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PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE IN MODERN MULTICULTURAL SPACE

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Abstract

The article considers the features of the Russian language functioning in the modern multicultural space. The specifics of the Russian language development in Russia cannot be reduced only to its linguistic aspects, and its special status in the post-Soviet space is not determined only by cultural and political factors due to the whole complex of factors relevant to the current state of the language, mainly: its fundamental nature for conservation and transfer of Russian culture, its enduring role in maintaining information and national security of both Russia and its neighboring states. For Russia, the problem of intergenerational communication is of particular relevance, because Russian society is disoriented in language as a field of meanings and styles, as well as in the axiological and ethical coordinates of the picture of the world. Any culture is characterized by a system of national values that reflects universal and individual, dominant and complementary meanings fixed in the language. Therefore, members of the linguistic and cultural community determine the preservation of the culture through their linguoecological behavior, along with other extra-linguistic factors. Thorough consideration of factors that influence the development of the Russian language in a multicultural space is strategically important in terms of ensuring the national security of Russia and its national unity. Thereby the phenomenological status of the Russian language can be defined as a complex multidimensional object requiring both state regulation and in-depth study within the linguistic paradigm, and other Humanities.

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1. Introduction

The understanding of language reality inherent in modern linguistics expands the range of issues of the scientific paradigm. One of the relevant scopes of research is the study of the language life in the context of intercultural communication and the development of the necessary conceptual and terminological apparatus (Baider, 2019; Krasnykh, 2008). In this regard, the problems of national security are also of particular importance, in the strengthening of which factors of the Humanities, including philological, play an important role (Kolin, 2006). Russian is the state language of the Russian Federation with a world status: it serves as a means of international communication among peoples of different states, is recognized as one of the six official languages of the United Nations along with English, Arabic, Chinese, French, and Spanish; important international agreements are established in it. Russian is studied in most countries, and its teachers are united by the International Association of Teachers of the Russian Language and Literature. An important indicator of the level of a person's culture is a proficient command of the national language: the ability to express the thoughts clearly and with observance of all orthoepic, lexical and grammatical norms means being well understood by all who speak this language. The rich potential of the Russian language is determined by the cultural heritage of global significance. However, the Russian language is the only one of the world languages that has lost its position in all major regions of the world over the past 15 years. This trend will continue in the next 20 years if appropriate measures are not taken to support effectively the Russian language and culture both domestically and in other countries of near and far abroad.

2. Problem Statement

The study, spreading and use of the Russian language in Russia cannot be called successful to date. Russia is losing dramatically its traditional high philological culture, which generally undermines the foundations of the entire culture of Russian society, including scientific and technological culture. The problem of the development and functioning of the Russian language in the post-Soviet space has not been fully understood yet, its relationship with the problems of ensuring the national security of the Russian Federation, including conditions of aggressive neo-globalization, has not been substantiated. The problem of the Russian language in near abroad, i.e. in the post-Soviet space, is often seen only as a political problem related to the situation of the Russian-speaking Diaspora, however, it is also necessary to take into account the fundamental importance of the Russian language for the preservation of Russian culture, as well as maintaining the information and national security of Russia.

3. Research Questions

The subject of the article is the consideration of problems and prospects of the Russian language development in the modern multicultural space from the standpoint of its status as a world language and a language of interethnic communication.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the article is to substantiate the problem of the relationship between the functioning of the Russian language as a language of interethnic communication with a world status, with the problem of Russian national and information security. Possible strategies for solving the problem complex preconditioned by the state of the modern multicultural space are proposed.

5. Research Methods

A synthesis of systemic, interpretative, and comparative approaches is applied to the material under study; the complex of methods includes analytical and hypothetical-deductive methods, as well as methods of analogy and generalization.

6. Findings

The functioning of languages in the modern multicultural space is determined by two needs typical of man – the need for identity (language acts as one of the markers of ethnicity) and the need for mutual understanding, satisfied in the process of communication. In the modern world, all nations have experienced and are experiencing the influence of other peoples in various fields – politics, culture, and other areas of public consciousness. Such influence can be carried out in various ways: as an exchange of cultural achievements, as direct interpersonal contacts in scientific and student sphere, in the business sphere through migration and tourism. The development of the world community expands the possibilities of intercultural communication and its channels that ensure the increasing sociocultural significance of the achievements of civilization for all mankind (Kolin, 2004; Patrão, 2018).

