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LINGUISTIC GENOCIDE AS ELEMENT OF DESTRUCTIVE LANGUAGE POLICY IN MODERN LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY

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Abstract

In the context of global geopolitical transformations in recent decades, there has been a sharp escalation of the situation related to the infringement of the language rights of national minorities, which is primarily relevant to the Russian-speaking population living on the territory of the former Soviet republics. Thus, the phenomenon of “linguistic genocide”, defined as a set of administrative, political and economic measures aimed at the language eradication in the regions of its original proliferation, has become widespread. In addition, linguistic genocide can be characterized as a clear restriction and infringement of the right of a national minority to freedom of expression, education and religious practice in their mother tongue. The formation of a true national idea of the state can serve as the main criterion and marker of the system of value coordinates, such as emphasis on the formation and consolidation of cultural and linguistic identity, respect for foreign cultural traditions, correct and adequate perception of the citizen as part of society and the state in the system of global socio-cultural relations. Limitation of minority rights to use their mother tongue is reflected on language functions. Decrease in the use of the mother tongue by the younger generation impacts the cumulative function. Ethnic function of the language suffers from the negative administrative and political influence.

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1. Introduction

Recently significant shifts have been taking place in the global geopolitical and socio-economic spheres and have been leading to large changes in the minds of representatives of different national and religious groups. As a result, there arise certain strict rules that regulate the presence of an individual in society; historically formed value guidelines and ethical norms are violated, since the functioning of an individual occurs in isolation from society.

This situation clearly reflects the current matter in the context of the so-called Russian world. It should be noted that the tendency to infringe on the rights and freedoms of the Russian-speaking population living in the territories of the former Soviet republics, in particular, Ukraine, Georgia and the Baltic States is taking a disastrous turn. The loss of the regional status of the Russian language occurred, among other reasons, due to the weak foreign policy position of the leadership of Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The desire for self-identity, a false idea of statehood, and attempts to rewrite history rapidly devalue the historical achievements of Russian great people, thereby undermining the system of moral values of the younger generation.

2. Problem Statement

In our opinion, the formation of a true national idea of the state can serve as the main criterion and marker of the system of value coordinates, such as emphasis on the formation and consolidation of cultural and linguistic identity, respect for foreign cultural traditions, correct and adequate perception of the citizen as part of society and the state in the system of global socio-cultural relations.

The cornerstone of a destructive language policy is the widespread use of extremist negative rhetoric and propaganda directed against a particular ethnic group based on language. This segregation is largely due to social orientation and legislative support.

And another important aspect in this context is the reduction or complete loss of the cumulative function by the Russian language; the language as a means of storing cultural and historical information is priceless, and the loss of its right to possess such a function would mean the loss of its other functions, which will eventually lead to its natural extinction in the territories where it was previously used as a rudiment.

3. Research Questions

3.1. To define the concept of ‘hate speech’

There are a lot of examples of ‘hate speech’ in mass media. It is widely used as a means to manipulate the society’s opinion and often leads to a destructive public response aimed at destabilizing the situation.

3.2. to investigate the relationship between the modern language policy of the former Soviet States in relation to the Russian language and the segregation of the Russian-speaking population on the basis of language.

There are a lot of examples of infringement of the rights and freedoms of the Russian-speaking population on the territory of the former Soviet republics that leads directly to segregation on the basis of language. It should also be noted that the destructive language policy of the neighboring countries is aimed at restricting the freedom of expression of national minorities.

3.3. to prove the influence of destructive language policy on the escalation of tension on national, cultural, religious and linguistic grounds.

The destructive language policy is one of the most powerful factors in the escalation of tension in the world. The ban on communication in the mother tongue is an act of infringement of the rights of the foreign-speaking part of the population, suppression of the rights of citizens to conduct religious ceremonies in the mother tongue, as a result of which this ban is a real linguocide.

4. Purpose of the Study

The authors observe the instability of socio-political concepts, the lack of an unambiguous and structured economic model, social and value deviations of public consciousness. All these facts are the reason for the emergence of interethnic, ethno-confessional, and intercultural hostility, leading to the emergence of protest movements and even local armed conflicts. Nowadays, in the context of ethnic linguistic conflictology, one of the most significant issues is spreading of the phenomenon of linguistic genocide, one of the characteristic features of which can be considered the widespread use of ‘hate speech’ and ‘rhetoric of anger’ in the media, social networks, as well as at state and legislative level.

