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## LINGUISTIC IDENTITY OF A STUDENT IN MULTICULTURAL ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY

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### *Abstract*

The article is devoted to the actual problem of the linguistic identity of a modern student in the multicultural academic environment. The study focuses on various characteristics of the linguistic identity of a student as well as on numerous factors influencing both students' personal development and their future professional activity. The detailed analysis of different levels of students language personality representation is introduced. The phenomenon of "linguistic identity" is discussed mainly on the base of the method of a language personality description based on a three-level model of a language personality by Yu. N. Karaulov. The research underlines that the linguistic identity of a modern student is highly influenced by such specific factors as age and gender, national, economic, political situation, social and ethnic environment. Special importance is given to the study of the students virtual communicative environment that is actively used by students for self-presentation, building the desired self-image and manipulating with self-impression and others' opinions.

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**Keywords:** Linguistic identity of a student, virtual linguistic identity, axiological competence, virtual communication, student jargon, slang.



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## 1. Introduction

The linguistic identity is a complex phenomenon, manifested in cognitive, psychological, communicative and axiological aspects. It includes a linguocultural component as well. Such scientific research areas as linguoculturology, ethnolinguistics, psycholinguistics, text linguistics, sociolinguistics, pragmatics, cognitive science, pragmalinguistics and other anthropocentric oriented sciences reveal the phenomenon of “linguistic identity”.

The study of such a phenomenon as a “linguistic identity” was started by the German scientist Weisgerber (2004), as well as by the prominent Soviet philologist Vinogradov (1980). This area of linguistics was actively developed in the eighties of the last century.

The basic concepts of linguistic identity are a reflection of general scientific trends. So the very concept of “linguistic identity” is a subject to constant clarification and more detailed differentiation. This differentiation is determined by both linguistic and extralinguistic factors.

## 2. Problem Statement

The language representations and language behaviour of a modern student in a certain discourse are considered to be one of the key characteristic features of a student’s linguistic personality. The linguistic consciousness of the student’s personality is manifested in the assessments of one's own and other people's speech, in reflection on the facts of the language, in relation to the language norm and its violations. The linguistic identity of a modern student in a multicultural environment of the University is under detailed analysis of various scientific research studying factors influencing its developing: both linguistic and extralinguistic.

## 3. Research Questions

### 3.1. Studies of the linguistic identity of a student

The linguistic factors influencing the language personality include the distinction of linguistic and speech identity, which is based on the distinction between language and speech. Krasnykh (2001) also distinguishes the concept of a communicative identity, which is understood as “a specific participant of a specific communicative act, actually acting in real communication” (p. 151).

Evsyukova (2016) draws the attention to the fact that the type of linguistic identity depends on the social, ethnic, economic, political and living conditions in which the process of formation of a specific linguistic personality occurs (p. 230).

According to Karaulov (1989) a linguistic identity is “a set of abilities and characteristics of a person, determining the creation and perception of speech works (texts), which differ in a) a degree of complexity; b) the depth and accuracy of the reality reflection; c) a specific target orientation ” (p. 3).

In accordance with the presented model by Kitaygorodskaya and Rozanova (2010) distinguish the parameters by which the linguistic identity is to be analyzed. These parameters include: the lexicon of a linguistic identity, i.e. vocabulary of words and phrases used by a linguistic identity; thesaurus

representing the linguistic picture of the world; pragmatics, including the system of motives, goals, communicative roles of the language identity in the process of communication.

It should be noted that the type of the linguistic identity is influenced by such factors as the national language specificity, the social, ethnic, economic, political, living conditions in which this linguistic identity, is brought up and developed, age and gender.

The linguistic identity's linguistic and cultural characteristics are often associated with a reflection of the ethnos culture a language. Despite the fact that the development of the language identity of a student is greatly influenced by the processes of globalization, by Internet, popular culture, pop and POST culture, national identity is reflected in cultural scenarios, national speech clichés, generally accepted ethnic appellatives and precedent statements.

The special status of the linguistic identity of a university student is based on a modification of communicative strategies and tactics of the speech behavior of a linguistic identity. In accordance with this, the very process of functioning of the units of the linguistic system changes, changes occur in the ratio of oral and written forms of speech, new speech genres appear.

Due to the spread of the Internet, we can speak about a virtual language identity of a modern student.

All the above stated questions seem significant in theoretical and practical ways.

#### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The main goal of this article is to define the specific manifestation of the linguistic identity of a modern student in the academic environment of the University. Research objectives in this context are:

- Investigation of the linguistic mechanisms of constructing a student language personality, namely, lexico-semantic, grammatical and stylistic means;
- Analysis of communicative strategies and tactics of the speech behaviour of a student to identify a special status of the linguistic identity of a university student is based on a modification.

