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**SOCIETY AS A SOCIO-LINGUISTIC CONSTRUCTION**

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**Abstract**

The paper is devoted to the notion society, which presents a great interest for scientists from various historical eras. Initially, the concept of society was identified with the political functions of the state, which consisted of maintaining order within the country and protecting against external enemies. The state was a kind of political structure that governs social relations. Depoliticization of the term society occurs when the line between the functioning of the state and society was formulated theoretically. At present, the concept of society is polysemantic, its lexicosemantic variants are united by the archisema "a set of people", "a circle of people", "a group of people". The development of language is associated with society, with the linguistic environment of communication. In turn, language creates spatio-temporal connections of social action that forms national identity. The present article examines the concept of society in Russian, English and French languages. This concept functions within a certain culture, a certain national identity, where information is encoded in images and symbols

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## 1. Introduction

Society plays a key role in the development of language, which in turn influences the process of social communication, in which verbal and non-verbal messages are transmitted at the social level. In the relationship between language and society, two understandings of the social nature of language can be identified. Based on one concept, only external conditions (for example, the person to whom the language is taught) determine the social nature of the language. According to another concept, a language is socially determined by its own level of development (Budagov, 2000).

It is possible to form an idea of the language functioning in different spheres of human activity with the help of concepts and categories that are meaningful and highlighted by scientists. The selected concepts relate to both society and language. A society is defined as "a society, a communication environment, a language collective, a speech collective" (Bogatireva et al., 2020, p. 126). While in the language, the following concepts are distinguished: "language, language situation, communicative environment, dialect".

Bernstein has a theory of code that can be either "expanded" or "limited." The first one prefers complex syntactic constructions and has a low degree of predictability, while the second one has a high degree of predictability and uses elementary syntactic constructions. B. Bernstein tried to identify the interdependence of the social structure, society and language. The language used by the middle classes (expanded code) is significantly different from the lower class (restricted code).

Filin (1982) believes that the structure of language is determined by the goals of society; therefore, the transformation of social relations leads to a change in the structure of language (p. 154)

Modern philosophy is changing the way we think about language. Since the time of de Saussure, language has been represented as a system of signs, and by studying the relations between the signs in the system; one can understand the meaning of each sign (Sanoilov, 2009).

There is an acute question about the interpretation of the text, about its subjective perception and the multiplicity of interpretations. Poststructuralists are interested in the text within a certain culture, in which information is encoded either in images or in symbols.

R. Barth believes that the text is the embodiment of many other texts having lost their own origin (codes). Therefore, each text is an intertext, which reveals other texts at different levels: fragments of old cultures and texts of the modern stage of society development.

Ilyin (2001) is of the opinion that poststructuralism insists on the thesis that any reading of the text is not infallible, and it is impossible to interpret the text correctly. The reader puts their own meaning into the text, but this interpretation takes place based on cultural systems and is limited by the historical conditions of these systems.

When talking about different pictures of the world, you can use a metaphor with pictures drawn by a cubist, an abstract artist, an impressionist, or a realist (Bogatyreva, 2019). Each nation has its own vision of the world, like each direction of painting. Language is the brush of an artist who creates the world by passing it through his consciousness.

Social and cultural life is reflected in linguistic phenomena (Bazhutina & Bazhutina, 2013). We are going to examine how social factors influence the concept of *society* in the Russian, English and French languages.

## 2. Problem Statement

It is necessary to note the close link between language and society. Historically, a particular language is associated with a certain group of speakers and social structures form a certain linguistic content and forms. On the other hand, the dependence of language and society is obvious, since it is the language that creates spatio-temporal connections, which are the basis of social action forming national identity (Budagov, 1985).

The concepts of the same phenomena and objects of reality differ in various languages due to the fact that different national consciousnesses form their representations. Words denoting the same notion in different languages have their own stylistic and socio-cultural connotations, diverse combinations, and live their own special verbal life (Busov, 2019). The socio-cultural factor underlying language structures calls into question the idea of the equivalence of words that coincide in meaning in relation to objects and phenomena of the surrounding world (Sanoilov, 2012). The language allows us to identify cultural characteristics of native speakers, reflecting peculiarities of their mentality.

