It is treated as neuter either because it has no identifiable hypernymor because its synonym is the neuter noun *uvlečenie* ‘interest, hobby’.³⁷ Consider Table 13:

Table 13. Gender assignment to inanimate indeclinable nouns (3)

| Noun | Masc. | Fem. | Neut. | Mixed | Frequency |
|------------------|-------|------|-------|-------|-----------|
| <i>mango</i> | 0% | 0% | 100% | 0% | 3 |
| <i>antre</i> | 20% | 0% | 80% | 0% | 2 |
| <i>èsse</i> | 0% | 0% | 100% | 0% | 4 |
| <i>safari</i> | 10% | 0% | 90% | 0% | 1 |
| <i>kivi</i> | 20% | 0% | 80% | 0% | 3 |
| <i>demo</i> | 0% | 0% | 100% | 0% | 3 |
| <i>interv’ju</i> | 0% | 0% | 100% | 0% | 4 |
| <i>taksi</i> | 0% | 0% | 100% | 0% | 4 |
| <i>nou-xau</i> | 10% | 0% | 90% | 0% | 1.5 |

4.4. The gender assignment of nonce words

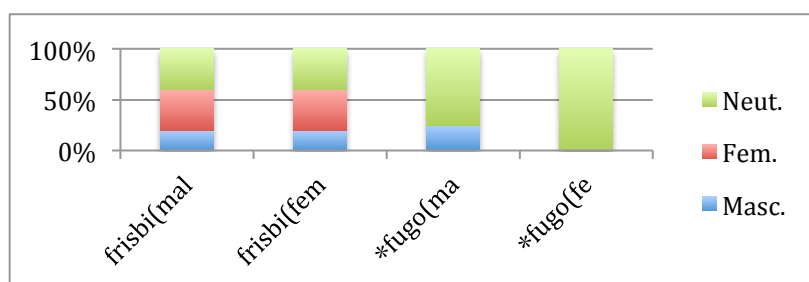
The second part of the experiment asked the participants to assign grammatical gender to four nonce words: **bemi*, **astju*, **deša*, **fugo*. The four words were given on a piece of paper, and the subjects were asked to use the attributive adjective *krasivyj* ‘beautiful’ to make phrases. The results show that there is a strong tendency to assign feminine gender to words that end in /a/: 80% of the subjects treated **deša* as a feminine noun. Likewise, 70% of the speakers treated **fugo* as neuter because of /o/. More speakers assigned masculine gender to words that end in /i/, /u/ and /ju/: 40%

³⁷ All of the participants were asked their reasons for assigning neuter gender to *safari*, *xobbi*, *alibi* after the experiment. Seventy percent of the native speakers related the neuter assignment of *xobbi* to the neuter synonym *uvlečenie*. Sixty percent considered that *alibi* was closely related to the neuter noun *opravdanie* and in fact was synonymous, while most (80%) did not consider that *putešestvie* had anything to do with the neuter assignment of *safari*.

selected masculine, 20% chose feminine, and 20% chose neuter for **bemi*; 30% chose masculine for **astju*, 20% selected feminine and 20% chose neuter. The results appear to confirm Murphy's claim that when speakers deal with the gender of unfamiliar indeclinable nouns, they do not necessarily select neuter as the default gender. In this experiment more speakers preferred masculine gender than feminine when they assigned gender to nonce words. The native speakers also experienced difficulty in assigning grammatical gender to nonce words. Two participants did not attempt to assign gender to these four nouns because they explained that the words were not Russian. Other speakers found it difficult to assign gender because of their unfamiliarity with the nonce words.

The results also demonstrate that male and female participants behaved similarly when they assigned gender to both indeclinable nouns and nonce words. For most indeclinable nouns, the majority of male and female subjects selected gender very similarly. For instance, 80% of the male and female subjects selected neuter for *antre*, with the other 20% selected masculine. Figure 5 shows the gender assignment of *frisbi* and **fugo* among male and female participants. However, since only ten people were involved in the pilot experiment, a study with more participants is needed to discover whether the biological sex of the subjects play a role in gender assignment.

