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**COSSACK LANGUAGE AS COMPONENT OF ECOLINGUISTIC
SITUATION OF LOWER VOLGA REGION**

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Abstract

This article deals with linguistic features of the Lower Volga region, reflected in the subculture of the Cossacks. The functioning of the Cossack language is a special ecosystem, being rather closed, but constantly interacting with surrounding language systems of other subcultures representatives. The analysis of definite language means representing the special worldview of the Cossacks as representatives of a separate subculture allows explaining their originality, uniqueness, “survival” in the modern world. The linguistic features of the Lower Volga region are reflected in the subculture of the Cossacks, developed during a long period of time and mainly conditioned by the historical living environment of the Cossacks, the special social way of their life.

The studies devoted to characterizing universal categories are topical and relevant; special attention is paid to the category of possessiveness. The prerequisite is as follows: the comprehension of the possessive relations, their development in the process of progressive human activity occurred in each culture differently due to a certain hierarchy of values, primarily national and cultural specificity, reflected in the Cossack language. In this regard, the analysis of a subject-possessor, whose names are recorded in the Cossack language, is presented. The following possessive characteristics were defined: kinship relations, property relations, ownership relations, the subject’s characteristics in terms of thrift and avarice. The analysis performed allows tracing the reflection of certain social relations associated with possessiveness in the semantics of linguistic units. These relations are explained by such traits of the Cossacks as thrift and governance.

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1. Introduction

Currently, an interdisciplinary approach is widely used in various branches of science, since it allows taking a comprehensive look at the researched phenomenon in various contexts. In linguistics, ecolinguistics can be considered such an integrating scientific direction, which is formed at the junction of social, psychological and philosophical studies. Nowadays, there are many different approaches in this area; besides ecolinguistics, scientists use such terms as “linguo-ecology”, “language ecology”, “language ecology”, etc. However, in the most general way the “representation” of this scientific direction was formulated by A. Haugen, an American linguist, who believed that ecolinguistics studied the interaction between a given language and its surroundings. Languages, the scientist believed, were in the state of equilibrium like various types of animals and plants, they competed with each other, and their very existence depended on each other within the state, some other social groups and the mind of a person who speaks several languages (Haugen, 1972).

2. Problem Statement

This provision is regarded as a basis: the core of the characteristics of the ecolinguistic situation in the region should involve the problem of coexistence of all languages spoken by representatives of various nationalities and subcultures that compose the region and their identity.

There are representatives of various nationalities in the Lower Volga region. A special place in the structure of the residents of the region is occupied by the Cossacks. The subculture of the Cossacks was formed over a long period of time and was largely conditioned by the historical living conditions of the Cossacks, as well as the special social way of their life (initially as the military-service class). In the post-Soviet era there was a revival of the Cossacks as a special, separate subculture. And the language plays a huge role in this revival, the Cossacks strive to preserve all the originality and uniqueness of the so-called language of the Cossacks.

The concepts of *language* and *culture* are closely related to the concepts of *ethnos* and *nation*. The unique individual features of each culture is the result of a special system of the experience organization, that is peculiar only to the given culture, though, the experience elements are not always unique and can be met in many cultures. Thus, the main thing in the formation of “culture sphere” (Likhachev, 1994) is human experience and activity. To prove it, one can quote Bitsilli (1992) who writes that “the national culture manifests itself in all areas of human activity. Economy, family, living, law, statehood, science, art – all these are “parts” of the same culture, all of them are united by a common “spirit” and have an imprint of a common “cultural style”. At the same time, in the context of culture an activity can be considered as “conscious and motivated, that is, a mentally and socially regulated presentive and purposeful activity of a public subject, mediating all his relations with the natural, technical, economic and socio-cultural environment” (Dridze, 1984). This activity is reflected and fixed in a language.

Culture is usually likened to a society that differs from other societies due to its national frontiers or a set of ethnic characteristics (race, religion, etc.). However, national or ethnic culture is not a homogeneous structure. Cultural standards and their manifestations vary in different groups – subcultures of a society. But despite all the differences subcultures have the same basis of the picture of the world, values, norms and patterns of behavior that indicate belonging to a particular culture.