Speech etiquette, normative communicative behavior, the language itself as a whole are determined by the sociocultural context. The Russian language at the present stage of development demonstrates an increased degree of dynamism, which naturally defines the importance of rethinking the status and functions of foreign borrowings. L. A. Brusenskaya emphasizes that the specificity of such dynamism “consists not only in a certain threat to the identity of the language due to the number of borrowings, but also in the absence (against the background of borrowings) of its own creation of words” (Brusenskaya, 2012).

The role and place of the Russian language in the system of ensuring information and national security is determined by the functions that it performs in the modern world community. In Russia, it is native to 130 million people and serves as the main means of communication among people in a multi-ethnic state; it also carries out all the functions of public administration, which is fixed by its status as the state language. The Russian language is a means of preserving and transmitting to future generations the history and culture of Russia, not only Russian, but also of other peoples that are and were part of the Russian Federation and the USSR earlier. It is this function that dominates all other functions, not less important, in public consciousness. Russian is also the main language of fundamental science and the system of higher education. Of course, the research results are presented in other national languages, however, it is the Russian language that plays the leading role, which becomes more significant as the

technological effectiveness of the modern multicultural space is increasing, the use of new high-tech technologies is rising, and a new technological structure of the information society is being formed.

In near abroad countries the Russian language retains the function of the language of interethnic communication, even in the Baltic countries, where state policy regarding the Russian language is openly hostile. Russian received the status of the second state language in Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan declared it the language of official documents. After the collapse of the USSR, the number of Russian-language schools is rapidly declining, although the Russian Diaspora continues to use the national language for everyday communication. The Russian-speaking population is discriminated by the indigenous population. Support for the Russian language at the state level is provided only in Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Transnistria, while in the former Soviet republics today, about 26 million people consider Russian as their native language, and almost 60 million can speak it.

In far abroad countries, the Russian language is used on a much smaller scale than it was in the Soviet period. Due to the absence of support from Russia, the Russian Diaspora is rapidly assimilating linguistically with the local population, which by no means strengthens the position of the Russian language. The only exception is the situation in Israel, since about 30% of the population of this country is Russian-speaking (Perelmutter, 2018).

There are quite serious threats to the Russian language in modern Russia. The most radical are those researchers who claim that the Russian language has already passed the "point of no return" (Karasik, 2013). In the oral and written Russian speech over the past twenty years, the use of Americanisms, hybrid English-Russian formations ("centaurs"), and semantic calques has increased repeatedly, and this process is naturally associated with the activity of the collective language personality in the sphere of advertising, economics, domestic and professional discourses, with an increase in the volume and quantity of media texts, including the Internet space, which poses a tangible threat to the security of the Russian language in the Russian Federation. An increase in the number of borrowings and hybrid formations changes the qualitative composition of the Russian language, literary and common, but the most important is that the subconscious of the representatives of the linguistic and cultural community is transformed in this way, as components of another linguistic culture are brought into it. Today, there is a lack of political debate culture, public eloquence, in other words, all that contributed to the preservation of the historical memory of the democracies of the past, when victory was achieved by conviction. In the public sphere of modern Russian, demagogic language practices and manipulations are often triumphant.

The general level of speech culture and literacy of the population is decreasing (Kolyaseva, 2018; Pekelis, 2018); Russian language native speakers continue to saturate its lexical composition with jargon, which entails blurring the boundaries of functional styles, that questions the normativity of communicative situations and their models that are significant for Russian linguistic culture. The other side of the jargon implication is the displacement of the native Russian literary vocabulary, which, ultimately, leads not only to the change in the angle of perception of ethical representations of the nation, but also to their deconstruction. Archaization, affecting the fundamental linguistic and cultural concepts, leads to a change in their significance, and sometimes to the periphery of the linguistic picture of the world. We emphasize in this connection that it is considered primarily ethical ideas that should not be subjected to time, should not be outdated. The connection of generations is carried out through language,

which provides its orientation function in the field of meanings and styles. This problem area also seems relevant, because Russian society and nation, together with linguistic guidelines, are losing moral values. This state of affairs poses a threat to the national security of the country, which can no longer be ignored. One of the most urgent and strategically important national security problems of modern Russia is the problem of ensuring its national unity as the most important condition for opposing the aggressive policies of modern neo-globalism aimed at destroying sovereign nation states, the very existence of which is today the main obstacle to uncontrolled access of Western countries to national resources of other independent states. In this regard, the motivational criterion for analyzing discourse is brought to the forefront in the linguistic scientific paradigm, which allows studying the discourse as a linguosemiotic and information space into which the speaker transports concepts and images for the purpose of communicative influence (Olyanich, 2007), which undoubtedly makes it possible to identify relevant trends in the development of the Russian language at the present stage.