Students speech is different from the speech of young people in general, so the study of the vocabulary of words and phrases characteristic of the linguistic picture of the world of youth is to be conducted.

#### **5. Research Methods**

The investigation of the linguistic identity of a modern student and factors influencing its development is based on conceptual framework of objective-system approach and has an interdisciplinary character.

To analyze the features of the linguistic identity of a young man, namely, a student, we analyzed the content of the student magazine RINHburg for 2017-2019, the authors of which are students of practically all academic fields of the Rostov State University of Economics (RINH). The work also takes into account the analysis of the peculiarities of oral and virtual communication in the youth environment. As a result of the analysis, it seems to us possible to identify a collective language portrait of a student - a functional model of a language identity.

The structural-functional method is used in order to investigate linguistic and extralinguistic factors influencing student linguistic identity.

The analytical method allows revealing mechanisms of modern students language consciousness orientation and in the same time investigate motivational structure in multicultural communicative practices.

The axiological aspect of the study highlights that the characteristic features of a linguistic identity depend on the moral and ethical values that have developed in the multicultural academic environment. It is the linguocultural community that forms the linguistic identity typical of this society.

## 6. Findings

Linguistic identity of a modern student was defined in the light of a number of scientific approaches to the phenomenon. Among them the definition of the linguistic identity by Bogin (2000): "... a person considered from the point of view of his readiness to produce speech acts, to create and receive speech messages" (p. 130). According to Krasnykh (2001) a linguistic identity, first of all, means a person as a "native speaker, taken from his ability to speech activity, i.e. the complex of psychological and physical qualities of the individual, allowing him to produce and perceive speech works - a speech identity in its essence" (p. 65). The linguistic identity is also understood as the totality of the peculiarities of the verbal behaviour of a person using the language as a means of communication - a communicative identity (Yarkoni, 2010, p. 363-373). And finally, the scientist states that a linguistic identity can be understood as "a basic national-cultural prototype of a certain language-speaker, embodied primarily in the lexical system, a kind of a semantic identity, drawn up on the basis of ideological attitudes, value priorities and behavioral responses reflected in the dictionary – a vocabulary identity, an ethnosemantic one" (Krasnykh, 2001, p. 65). The definition of a linguistic identity proposed by Neroznak and Kalinkina (2003) are also significant. They consider it to be an individual who has the ability "to create and perceive speech works or texts, differing in the degree and level of structural linguistic complexity, accuracy and depth of reflection of reality, purposefulness" (p. 228).

It should be noted that the type of the linguistic identity is influenced by such factors as the national language specificity, the social, ethnic, economic, political, living conditions in which this linguistic identity, is brought up and developed, age and gender. Germasheva (2011) states that "the linguistic identity has linguistic as well as axiological competence; it includes both mental and social components, representing their communication and, thus, identifying it with a certain cultural community" (p.57) and reflects the existing system of values.

The linguistic identity's linguistic and cultural characteristics are often associated with a reflection of the ethnos culture a language. Despite the fact that the development of the language identity of a student is greatly influenced by the processes of globalization, by Internet, popular culture, pop and POST culture, national identity is reflected in cultural scenarios, national speech clichés, generally accepted ethnic appellatives and precedent statements.

The complexity of the current situation lies in the fact that during the post-Soviet period a peculiar so-called "POST-culture" was developed, which naturally affected the features of a new language identity. Such features of the POST culture as globalization, unification, homogenization are taken for

granted absolutely in modern culture in general and in language culture in particular (Potanina, 2005). It should also be noted that the essential feature of the POST culture has become the Internet, which has an all-encompassing effect on the life of the society (Shahibi, 2017).

In the social aspect, it is possible to talk about the gender linguistic identity, reflecting the characteristics of gender speech behaviour, the choice of lexical units and other factors.

The speech behaviour of a linguistic identity is nationally-marked due to the norms of morality and ethics adopted in a particular culture, national peculiarities of the educational system that exists in a given society. In this regard, we can also consider the fact of the existence of a national language identity. It has been proved that the characteristic features of a linguistic identity depend on the moral and ethical values that have developed in the environment. It is the linguocultural community that forms the linguistic identity typical of this society.

In the linguistic communication the cardinal changes in political, ideological, economic, ethical and moral orientations led to the situation when the cultural linguistic stereotypes of the past century did not fit into the socio-cultural situation of modern Russian society. At present, an active search for new forms of communication that are adequate to the modern state of such a living organism as language is going on.

Students' speech is different from the speech of young people in general. It is believed that it is the students' speech that reflects the development of the language norms. One of the parameters is the lexicon of the linguistic identity (Pradianti, 2013).