## 3. Research Questions

Language, being a mirror of both the real world and the world of culturally conditioned concepts, reflects not an objective, but a subjective picture of the world. A native speaker, who has a certain system of values and belongs to a certain socio-cultural community (Manheim, 2004), creates his special worldview. We are going to determine the distinctive mental images of peoples who speak different languages by analyzing the concept of *society*.

## 4. Purpose of the Study

Language carries with it a certain social structure, which, through the mastery of language, penetrates into the individual (Mezhuev, 2006). Thus, the individual is separated from the speakers of another language and acquires his identity through his language, through his education and his social life (Remer, 1995). The purpose of the article is to consider common features and identify peculiarities of the concept of *society* in the Russian, French and English worldview.

## 5. Research Methods

We have used the general scientific principles of integrity, systematicity, development, determinism as the theoretical and methodological base of the research. Our study is based on the comparative and the comparative historical method. This general scientific empirical method is universal and allows you to get theoretical knowledge (Pengo & Gravints, 1972). The comparative method in scientific cognition is used to compare more than two objects under study in order to identify their

relationship, similarities and differences, to build classifications and typologies. It is the fundament for many applied sciences, as it allows you to create groups of objects basing on their distinctive features (Gvishiani, 2004).

The study applied the comparison principle of vocabulary composition, which revealed that usually a certain meaning of a word in one or more languages acts as the main, in another or other languages as secondary, as more or less peripheral (hyponym of a microfield).

## 6. Findings

The Russian language borrowed the word society from Old Slavonic, where it was formed as a tracing paper from the Greek *koinonia*, meaning *community* from the adjective *koinos* — *common*. It begins to occur in Russian literary monuments from the end of the 11th century.

According to the etymological dictionary by Krylov, the Old Russian word *society* is derived from the adjective *obchiy*. In turn, the adjective was formed from the verb to communicate, meaning the exchange of words and thoughts, which retained the common Slavic basis *obъtъbъ*, meaning *common*. Related words are the adjective *public* and the noun *community*.

The emergence of the French concept *société* from the Latin *societatem*, *socius*, *comrade* dates from the 14th century ("*Pour che que lesdites terres ne soient plus en soihestés, ai consenti, de ma bonne volonté, à partir desdites terres*" (1317), Du Cange)

In English, the concept of *society* appears in the middle of the 16th century in the meaning of friendly communication with other people, camaraderie (from the French word *société*, from the Latin *societas*, from *socius/comrade*).

The dictionary under the editorship of Ushakov, small academic dictionary of the Russian language, the dictionary by Dahl distinguish the following main meanings of the concept of *society*:

1. Something separate and whole, a parish, a volost, or population under a common administration. (The community chose Burov as the village headman. Two Nizhny Novgorod communities: Diveevskaya and Alekseevskaya.)
2. A group of advanced, educated people of the country, which before the revolution had the equivalent of intelligentsia. (Russian writer Maxim Gorky about Herzen: "Its significance in the history of Russian society and Russian thought is enormous").
3. The association of the estate in the pre-revolutionary meaning (bourgeois society, noble society of the province).
4. The system of industrial relations at a certain stage of human development: primitive society, feudal society, bourgeois society, capitalist society, communist society. This idea was brought to the Russian language by Marxism. (Lenin: "...Marx put an end to the view of society as a mechanical aggregate of individuals ...The personal abilities and personal work of every citizen determines his position in society.")
5. A group of people united by common goals and objectives (cultural societies, trade unions, cooperatives, party organizations). A separate place is occupied by enterprises and organizations (joint-stock companies).
6. In the obsolete meaning, it denotes the circle of people belonging to the privileged classes. (Pushkin: "The societies presented a most entertaining picture.") You can be accepted in society. They don't talk about it in society.
7. Being together in the company of people spending time together, being in public, among people. The soul of society. (Pushkin: "The habit of being always in society gave him a certain courtesy, especially with women.")