The problem of philological culture and philological education in Russia is also topical. According to authoritative experts (Belkanov, 2007), the system of classical philological education that existed in Russia earlier, is completely destroyed today, and it will require much time to restore it. In modern conditions, it is educational institutions that perform the function of ethnocultural consolidation of society and ensure its sustainability. Promising and effective approaches to teaching have been identified that contribute to the formation of intercultural dialogue skills in the educational process: the creation and implementation of integrated courses in the educational process taking into account the ethnocultural component; development of copyright innovative programs that take into account state (all-Russian), national-regional and local specifics; development and educational implementation of specialized courses for the study of the ethnocultural heritage of the Russian peoples. To date, the following tendency has also been identified: the problem for the North Caucasian peoples is not Russification, but insufficient knowledge of the Russian language. On the other hand, knowledge of certain ethnocultural constants which create a precedent background for full communication in the learning process, mainly: customs, national cuisine, etiquette, works of national literature, etc., is as well of great importance for establishing contact and empathy between the teacher and students.

The existence of a linguistic personality in the cultural space naturally relies on the knowledge of the national language, as well as on the functioning of forms of social consciousness at the scientific, common and other levels, on behavioral stereotypes and norms (Carlucci, 2018; Sierra, 2019). National values, presenting a system, are the defining characteristic of any culture. In this system, universal and individual, dominant and additional meanings are distinguished. Such meanings are fixed in the language: in the semantics of lexemes, in the units of syntax, in phraseological units, in the paremiological stock and in precedent texts. Therefore, there is no doubt that the linguoecological behavior of members of the linguistic and cultural community as a whole determines, along with other extralinguistic factors, the preservation of a particular culture.

Of course, these processes reveal destructive trends that are dangerous for the spiritual culture and intellectual potential of the country. Imbalance in the environmental sphere of the language may be the result of neglecting the pragmatics of the lexical composition and syntactic units. The Russian language at present stage is characterized by an active change in stylistic and communicative registers for entire

layers of vocabulary: for example, those lexical units that were previously on the language periphery are used frequently. The pragmatics of the Russian language also reflects the opposite process: lexemes and their combinations, which once formed the ideological core of Russian linguistic culture, are losing gradually their significance and frequency of usage. It can be stated with all responsibility that the recent twenty years has been characterized not so much by a change in the language itself (although quantitatively lexical borrowings are very noticeable), as by a transformation of the strategies of communicative behavior of representatives of the linguocultural community.

7. Conclusion

The attempt to reduce the problem of the Russian language in Russia to its linguistic aspects and, in the post-Soviet space – only to cultural and political phenomena, seems to be erroneous. In the modern multicultural space, the Russian language receives quite obvious threats, which are manifested, first of all, in the displacement of the Russian language from all spheres of public life.

The analysis of the phenomenological status of the Russian language in the modern multicultural space, as well as from the standpoint of ensuring the national security of Russia and the Eurasian states surrounding it, allows drawing the following main conclusions:

- the problem of preserving and using the Russian language in public life, science, education and culture of Russia and other neighboring countries is currently extremely urgent, because it is directly related to ensuring their information security;
- real serious threats to the Russian language exist both in Russia itself and in near and far abroad. So, in the states that gained independence after the collapse of the USSR, the Russian-speaking communicative space is shrinking, an entire generation has grown up without knowing the Russian language and Russian culture, history, without the opportunity to get acquainted with scientific and technical achievements due to its Russian conveyance, which in the near future may become a serious barrier to the cooperation of neighboring countries with Russia;
- preservation of the Russian language and Russian-language education in the post-Soviet space becomes a determining condition for the restoration of the national unity of Russia, which at present is a divided nation. This requires a focused and consistent state policy, the importance of which is determined by the requirement of national security of the country.

If the current trends are not reversed, after a quarter of a century the Russian language will lose its status as a world language, since there will be a sharp decrease in the number of its speakers. Therefore, it seems necessary to take urgent measures to change the situation with the study of the Russian language and literature in Russian comprehensive schools, as well as the attitude to the philological education that exists in modern Russia in order to prevent the linguistic and spiritual degradation of Russian society. To solve the important task of strengthening the position of the Russian language, significant resource of support is required, as well as effective interaction between state and public departments and organizations designed to support, develop and promote the Russian language and culture.

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