At this stage, we analyzed the vocabulary of words and phrases characteristic of the linguistic picture of the world of youth and used by the linguistic identity of a student.

The main feature of the speech of the group described is the active use of student slang - nominations related to the educational process, living in a dormitory, and leisure: uni, to brainwash, to swot up, to boil brains, dorm, gym, to ditch college, double Chemistry, play hooky, nerd, bear, freebie, preppies, bash, tail (failed test), kursych (a course project), matan (math), klubeshnik (a night club, place for entertainment), stipukha (scholarship), an automatic "a".

Since the main function of jargon is labeling and manifestation of group affiliation, the student journal naturally contains a vocabulary that is sometimes artificially introduced into the characteristics of a linguistic identity to demonstrate its belonging to a given environment, corporate identity (Bentum, ten Bosch, van den Bosch, & Ernestus, 2019, p. 98-130). Quite a lot of student jargon is used only within a particular university. This is also characteristic of the language identity of a student at the Russian State University of Economics (RINH): Mipovtsy (students of the Faculty of Management and Entrepreneurship), Ufovtsy (students of the Accounting and Economics Faculty), grandfather of the RINH, citizens, PER-Chiki (students of linguists-translators), pen-pushers, aggie.

The linguistic identity of a student is also characterized by the use of a large number of foreign words, especially Anglicisms, which youth customary writes using the method of transliteration or transcription. For example: gou (go), bro (bro, brother), wifi (wi-fi), pliz (please), reely (really). Very often, these anglicisms are borrowed from electronic discourse: there is certain contamination of virtual and real communication, the impact of the Internet vocabulary on a standard language, for example, LOL (laughing out loud) public (public), facepalm (facepalm), IMHO (IMHO), gamer (gamer), OMG (Oh my

God). Using foreign language vocabulary for instead of existing Russian equivalents students somehow strengthen the status of the speaker in his own eyes. It is considered fashionable and prestigious. For example: badboy, major, driving, to be in the de, provider, private, secondhand.

The linguistic identity of a student at the present time, as well as in all the times of the existence of students, is characterized by a wide use of obscene, abusive words in speech, as well as common language expressions. This is the deliberate and conscious use of these units with certain pragmatic goals. The colloquial expressions like easy peasy, bash, Meeeeh, my math is suck, booze, go on the booze, tank up, hang out, squirrel away, stash, fugazy, fanfuckingtastic, chukhnya (estonia), cool, rzhach (too funny), fubar, kapets (so much for); rude words: sucker, bomzhara (a Jakey-bum, a homeless person), freak, dill, goblin, spook, breeder and other invariants of modern student communication in some cases are used automatically, unconsciously, filling pauses, or paying tribute to fashion, but more often express aggression of the speaker - the general trend of modern communication.

Due to the spread of the Internet, we can speak about a virtual language identity. Linguistic literature today presents a number of works devoted to the study of features of a virtual language identity. Studies of such researchers as Lutovinova (2009), Germasheva (2011) and etc. are devoted to the problem.

A virtual language identity becomes a specific language type of the receiver and the speaker, not similar to either a real type of a person or a fictional one, since the line between a person acting on his own person and a person creating an unreal image in virtual discourse is indefinable (Lutovinova, 2009, p. 6).

A virtual language identity presents itself in a virtual communicative environment of social networks, youth blogs, forums, chat rooms. The rules of network genres and etiquette impose certain limits on the features of speech communication on the Internet. The virtual communicative environment seems to be a convenient model of relationships with the world and people, it gives a chance to maintain your own vision of the world, direct your self-presentation, build a new image of self, controlling the impression of yourself. The Internet space does not limit the communicative freedom of the language identity. A survey conducted among students showed that virtual language identity is characterized by the use of obscene and swear words, ironic slang vocabulary (suburban, high-brow highbrow, leet, blab, bla-bla-bla, dudes, fubar, evil, devil), unceremonious use of negatively-evaluative vocabulary (chukhnia, to dodge, looser), simplified speech (drop-in, listen up, bovered (from bothered) and the use of abbreviations, (thanx (thank you), pls (please), sys (see you soon), Yolo (You Only Live Once), Mac (McDonalds), BZ (busy), not very good (not so), gentle en (surprise), heh (expression of ridicule), SSL (saloon so long).

## 7. Conclusion

It is possible to conclude that the student's linguistic identity is formed on the basis of youth slang, however, it has its own specific characteristics, exactly the use of a specific student slang, including slang of the institution and its geographical location, as well as use of network communication.

Use of obscene words, slang, ironic vocabulary, simplified speech are characteristic features of students language identity as well as of a virtual language identity of modern students.

The student environment forms and dictates its current standard. Multicultural environment is an important factor influencing speech and behaviour of a modern student.

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