The Littré dictionary distinguishes the following meanings of the concept of *société*:

1. The association of people who have the same origin, the same customs and laws. (*Montesquieu: "As soon as people enter society, they lose their sense of weakness."*) 2. A community of animals with common goals and common interests. (Ants live in society) 3. Communication, relationships. 4. Interaction, participation. Work performed in society with someone, work that is performed by two or more people. 5. A contract concluded between several people who have united for a particular business within the framework of mutual interests. General partnership, limited partnership, joint-stock company, joint venture. (*"Toutes sociétés doivent être rédigées par écrit, lorsque leur objet est d'une valeur de plus de cent cinquante francs", Code civil, art. 1834. "All companies must be registered in writing if their object is worth more than one hundred and fifty francs", Civil Code, Article 1834.*) 6. People who come together within a particular religious institution or to share certain scientific knowledge. (*Société de la morale chrétienne./Society for Christian Morality. La Société royale de Londres./Royal Society of London.*) 7. Associations for performing music. Singing societies. 8. Secret societies (for example, for the purpose of overthrowing the Bourbons). 9. The relationship of the inhabitants of a certain region, country, city, village. 10. A group of people who regularly gather at each other's houses (Good and Bad society). 11. Business relations, business with certain people.

Most dictionaries distinguish the following meanings of the English concept of *society*:

1. People who live together and follow a certain social order (Buck, 1949). 2. A community of people living under certain laws, having common customs, living in a certain territory (in a certain region, country). 3. Used with an adjective, it denotes a certain part of society ("local society", "rural society"). It is often used with the adjective "polite" ("polite society"). 4. A group of rich and powerful people who make up a certain group in the community ("a society wedding", "fashionable society women and royalty", "shunned by her former society friends"). 5. Community of animals or plants. ("The analogy between insect society and human city is not new"). 6. A club or an organization created for a specific purpose or for a specific type of activity. ("Young people should get a greater say in how clubs and societies are run"). 7. Being in the company of other people ("she shunned the society of others", "people shunned by society").

Analyzing the meanings of the concept *société* we can see that it is considered in the most detailed way in the French language. Obviously, the main meaning for these languages is a group of people living in a certain territory. In French and English, laws and customs of people living in a certain territory occupy an important place, while in Russian this meaning is not distinguished. The English language attaches special importance to the social order that everyone must observe which is not evident in Russian and French. At the same time, the Russian language owes to Marxism the appearance of the meaning of industrial relations, which is not presented in French and English.

In English, *society* can refer to a certain stratum of society; most often it is used with the adjective *polite*, indicating the exclusivity of the people belonging to it, as well as the aggregate of influential people. It is important to be accepted by society, not to become a social outcast. In English, *society* can refer to a certain stratum of society, most often it is used with the adjective *polite*, indicating the exclusivity of the people belonging to it, as well as the aggregate of influential people. It is important to be accepted by society, not to become a social outcast. The Russian language also distinguishes class

associations, a privileged class, the circle of educated, advanced people who are called intelligentsia, but these meanings are outdated. The Russian language also distinguishes class associations, a privileged class, the circle of educated, advanced people who are called intelligentsia, but these meanings are outdated.

In all three languages, the word *society* is used to refer to an organization, a company that unites people with a specific purpose, a specific cause. However, in Russian and English, this meaning is quite general, while French gives a more detailed idea of organizations formed according to interests, highlighting scientific, religious institutions, associations for performing music, secret societies. It is particularly noteworthy that the French language emphasizes the concept of society in the meaning of communication, relations, participation, interaction of people with each other, which we cannot identify in English and Russian. In French, the term denoting a group of animals or insects has a close connection with a group of people. In English the word *society* denotes a certain association of animals. In contrast, Russian does not have this meaning using the word *community* in this sense.

The word *society* in a peripheral sense refers to a group of people who regularly gather with each other, which is common in these languages. In Russian, there is the concept *soul of society*, which in French and English is understood as being sociable, extroverted, able to communicate with a large number of people. The French word *soul* is used with the word *la communauté*, not *société*, with an emphasis on being in a group of people. In English, *soul of society* is expressed by *man of the people, life of the party*.

The problems of society have interested mankind since ancient times. Thus, Aristotle states that a person who cannot or does not want to live in society is either a beast or a god. Seneca describes society metaphorically, comparing it to a vault of stones that would collapse if one did not support the other.

Examining the quotations of the French, English and Russian languages, one can trace the contradictory nature of the concept *society*. On the one hand, a person is an integral part of society, needing its support; on the other hand, he is constantly in a state of struggle with society.