Figure 5. Gender assignment based on the subjects' sex



4.5. Summary

The preliminary results generally show that the grammatical gender assignment mechanism for indeclinable nouns that I have proposed in previous chapters works well. The data also show that there are variations in gender decisions, with native speakers not unanimously assigning a gender to every indeclinable noun. For instance, while 50% of the speakers considered *kiridzi* as feminine, the other 50% selected either masculine or neuter. Native speakers do not know the prescribed gender of an indeclinable noun, and assign grammatical gender according to various rules and criteria. Animate indeclinable nouns are subject to the Absolute Semantic Criteria. Inanimate indeclinable nouns are assigned gender based on the Morphosemantic Criteria and the Neuter Filter. The subrules of the Morphosemantic Criteria were discussed (see 4.2). Indeclinable nouns are assigned gender based on the relationship between their lexical meanings and hypernyms or synonyms. In addition, the Neuter Filter indicates that inanimate indeclinable nouns are treated as neuter when the Absolute Semantic Criteria and the Morphosemantic Criteria do not apply.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

This thesis has investigated the grammatical gender assignment of indeclinable nouns in the contemporary Russian language. A gender assignment mechanism has been proposed to account for three hypotheses of gender assignment: the **Absolute Semantic Criteria** successfully predict grammatical gender of animate indeclinable nouns; the **Morphosemantic Criteria Based on Hypernyms or Synonyms** are helpful in assigning the gender of many inanimate indeclinable nouns by the grammatical gender of their hypernyms or synonyms; and the **Neuter Filter** explains that the indeclinable nouns are treated as neuter when semantic rules do not apply.

In order to test the validity of the gender assignment mechanism, I developed an experiment involving ten native Russian speakers. They were asked to assign grammatical gender to 62 indeclinable nouns and four nonce indeclinable nouns that end in /i/, /ju/, /a/, /o/.

The results from the experiment generally show that the gender assignment mechanism is helpful in predicting the grammatical gender of Russian indeclinable nouns. The results show that the **Absolute Semantic Criteria**, the first rule in the mechanism, are used by native speakers to assign grammatical gender to animate nouns. Moreover, the default gender of animate nouns denoting animals are generally masculine, although phonological factors may also influence the default gender, as shown by the fact that more than 50% of the native speakers assigned feminine gender to nouns that end in /a/. The **Morphosemantic Criteria** successfully explains why

native speakers treat a number of indeclinable inanimate nouns as masculine or feminine. They assign grammatical gender according to the gender of the hypernyms and synonyms of the indeclinable nouns. The results also demonstrate that the non-neuter assignment of inanimate indeclinable nouns are very common for native speakers, and in this case native speakers use the **Neuter Filter** to treat the indeclinable nouns as neuter.

Future study on the issue of grammatical gender assignment of indeclinable nouns should focus on the following aspects. First, the experiment should involve more native speakers with different ages and educational background from different regions of Russia to receive a more representative result. Moreover, the indeclinable nouns in the experiment should be increased to cover as many nouns with different semantic classes as possible to extend the subrules of the **Morphosemantic Criteria**.

Second, future research should also focus on whether phonological factors play a role in the gender assignment. The results that masculine, feminine and neuter are all possible choices for the nonce nouns ending in /i/, /ju/, /a/ and /o/ show that a more sophisticated mechanism that involve phonological rules may explain why native speakers do not treat these nouns as neuter.

Third, future exploration of the gender of indeclinable nouns should also focus on the gender assignment of indeclinable nouns in other Slavic languages. As some Slavic languages attempt to make borrowed nouns declinable, some indeclinable nouns still remain in the languages, for instance, in Czech. Therefore, more study should investigate if the gender assignment mechanism applies in other languages,

and if different assignment rules exist in other languages.

APPENDIX A

ABBREVIATIONS

The following is a list of abbreviations in grammatical glosses in this thesis.

ACC=accusative

DAT=dative

FEM=feminine

GEN=genitive

INSTR=instrumental

LOC=locative

MASC=masculine

NEUT=neuter

NOM=nominative

SG=singular

PL=plural

APPENDIX B

TESTS

I.

Instructions: Please fill in the blanks using the word given in the parenthesis. You may just write the ending. After you have done every sentence, please indicate how often you encounter the italicized noun using the numbers 1,2,3 and 4.(1=I very rarely/never encounter/use the word; 2=I seldom encounter/use the word; 3=I sometimes encounter/use the word; 4=I often encounter/use the word.)

Инструкция: Заполните пропуски, используя слова в скобках. Напишите только окончание. После заполнения каждого предложения, укажите, как часто вы встречаете и используете выделенные жирным слова, используя цифры 1,2,3,4. (1= Я почти никогда не встречаю это слово; 2=Я редко встречаю это слово; 3=Я иногда встречаю это слово; 4=Я часто употребляю это слово.)

Пример:() Ему нравится _____ (такой) **книга**.

Ответ может быть: (4) Ему нравится _____ такая _____ (такой) **книга**.

