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WOMEN`S ADDRESS FORMS VARIATION IN RUSSIAN

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ABSTRACT

In this article information is given about the specific features of addressing and the stages of development. This article illustrates about how to address among women in Russian.

Keywords: mister, *comrade*, closeness, treatment, disintegration.

One of the peculiarities of the Russian language today is the fact that there are no generally accepted neutral address words to appeal an unknown person – a man or a woman [8, 420]. Such kinds of words were used before the revolution 1917. They were *сударь* (sir) and *сударыня* (madam), *господин* (mister) and *госпожа* (*mistress*). The revolution changed not only life in Russia, but also the Russian language and speech. People started to frequently use the word "*товарищ*" (*comrade*) to address both men and women. In formal relationship, especially in the written speech and documents, the word гражданин (citizen) was used.

Along with disintegration of former Soviet Union the soviet word товарищ also vanished, but no new word took its stand. The empty space was filled by the expressions *"Молодойчеловек!" (Юноща, 136)* (a young man) и *"Девушка!"* (a girl). Nowadays, if you want to address an unknown person you can say "Молодойчеловек!" Please note that it's absolutely unimportant how old the person you address to is – 20 or 60 years old or "Женщина"for old woman and "Девушка" for younger one. Don't be confused to use these words and expressions and don't think about their exact meaning [2, 168].

In official situations, in the documents or when you see a person for the first time, it's a tradition to use a name and a patronymic (father's name in a special form): *Lyudmila Petrovna, Maria Nikolayevna.* The names "Ivan", "Maria" are full first names. "Petrovna", "Nikolayevna" are special forms from the names "Petr", "Nikolai". However, young people because of their age and influence of Western culture prefer to give only their first names: *Alexei, Natalya, Anna* and *Sergey.* But an official "You" is preserved [6, 152].

Among close friends, in the family and at school people don't use their "full" names, they use diminutive forms. For example: for the name *Alexei* a short form is *Aljosha*, for *Maria – Masha*, for *Petr – Petja*, for *Leonid – Ljova*, etc. Such short forms tell us about close and informal relationships between people. People in such cases use "you" – "ты". Be attentive: there're names in short forms in Russian which end on –a (*Vanja, Seryozha, Aljosha, Dima*) and look the same as

female but are male names!

There's another short and tender form addressing people: *Sashenka, Serjozhenjka, Jenechka.* Kids and close ones can be called like this. This form is made with the help of different suffixes (-еньк, -оньк, ечк) to the short form of a name.

Thus, you can guess what relationships are between people if you know how people address each other.

In Russia, when you're referring to someone in a formal setting, you don't just use their first name, but their first name and patronymic, i.e. *"Anna Vasilyevna"* or their diminutive. *"Maria Nikolayevna"* is a name familiar to Tolstoy wonts, who will tell you that that is not the character's full name; former Soviet history buffs will tell you the same about *Nadezhda Ivanovna.*

Oddly, even though addressing a person by the first name and patronymic is very formal, addressing them with the patronymic alone is seen as highly informal, even less formal than First Name Basis. In this informal usage female patronymics usually get shortened by removing the "ovna\yevna" (e.g. *Ivanovna* becomes *Novna*.

In addition, some names have completely idiosyncratic short forms for mail ones (e.g. *Pavlovich –Palych, Dmitriyevich–Mitrich,* etc.) As a way of emphasizing his closeness to the people, Lenin was often referred to simply as *"Ilyich"* in speeches and Soviet media. In contrast, no one ever (except *maybe* general *Vlasik* — they were reportedly quite close) referred to his successor as *"Vissarionych".*