It is known, the bearers of different languages and cultures see and categorize the surrounding reality in different ways. That is the reason why the studies devoted to characterizing universal conceptual categories in the context of the national cultural peculiarities reflection in the region language are relevant and topical; they, according to Gurevich (1984), represent a coordinate grid applied to the reality, through which people perceive the world.

The universal conceptual category of possessiveness plays an extremely important role in the human sphere of concepts. Throughout the life, a human always owns something and someone, includes various objects in his/her sphere of life. The study material includes *Big Explanatory Dictionary of the Don Cossacks*, as well as literary texts of writers of the Lower Volga region (Yekimov, 1995; Terekhov, 1988), collections of poetic and prose texts of the Kholer Cossacks. The language means used in the speech of the Don and Kholer Cossacks are considered as a single array of facts reflecting the peculiarities of the Lower Volga region.

The universal conceptual category of possessiveness is binary: the subject is a possessor only in relation to a certain object, he has possessive relations with. Thus, all the linguistic means representing the category of possessiveness can be divided into linguistic means related to the subject or object, as well as describing possessive relations (Milovanova, 2007; Milovanova, Linkova, & Arzhanovskaya, 2017). There are a lot of objects, both inanimate and animate, surrounding the subject-possessor, therefore, only the means of naming the subject-possessor will be analyzed in the article, as well as peculiarities of the possessive relations representation in the language of the Cossacks.

3. Research Questions

The subject of study are language units representing the special world view of the Cossacks as representatives of a separate subculture, their place in the linguo-ecological situation of the region. In the system of any language, the names of an animate subject are of high importance, since a human is the center of the objective reality. However, compared with the literary language the names of a subject-possessor in the language of the Cossacks present a more extensive group, since these language means perform both nominative and evaluation functions. Connotative meaning is especially significant for the language means designating a person (in all the variations) because of the specificity of the nomination object itself, as a person's characteristics (his character, social status, etc.) cause, as a rule, emotional and evaluative attitude.

4. Purpose of the Study

The aim of the work is to define various groups within the class of names of the subject-possessor.

5. Research Methods

The given research of various groups of lexis reflecting the national cultural characteristics of the regional language is based on the methodological principles originating in understanding the language as the most important means of communication in the framework of systemic and functional approaches (Budagov, 1983; Katznelson, 1984; Solntsev, 1977). It is assumed that "the so-called linguistic picture of the world is not purely linguistic, it is a manifestation of the cognitive activity conditioned by history, geography, culture and other factors within a single objective world ..." (Kolshansky, 1990). Thus, in the

given study the following methods were used: methods of observation and description, comparative method, elements of the component analysis method, contextual analysis, linguocultural analysis.

6. Findings

The analyzed linguistic material allows defining the following groups within the class of names of the subject-possessor: 1) kinship relations; 2) social status (material characteristics); 3) quality characteristics; 4) ownership.

The first group is the most numerous. According to a number of researchers, kinship relations are included in the possessive relations (Seiler, 1983), as they represent the personal sphere of a subject (whole-part relations). The subject in this case can act both as the subject itself having objects (relatives) in its sphere, and as an object being included in the sphere of other subjects (relatives). There are several subgroups in this group. First of all, it is the designation of the subject in terms of the kinship relationship (including the terms of direct relationship): *bratan*, *bratash*, *braten'*, *bratyenya*, *bratets*, *btatka*, *bratyunya*, *bratusha*, *bratushechka*, *dvoyurodnik*, *dedanya*, *dedyunya*, *mamushka* (BEDDC, 2003). These linguistic units show that for the evaluation nomination of kinship relations one widely uses suffixes *-un-*, *-ushk-*, *-an-*, *-echk-*, *-nya-*, *-ets-*, besides, there are mainly names of males (positively colored), which really reflects the family structure of the Cossacks, where a man was in the center, especially the elder brother named by special units – *starshak*, *starshukha*, *bolshak* (BEDDC, 2003).