5. Research Methods

The theoretical and empirical research methods served as the basis of the investigation:

5.1. Analysis

The authors analyse the problems of the so-called Russian world within the framework of the notion “linguistic genocide”. It is underlined that the tendency to infringe on the rights and freedoms of the Russian-speaking population living in the territories of the former Soviet republics, in particular, Ukraine, Georgia and the Baltic States is taking a disastrous turn. The loss of the regional status of the Russian language occurred, among other reasons, due to the weak foreign policy position of the leadership of Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The desire for self-identity, a false idea of statehood, and attempts to rewrite history rapidly devalue the historical achievements of Russian great people, thereby undermining the system of moral values of the younger generation.

5.2. Observation

The authors consider the current situation related to the infringement of the language rights of national minorities, which is primarily relevant to the Russian-speaking population living on the territory

of the former Soviet republics. They also reveal the phenomenon of “linguistic genocide”, defined as a set of administrative, political and economic measures aimed at the language eradication in the regions of its original proliferation. In addition, the authors characterize linguistic genocide as a clear restriction and infringement of the right of a national minority to freedom of expression, education and religious practice in their mother tongue.

5.3. Comparison

The authors review the policy of linguistic genocide in the modern society and compare it with that in the previous century, based on the works by Rudnitskyj (1987) who identifies several interesting examples that are directly related to the modern language situation on the territory of some former Soviet republics. The authors also emphasize his thesis that language minorities shouldn't be discriminated against, but, on the contrary, should be supported at the state level.

6. Findings

The concept of ‘hate speech’ contains a set of language tools and syntactic techniques that offend people (or society as a whole) on racial, ethnic, gender, religious grounds, as well as health and sexual orientation (Kudinova et al., 2018). Language tools that are inherent in ‘hate speech’ are not a standard recognized vocabulary, they are defined as invective and are prohibited, both at the domestic and state level. However, examples of their widespread use are becoming more and more numerous. The intensive use of ‘hate speech’ in the media and in social networks, even if there is no direct call for actions of an extremist or other illegal nature, produces the effect of a “bomb gone off”. The younger generation is particularly at risk, since it is among young people that ideas and trends of an extremist nature are born and develop most productively, since socio-economic instability and lack of personality formation construct the features of their thinking (Privalova, 2005). Immature young minds easily perceive information that is negatively colored and contradicting historical truth, but is correctly presented by political strategists. Meanwhile, the result of “stringing” distorted information on the thread of propaganda is segregation on the basis of language, which in our opinion can be interpreted as a linguistic genocide.

At the same time, there is a collapse of the system of value orientations and a delay in the formation of new ones. It should be noted that all destructive processes of this kind receive legal assistance, supported by the legislative framework that forms the policy in the field of language and culture.

In this case it is necessary to state the difference between two terms that are often mixed up: “multilingualism” and plurilingualism”. Béatrice Boufoy-Bastick defines these lingual phenomena in the following way:

the main distinction is that “multilingual” could be applied to nations where several languages are spoken and an individual may be mono- or plurilingual. ... Multilingualism engages social justice by recognizing the language rights of each community attesting to the acceptance of minority groups within a nation state. (as cited in Rudnycky, 1987, p. 477)

Consequently, it is precisely in connection with large-scale changes that the phenomenon of “linguistic genocide” is becoming more pronounced. This phenomenon is characterized by the following definition: “a set of administrative, political, and economic measures aimed at eradicating the language, usually in the regions of its original spreading”. It should be noted that the author of the term “linguistic genocide” (“linguocide”) is considered a linguist Rudnyckyj (1987), who first used this term in 1967 (Boufoy-Bastick, 2020). Linguocide takes place when speakers of other language systems are not physically exterminated, as in the case of genocide, but are subject to a specific language doctrine, the centre of which is forced language assimilation. In his works, Rudnyckyj (1987) identifies several interesting examples that are directly related to the modern language situation on the territory of some former Soviet republics. According to the researcher, the threat of turning a bilingual society into a monolingual one with a dominant language of communication will be inevitable throughout the development of the society. For this reason, it is necessary to protect the language rights of the group “at the expense of the favourable attitude of the whole community, creating favourable conditions for the localization of language resources”, i.e., to support the language as means of communication within this society (as cited in Boufoy-Bastick, 2020).