When it comes to name orders, Russian does not stick to just one, unlike English or Japanese. The most formal order is family name first, followed by given name, followed by patronymic *(e.g. Ivanov Ivan Ivanovich).* However, this order is only used on official documents and when introducing or referring to people in a very formal setting (for instance, dinner at the Kremlin or a courtroom in session), never as a direct form of address. This does not differ too much from the equivalent Western usage; think of the situations someone might use the phrasing *"Smith, John Michael"* and you have a rough (but hardly complete) idea when *"Ivanov Ivan Ivanovich"* might be used in Russia. The more Western order of given name-patronymic-family name *(Ivan Ivanovich Ivanov)* is a less official, but more commonly used way of giving someone's full name. When the patronymic is left out both the Western *(Ivan Ivanov)* and Eastern *(Ivanov Ivan)* orders are acceptable. The media nowadays uses the Western order almost exclusively (which also means that most official anime dubs reverse the Japanese names, just like they do in the West), while in schools and colleges the Eastern order is generally preferred. The only strict rule in Russian naming orders is that the patronymic can only be placed immediately after the given name (so *"Ivanov Ivan Ivanovich"* is always unacceptable). The surname alone is used in some formal situations as surname and first letters of name and patronymic in many documents. It assumes authority of the caller, such as of teacher in a class or a drill sergeant before a rank of enlisted men [1, 320].

The Russian equivalents to Mr. and Mrs. aren't really used save in older literature. Lack of an easy honorific to call someone actually became a problem a few years ago. *"Господин" or "госпожа"[3, 372]*(equivalents to Mr. and Mrs. respectively) were only recently returned to use and are used mostly by businessmen or civil servants to address each other, very formally. (Don't call a Russian the equivalent of «citizen «; that's how cops address a *perp*, so it sounds offensive.) The honorifics *"сударь"* and *"сударыня"[4, 118]*(equivalent to *"sir"* and *"madam")* are even rarer, technically valid but not really used; historically they were used only by nobles, so most Russians do not feel entitled to be called such. The address "*comrade"* (historically rendered *tovarishch*) is used only in the army, which is removed from power and is slowly dying out. The most common forms of address between common people are the Russian equivalentsof"man"*("мужчина"),*"youngman"*("молодойчеловек"),*"woman" or "girl". Note that

"girl" *("девушка")* is much more preferable then *"woman"("женщина")* as the latter may and frequently will be interpreted as connoting significant age and thus offensive (in this sense, it's a lot like Ma'am for people residing outside of the Deep South). Children mostly address unfamiliar adults as *"дядя/дяденька"* and *"тётя/тётенька".* These words literally mean *"uncle"and "aunt",* but they do not imply family ties in this case. At present time, in colloquial speech we can hear some ruff form of address, like "*Kukolka*","*Pusik*","*kotyonok" or "mishonok"* and so on. Similarly, in the predominately Muslim regions of Russia and the former USSR it may be customary for young and middle-aged people to address all elderly people as *"father"* and *"mother",* saying either "*отец*"and *"мать"* in Russian, or a corresponding term in the local language [5,421].

In former Soviet times, "*товарищ"* ("comrade") was more or less universal, but depending on its mode of usage, it could be more or less a honorific. Simply "comrade",as in "sir" or "madam", was considered polite address fitting for any honest of former Soviet citizen; criminals and enemies of the people, however, were forbidden to both be called comrades and call anyone comrades. That's why they were addressed *"гражданин"* or "*гражданка*"("citizen") and how that word became offensive (another honorific, "*гражданинначальник"* -"citizen boss" or "citizen master" was reserved for non-comrades to address policemen and prison guards). The form "comrade + Name" (as in "Mr.\Mrs.+Name") was more of a honorific, used to address important people. Its most formal usage was *"дорогойтоварищ"* ("dear comrade") [8,420].

In other words, the lack of honorifics to call a Russian reflects the ideological vacuum typical for The New Russia. You can't call someone "*сударь"* because they aren't a noble, you can't call someone "comrade" because they aren't a Communist, and you can't call someone "hey, you!", because they still feel too empowered for that after seventy years of "people's rule", perhaps wrongly, but still.

When writing full Russian names in English, you skip the patronymic, initial both names, or do it in full. Usually, some people get the "Name Patronymic-initial Surname" treatment, most famously Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin, frequently called *"Vladimir V. Putin"* in the Western press.

Generally speaking, Russians are rather conservative when it comes to naming their children. There have been some historical naming trends, however, especially during the former Soviet era. The 1920s brought a vogue of exotic, revolutionary names, such as *Elektron, Traktor*, and names honoring Soviet leaders such as *Vladilen* (from Vladimir Lenin) and even *Stalina* (for Stalin). By the 1930s, traditional names such as *Kuzma, Nikita*, and *Foma* (for men) and Fekla, Praskovia, and Marfa (for women) were seen as too stodgy and rustic. Names associated strongly

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