A large subgroup within the group of “kinship relations” consists of the names of a non-adult being – a foster child or an extramarital child: *vskormlennik*, *vospriemnik*, *priemush*, *priemysh*, *prikormlennik*; *podkidukh*, *podkrapivnik*, *podtynnik*, *podugolny*, *prigulny*, *nakotysh*, *napryadukh* (BEDDC, 2003; TP; NT). In this case in the given linguistic units, the prefixes *pod-*, *pri-* are actively used reinforcing the brightly expressed negative connotation. The semantic basis of the developed evaluative nominations of a non-adult are metaphorical figurative-idiomatic expressions that emphasize the indirect relationship of the designated subject in the sphere of the kinship relations. This may be an indication of the so-called “location of his/her finding”: *podtynnik* (found under the fence), *podkrapivnik* (found under the nettle), *podugolnik* (found over the corner); or a subject is designated describing the way of his/her appearance in the sphere of another subject: *podkidukh* – a child who was dumped, in this case, the suffix *-ukh-* also has a negative evaluation; *priemush* – a child who was accepted into the family. In this number of linguistic means the nouns with the prefix *na-* are of interest: *nakotysh* – *Nakotysha nagulyala* (BEDDC, 2003), *napryadukh* – *Nakhalenok*, *ili napryadukh*, *napryadala zhe* (BEDDC, 2003). In this case, the prefix *na-* emphasizes the effectiveness of the action: *pryala*, *pryala* and *napryala* (was spinning and has spun at last).

The next subgroup in the “kinship relationship” group is “marital relations” that specify the special status of a husband or a wife. Firstly, the nominations by action are noted in this subgroup: *brataya* is the woman who was married (this nomination applies only to females). In the given example, the “accession” into kinship is represented; the other examples record the so-called “coming out” of kinship relationships, the nomination is carried out on the basis of the action of the verb *brosit'* “to leave” – man (woman) who was left: *broshenka*, *brosachka*, *broshenets*, *brosyak* (BEDDC, 2003). In this examples, the suffixes *-ets-*, *-yak-*, *-k-*, *-en-* have the evaluative load (disapproving one). In addition to the nominations by action, in this subgroup there are nominations by the place of “living” of the designated subject: *vodvorka* is a woman

that came to live in the husband's yard (house); *vodvorok* – a man who came to live in the yard (house) of his wife (BEDDC, 2003). This type of nominations reflected a certain closeness of the Cossack's private space, as his house, farm and property played an extremely important role providing the family with all the things needed. Moreover, the situation when the husband comes to live in his wife's house can be assessed negatively, which is reflected in the semantics of the noun *priemys*h – the husband who was accepted into the house, thereby emphasizing his lack of property: *I also called him a priemys*h. *He did not like that* (BEDDC, 2003). The above mentioned micro-group also contains complex nouns that characterize the repeated nature of marital relations: *vtorozhen*, *drugozhen*, *vtoromuzhka*.

The next group of linguistic means representing a subject-possessor is the “social status” (material characteristics). The semantics of the language units included in the group directly reflects the concept of ownership. Consequently, these language units are classified into two micro-groups – humans having some property and humans having no property. The micro-group of linguistic units representing a subject-possessor as a property owner includes the nominations emphasizing a certain degree of wealth: *bogatun*, *dostatochny*, *zamozhny*, *ozolotenny*, *pripravny*, *chemezinnik* (BEDDC), for example: *Here only bogatuns used to live* (BEDDC, 2003); *Our Dad was a hetman, a zamozhny Cossack* (BEDDC, 2003); *The rich were called chemezinniks* (BEDDC, 2003). In most cases, a negative evaluation is explicated, as it may be expressed by the suffix *-un-* or the semantics of the noun itself: *chemezinnik* is derived from the name of the object *chemezin* – a wallet of a special form, a kind of a pocket for money (BEDDC, 2003); according to the dictionary by Dal (2003), *chemezinnik* is not only a rich man, but also a rich miser. The substantive noun *ozolotenny* also has a negative connotation, in this case, it is a verbal derivative from the verb *ozolotitsya* “to strike gold”. The substantive nouns *zamozhny*, *dostatochny*, *pripravny* are neutral in terms of connotation, the basis of nomination of a subject-possessor is either an action (metaphorically rethought) – *pripravlyat* – to fit, to attach, or a set of objects: *zamoga* – wealth, property.

The subgroup of names of a subject-possessor having no property is more numerous. The basis of the nominations of a subject-possessor contains appearance, internal features, metaphorical rethinking of the reality, in general, a way of living. First of all, there are several nominations of the subject motivated by the lexeme *golyi* “naked”: *golemyaka*, *golodryab*, *golutva* (BEDDC, 2003), in the first two examples the nomination is developed by appearance: *golemyaka* is the one who is poorly dressed and, accordingly, poor: *Galimyakas have got nothing* (BEDDC, 2003); *golodryab* comes from *golyi* “naked” and *dryabat* “to scratch, tear”, the means of the nomination of *golutva* is a metaphor: *golutva* – clearance, cut-through (D, 1, 348), that is, a clean, bare place.