Speaking of the second language learning and bilingual society, some scholars emphasize that it is of particular interest that perceptual effects are modulated by the factors related to language dominance, including language proficiency, language history, attitudes and use of the first and second languages (Boufoy-Bastick, 2020).

It should be highlighted that Rudnyckyj (1987) defines the right to communicate in the mother tongue as a component of basic human rights. Hence it should be stressed that in the research carried out by Pérez Cantador (2020) “An Approach to Studying the Sociolinguistic Integration of Romanian Immigrants Residing in the Community of Madrid”, the author justly makes a point of the sociolinguistic integration process of the Romanian immigrant population residing in Madrid. The analysis of the interviews with the Romanian immigrants evidences that in general they have a good attitude towards the speech of Madrid and, in general, seem highly predisposed to integrating into their host community. Speaking about social integration and sociolinguistics, the author defines sociolinguistics as a bi-directional process that affects both the migrant population and the host community. Thus, it can be assumed that the rights of migrants to speak their native language are not infringed (Boufoy-Bastick, 2020).

Rudnyckyj (1987) believes that any support from a part of society or the government of one language at the expense of another is a linguocide. In addition, the availability or absence of such support depends on the level of development of democracy. Special attention should be paid to his thesis that language minorities should under no circumstances be discriminated against, but, on the contrary, be supported at the state level (Boufoy-Bastick, 2020). The above aspects are puzzling in the light of recent events taking place on the territory of Ukraine: Ukrainian nationalist Y.B. Rudnyckyj, who lived in immigration in Canada, tried to bring charges against the Soviet government, and now all that is successfully carried out by his ideological associates in Ukraine. The policy of linguistic genocide is expressed in the general rejection of language as a separate linguistic concept; denial of the right of national minorities to communicate through their mother tongue; prohibition of the use of their mother

tongue if it is not recognized as the state language; outright or indirect humiliation of representatives of national minorities who practice speaking the language of their parents (Reznikova & Kalashnikova, 2016). Considering these factors as existing realities, it is possible to give a specific interpretation of the phenomenon of language genocide. We believe that language genocide is an open discrimination of a national minority against the use of their mother tongue as a right to freedom of expression, education, and religious observance in the language of their people. It should be noted that in connection with the spread of the language genocide phenomenon, it was the representatives of the Russian-speaking population who live on the territory of other states who experienced very great discomfort.

As it is known, linguicide is the result of long-term exposure to destructive forces that contribute to the development and spread of such phenomena as russophobia and rejection of the “Russian cultural tradition”. The crisis of the population's spirituality is the basis for the emergence of nationalist ideas, which are supported by quasi-scientific and pseudo-historical concepts, religious dogmas and extremist philosophy. This, in the end, has led to a large increase in the number of extremist and nationalist groups that hide behind the “national idea” (Patyukova & Kudinova, 2017). The events in Ukraine can serve as a clear example of propaganda of destructive ethno-language policy in the context of this socio-political phenomenon.

A huge number of humiliating nicknames were created for citizens of the Russian Federation, by radical Ukrainian nationalists. The use of words and expressions of this kind, with a pronounced pejorative coloring and provocative orientation, usually further aggravates a certain bitterness in relations between countries. The introduction of lexical models of an invective nature in educational programs and, as a result, in the minds of the younger generation, is even more dangerous. Such excessive influence on the immature consciousness of young people cannot be justified by any national idea and contributes to the cultivation of nationalism, in particular russophobia, in its most unattractive aspect, cultivates rejection of dissent, foreign culture, and generates the idea of the superiority as well as dominance of one race or nation over another (Slavko, 2018). In accordance with the European Charter of regional languages, Russian retains the status of a regional language in places where it is considered to be the native language of at least 10% of the population. Therefore, in 13 of the 24 regions of Ukraine, the Russian language could get the status of a regional language. However, in absolute violation of the European Charter of regional languages, the Verkhovna Rada registered a bill on the mandatory use of the Ukrainian language in all spheres of state and public life, as well as in the media. In Ukraine, administrative and criminal liability is provided for violations of language legislation. Attempts to introduce official multilingualism in Ukraine can be equated with attempts to forcibly overthrow the state system (Article 109 of the criminal code of Ukraine), and public expression of disrespect for the Ukrainian language can be regarded as an outrage on the state symbols of Ukraine (Article 338 of the criminal code of Ukraine) (Reznikova et al., 2019). Ukraine has shown the official introduction of linguistic genocide as a norm of state reference, i.e. on September 5, 2017, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine adopted the law on education, on the basis of which it can be said that there will be a de facto ban on teaching in any language other than Ukrainian. Thus, this situation is unacceptable both for Russian-speaking citizens and for representatives of other national minorities. There is no doubt that the above-mentioned political decisions are groundless. The ban on communication in the mother tongue is an act of