Georges Duhamel and Georges Simenon point out the contradictory nature of life in society. Napoleon Bonaparte insists on the necessity of religion in every society, comparing it to a compass on a ship. Victor Hugo is optimistic in his views, believing that every sick society can be cured: you can always see the light at the end of the tunnel. Jean-Jacques Rousseau is quite pessimistic, arguing that society makes a person who was born kind and happy, unhappy and perverted. According to Lionel Jospin, the idea of violence comes from society itself. Frédéric Beigbeder feels alone in society, and compares individualism in sociology to egoism. Leon Gambette and Emile Littré consider freedom to be one of the main elements of a prosperous society, while Pierre Boiste is convinced that there can be no social freedom, it is just the least slavery. In general, in the language picture of the French world, society is a constant struggle of the individual with society (Nordau, 1995).

The English language also traces the idea of a close relationship between man and society (Narykov, 2012). William James is convinced that a society degrades if it does not receive impulses from individuals; a person degrades if it does not receive sympathy from the whole society. Ronald Reagan supports Napoleon Bonaparte's idea that religion should be the foundation of society and democracy. Like Georges Duhamel and Georges Simenon, Ralph Emerson points to the conspiracy of society against man.

Henry Bolingbroke, together with Leon Gambette and Emile Littré, draws a parallel between the freedom of the social organism and the health of the individual. However, in English, special attention is paid to the social stratification of society, the division into the rich and the poor. Brian Stevenson claims that we can judge the civility of a society not by how it treats the rich, but by how it treats the poor. The basis of English mentality is the idea of order. Ronald Reagan believes that everyone is responsible for his actions. Martin Luther King finds no difference between the well-being of a person and an animal. Thus, the English word society is based on the idea of order and social inequality.

The great influence of human society on the personality formation is also shown by Russian quotes. Pisarev approves that a person's happiness depends solely on the peculiarities of his social life. Krotov and Pushkin speak about the ambiguity and inconsistency of public relations, emphasizing that the theoretical laws of society and the reality of public relations do not coincide. Sorokin emphasizes the relationship between man and society, as well as their confrontation, comparing society with a raging sea, and people with waves that constantly collide with each other. Fyodor Tyutchev is convinced that a person is weak without society, and only people of spirit can endure loneliness. According to Dostoevsky each person is responsible to all people for all people and for everything. Society is something native, in spirit, in heart, in blood. (Belinsky) Prishvin compares people with leaves, which, thanks to their unity, form the unity of the whole tree. Rozanov contrasts society with the soulless concept of "crowd". Therefore, the Russian concept of society is the most general and integral concept that is closely related to Russian people's soul.

## 7. Conclusion

Taking into account all the above, we can conclude that in the Russian language, society is etymologically connected with the concept of common, belonging to everyone, especially their own, i.e. neighbourhood, spread around. We are talking about a common feature for all, about commonality, the main thing that unites, represents something whole. The Russian concept represents all facets of human existence: social, economic, and political. This concept is much broader than society. In Russian, the emphasis is on the association of people, while this word does not apply to animal communities.

In French and English, the term society is used to refer both to the totality of people and animals. Moreover, the French language practically equates the animal world and the world of people. In French and English, the concept of society goes back to the words comrade, ally, company, relations between people. In French and English, society is primarily a relationship between people, accompanied by constant struggle, which indicates the individualistic nature of the speakers of these languages. This peculiarity of their nature is also shown by the fact that in the term society the most important thing is the fact of obeying certain laws and maintaining common customs. In English, great importance is also attached to the order in society. According to the given contexts, society in English and French is not a collection of people, but something more that opposes a person.

The French, English, and Russian ideas of society have much in common, but their social shell, the social framework, is organized differently. In Russian, society is a community based on spiritual and heartfelt closeness, in French it is a set of individuals and connections between them regardless of their relationship to each other, in English it is a set of individuals who observe the social order.

It should be noted that the picture of the world of an individual depends on what stratum of society he belongs to. As an illustration, public order, public laws, and confrontation between the individual and society come to the fore for politicians. The person, his soul, interaction of the inner world of a person with society is important for the writer.

In summary, the French and English approaches are more detailed and structured, while the Russian approach is more general and holistic. The lexical material fully reflects the specifics of the French, English and Russian language picture of the world.

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