The nomination of the subject by appearance is presented in the semantics of the noun *lokhunnik*: from *lokhun* – a rag (BEDDC, 2003), respectively, a man dressed in rags is a poor man. A clear negative connotation is characteristic of nominations that are based on such internal characteristics of a person as laziness, unemployment, which lead to poverty: *gulyapa*; for example, *There are only gulyapas in the kolkhoz, what should be expected?* (BEDDC, 2003), moreover, the similar word can be found in a book by M. Fasmer – *gulyai* “a loafer”. A subject who has neither property nor his own house, leading a dependent life, living with other people is denoted by the lexeme *bobylny*: *I remember him to be bobylny ...* (BEDDC, 2003). In Dal's dictionary (2003) there is a definition: *boby*l is a peasant who does not own the land ... because of poverty, solitude, and neglect. A special place among the nominations representing a subject

with low social position is occupied by the verbal derivative *pobirakha*, this lexeme is motivated by the verb with negative connotation *pobiratsya* “to beg” and indicates the lowest social position.

Thus, the semantics of linguistic units nominating a subject-possessor from the point of view of property relations reflects the negative attitude of the Cossacks to both poverty and excessive wealth, the state of poverty caused by the unwillingness of the subject to work is blamed most of all.

The next group of nominations of a subject-possessor presents his qualitative characteristics in terms of his attitude to the property, consequently, there are two subgroups – nomination of a subject with positive connotation: *bereginya*, *blyudki*; and nomination of a subject with negative connotation: *razmakholya*, *raspustekha*, *skryazhny*, *skupendya*, *skupitsa*, *chuzhbinnik* (BEDDC, 2003). The first group includes nominations by the action of verbs *berech* “to cherish” and *blyusti* “observe”, which represent a subject who cares about keeping various objects in his life. The nominations of the second group are more varied: by action – *raspustekha* – (a woman that spends and loses everything): *Anna is a raspustekha, does not do anything, loses everything* (BEDDC, 2003), the prefix *ras-(raz-)* shows the highest degree of the manifestation of action underlying the nomination. The nomination of a subject-possessor as a stingy person involves the internal qualities of an animated subject: *skryazhny*, *skupendya*, *skupitsa* (in this case, the negative connotation is conditioned by both the semantics and the suffixes *-end-*, *-its-*). The highest degree of stinginess is represented by the noun *razmakholya*: *Razmakholya loves himself once a year and the others never. He does not give anything* (BEDDC, 2003). The last noun of this subgroup *chuzhbinnik* characterizes a subject-possessor having something at the expense of the other people. The nomination is based on the idea of an action manner – living at the expense of strangers: *Chuzhbinnik does not want to work himself. He grudges his own things but diddles out of other's ones* (BEDDC, 2003).

The last small group of names of a subject-possessor is composed by the linguistic units that nominate a subject from the point of view of direct owning something; this group, mainly, contains the nominations by action: *volokusha* – an owner of the net, *otkupala*, *malik* – an owner of the part of river.

7. Conclusion

Thus, the names of a subject-possessor represented in the language of the Cossacks (and not represented in the Russian literary language) allow noting the relevance of such possessive characteristics as kinship relations, property relations, ownership relations, and characteristics of a subject in terms of thrift and avarice. In the analyzed groups of the subject-possessor's names various types of nominations were identified: by action, by external and internal characteristics of an animate subject; nominations based on metaphor, as well as the nominations based on material items. The analysis of the determined nominations shows that the negative assessment of the subject-possessor's identified characteristics was clearly represented in the language of the Cossacks.

The analysis of a separate fragment of the linguistic picture of the Cossacks' world allows tracing the reflection of certain social relations associated with ownership in the semantics of linguistic units. This type of relationship is largely conditioned by such traits of the Cossacks' character as thrift, governance, “stinginess”. In the future, it is advisable to analyze this kind of language units in comparison with the language units of representatives of other subcultures living in the region. It will contribute to a more complete description of the linguo-ecological situation in the Lower Volga region.

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