infringement of the rights of the foreign-speaking part of the population, suppression of the rights of citizens to conduct religious ceremonies in the mother tongue, as a result of which this ban is a real linguocide. In addition, in the context of the language policy of linguistic genocide and the uncontrolled use of 'hate speech', there is another global problem that is the promotion of extremism in the media, as well as in social networks, attracting people to recruit into the ranks of various extremist organizations. Such propaganda has become increasingly widespread as a result of years of ill-advised youth policy: the lack of necessary funding has cancelled the previous achievements of the Soviet Union related to youth policy. As a result, youth organizations and public associations that were to direct the minds of young people in the right direction have stopped working. Pioneer and Komsomol organizations were literally replaced by extremist nationalist groups. Such organizations have reinforced many ideas of an extremist nature in the public consciousness as something acceptable and, moreover, the only correct one (Kulyk, 2013, 2017). As noted above, one of the most significant reasons for such a large-scale spread of extremist sentiments in society, contributing to the strengthening of positions of destructive language policy, resulting in linguocide, is the active dissemination and rooting of an incorrectly formed idea of national identity, which is based on the superiority of one nation and its language and culture over others. These social, inter-ethnic, and religious conflicts are supported by nationalist ideas and reproduced by the mass media; they contribute to the emergence of military actions, inter-ethnic revolutions and other illegal actions, which are based on a single goal — the violent change of the current regime. At the same time, extremism as a phenomenon, in a broad sense, reflects a different interpretation and can penetrate the minds of the public in terms of the foundations of national identity, religious, cultural, and linguistic traditions, as well as inciting ethnic strife. In this case, the 'hate speech' and the promotion of the linguocide's language policy act as the driving force behind this destructive process. There are historical examples of a destructive educational model based on nationalistic ideas about racial, cultural, and linguistic superiority, as well as the results of such social experiences. The Baltic States, Ukraine, Georgia, and other former republics of the USSR do not accept the historical truth and destroy their statehood with an imaginary national idea of the need to abandon the use of regional languages as part of the cultural identity of the peoples living on the territory of the state. This policy distributing linguistic genocide is in itself destructive and inefficient for the state but there is even a state project of funding nationalistic language idea with the help of different state and non-state funds support (Hutton, 2020). Russian-speaking population should not be neglected in the above-mentioned States. We believe that the Russian language should be given the status of a regional language, if not a state language, since a third of the population of the countries speak Russian at a high level and consider themselves Russian-speaking. The main task in building and developing an authoritative, socially developed state that claims to be a democratic state in this situation should be the tendency to form a multipolar world, to cultivate certain conditions for assimilation of cultural customs of societies representing other cultures, to cultivate liberality and humanism, as well as the eradication of ethnic and religious conflicts that have already arisen. The focus on common sense in the implementation of intercultural communication, respect, and tolerance for all manifestations of the characteristics of carriers of a different cultural tradition should become one of the main components in this issue.

7. Conclusion

The carried out analyses of the problem discussed allows us to draw the following conclusions:

1. The establishment of friendly and partnership relations among states should be facilitated by the introduction of a strict ban on the use of 'hate speech' not only at the state level, but also at the interstate level.
2. It is necessary to defend the interests of Russian-speaking citizens in other States in matters of non-compliance with their linguistic rights not only in the domestic legal field, but also at the global level to provide legal support with the involvement of international experts in this field (Patyukova & Kudinova, 2017).
3. We need to strive to basis of a multidimensional world order, the creation of conditions for assimilation of culture and values that exist regardless of geographical location, tolerance, and humanism.

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