- ()1. Алёша любит коллекционировать бабочек. Он хочет увидеть такую бабочку, как _____ (южно-американский) **брамеа**.
- ()2. Завтра будет _____ (сильный) **торнадо**.
- ()3. На столе лежит _____ (последний) **хачапури**.
- ()4. _____ (чёрный) **кофе**—это мой любимый напиток.
- ()5. Она съела 1 _____ (свежий) **манго**.
- ()6. **ФИФА** _____ (должен) сотрудничать с этой организацией.
- ()7. Он сел к компьютеру и стал пить _____ (свой) **виски**.
- ()8. _____ (главный) **антре**—это жаренная рыба.
- ()9. Я только что приготовила _____ (вкусный) **капучино**. Попробуйте!
- ()10. У Маши 1 _____ (двухлетний) **чихуахуа**.
- ()11. В клубе танцуют _____ (модный) **шимми**. Это популярный танец.
- ()12. Алёна написала _____ (отличный) **эссе**.
- ()13. Никто сейчас не изучает **эсперанто**, _____ (который) придумал лингвист 60 лет назад.
- ()14. **Лигва франка нова** _____ (был, была, было, были) искусственным языком.
- ()15. _____ (Венгерский) **салими**---это фирменное блюдо этого ресторана.
- ()16. Мама приготовила _____ (вкусный) **кафе о лэ**.
- ()17. Ты знаешь _____ (болгарский) **хоро**? Этот танец очень уникальный!
- ()18. Следующее блюдо будет _____ (французский) **фуа-гра**.
- ()19. На улице стоит _____ (белый) **рено**.
- ()20. Я хочу вернуться в _____ (прекрасный) **Сочи**.

- ()21. Сейчас выходит _____ (французский) **конференсье**.
- ()22. Там стоит 1 _____ (одинокий) **фламинго**.
- ()23. Это _____ (необычный) **сафари** для всех.
- ()24. Я не разу не пробовал _____ (японский) **саке**.
- ()25. Главное требование было восстановить _____ (нынешний) **статус-кво**.
- ()26. Вот _____ (наш) **рефери** Анна Петрова.
- ()27. В клетке сидит 1 _____ (грустный) **шимпанзе**.
- ()28. Я хочу продать _____ (этот) **вольво**.
- ()29. Ребёнок смотрел мультфильм. Ему _____ (понравиться) **снупи**.
- ()30. Он заказал _____ (сладкий) **каффе латте**.
- ()31. В волейбольной команде она была _____ (отличный) **либеро**.
- ()32. Как называется _____ (этот) **авеню**.
- ()33. На столе лежит 1 _____ (коричневый) **киви**.
- ()34. Пришлось изменить _____ (ваш) **инкогнито**.
- ()35. У нас здесь не растёт кешью. А **кешью** _____ (вкусный)?
- ()36. В зоопарке я увидел 1 _____ (маленький) **киви**. Такую птицу редко увидишь.
- ()37. Давайте посмотрим на _____ (наш) **демо**.
- ()38. _____ (Австралийский) **эму**—это крупная птица на этом континенте.
- ()39. На улице она увидела 1 _____ (желтый) **такси**.
- ()40. Скажите, как попасть на _____ (шестой) **стрит**?
- ()41. _____ (Веселый) **фрау** стоит в коридоре.
- ()42. У меня есть 1 _____ (китайский) **кольраби**.
- ()43. МГУ—это _____ (мой) **альма-матер**.
- ()44. Думаю, что _____ (наш) **интервью** состоится завтра.
- ()45. Дима потерял _____ (любимый) **дивиди**.
- ()46. Где _____ (наш красивый) **хостес**?
- ()47. Вчера Таня завела 1 _____ (большой) **дегу**.
- ()48. Я думаю, что **хинди** очень _____ (сложный).
- ()49. Перестань говорить, что я _____ (твой) **гёрлфренд**.
- ()50. Видимо, _____ (этот) **кенгуру** скоро умрёт.
- ()51. Я очень хочу пить _____ (британский) **бренди**.
- ()52. Из зала _____ (вышел, вышла, вышло) **мадам**.
- ()53. Это _____ (удивительный) **ноу-хау**.
- ()54. Настя в первый раз попробовала _____ (американский) **броколли**.
- ()55. Что вчера _____ (сообщил, сообщила, сообщило, сообщили) **МИД**?
- ()56. Папа купил мне 1 _____ (крутой) **фрисби**.
- ()57. На улице стоит 1 _____ (итальянский) **феррари**.
- ()58. Евгений давно хотел купить _____ (такой) **бентли**.
- ()59. На вкус это похоже на _____ (индийский) **карри**.
- ()60. У него есть 1 _____ (белый) **колли**.

()61. _____ (японский) **киридзи**—это запись японских слов кириллицей.

()62. У этой команды всего _____ (один) **пенальти**.

II.

Составьте словосочетания со следующими словами, используя слово “красивый”.

Образец: _____ (красивый) девушка

Ответ: красивая девушка

_____ беги

_____ астю

_____ стеру

_____ деша

_____ фуго

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