

Mother Tongue and Its Territorial Expansion

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Abstract—The problems considered are mother tongue and the creation of its area of use. The idea is developed of the fundamental and exclusive role of the mother tongue as a language of expressing the process of thinking in the frame of outer and inner speech. The traditional division of the system of language into the three subsystems (phonemic, lexemic, grammatic) is supplemented with the fourth, namely, the stylistic subsystem. The mother tongue is presented as the actual factor of creating the personality. This destination of the mother tongue puts a special responsibility on society and state. In this connection, the mentality part of the mother tongue becomes especially important, together with the system of assessing cultural nominations called by the author “menemes”. The problem considered separately is on preserving Russian as the international language in the CIS.

Keywords—mother tongue; forming language area; personality; centered area; non-centered area; lexical paradigm of nomination; cultureme; meneme; subsystem; phraseme; phraseome; mentality

I. INTRODUCTION

Mother tongue is the primary and absolutely essential attribute of a personality, and is the personality’s inalienable and principal organ. Through the mediation of this organ constituting the fundamental component part of all the living activity of a human being the formation of a personality is accomplished. And the organ is developed together with the development of a personality while the process of thinking and communicating is going on. The crucial destination of language as an organ of a personality is pointed out by the wonderful nomination “natural speaker of language” [1].

II. MOTHER TONGUE AND CONSCIOUSNESS

By means of mother tongue, the speech-thinking process is realized in the most complete and profound way [3]. It is mother tongue that can rightly be comprehended as the natural language of consciousness. We should fully realize that when people use language as a means of forming ideas and communicating ideas, what they think about in their hearts is nothing more than their mother tongue.

III. CORTEMES AND SIGNEMES AS TYPES OF THE ELEMENTS OF LANGUAGE

Language is formed as the mental system of elements falling into the two types. The elements of the first type are purely material, and they have no semantic meaning. Being

devoid of semantics, their function consists in forming and distinguishing the elements that do express semantics as such. Non-semantic elements include sounds-phonemes (building material for morphemes), sounds-syllables (building material for words), poetical feet (building material for verses). The elements of the second type are characterized as double natured. Their body is material, but it contains semantic meaning. Don’t we see this relation similar to that between the human being’s body (physical matter) and soul (spiritual content)? These elements are words, word-groups (phrases), logical stresses, notional rises and falls of tone.

The elements of the first type are understood as “one-sided”, they are considered to be “non-signs”, while the elements of the second type are understood as “two-sided,” they are considered to be “signs”. The author has called the elements of the first type “cortemes” (deriving the term from the Latin cortex, corticis - the cover, bark), and the elements of the second type, respectively, “signemes” (deriving, naturally, the term from the Latin signum, signis - sign).

IV. LANGUAGE AS A SYSTEM OF SIGN-FORMING ELEMENTS

The effected reorganization of terminology has been dictated by the fundamental change of interpreting the idea of the sign. Up to the present, the sign has been presented as a two-sided entity distinguishing the plane of expression (the surface plane) and the plane of content (the deep plane). Analyzing this idea, the author has found that it wants fundamental correction. Namely, as different from meaningful elements of language that are actually two-sided, the sign is definitely three-sided. It follows from the fact that genuine signs are speech-formed, i.e. they are generated by meaningful (two-sided) elements of language. Let us show this on the example of the traffic lights. Taking the sign of Red, we note that the element of language “the red” is two-sided, and the word means the color. Whereas the meaning of the sign “Stop!” makes the third side (or the third plane).

The accomplished consideration persuades us that the formula “Language is a system of signs” should be changed into the formula “Language is a system of sign-forming elements”. The term chosen for these elements is the “signeme”.

V. THE SPECIAL ROLE OF PHONEME IN MOTHER TONGUE

Thus, cortemes, and first of all phonemes, are deprived of a semantic content. Still, phonemes and other cortemes of mother tongue perform a radically important function that can be called “moral affinity” with the personality of a natural speaker of language. Mother tongue displays an organic connection with a personality beginning with its phonetic make-up. All the phonetic appearance of language tells the personality of their inseparable unity. This unity can never be broken by any alien intrusion, any strange phone or tone. It is this phonetic appearance that makes the sacred heartstrings sound, giving a musical response to a musical phonologic call. As to the force that drives the music-in-question, paradoxical as it may seem, it is no other thing than the semantic content of the respective nominations. For example, the word “liar”, sounding unpleasant, will compare with the word “lover” as sounding pleasant in spite of phonetic similarity; likewise, the word “perish”, sounding unpleasant, will compare with the word “cherish” as sounding pleasant in spite of phonetic similarity, etc.

VI. THE THREE SUBSYSTEMS OF LANGUAGE: PHONETIC, LEXEMIC, GRAMMATIC

The system of language falls into the four main subsystems or “sides” (side – term of all trades!).

The first is the phonetic side. The second is the lexemic side. The third is the grammatic side. The fourth is the stylistic side. All the four sides are connected by a special relation with the personality of a natural speaker of language. We have just talked about the connection of the phonetic subsystem with a personality. The lexemic subsystem (lexis, or vocabulary, or word stock, e.a.) includes nominations of all objects and their properties identified by consciousness. Besides, words proper stable phrases belong to this subsystem forming its periphery (I have chosen the term “phraseome” to mean a “stable phrase”).

Notional lexemes form the lexemic paradigm of nomination consisting of four key forms built up on one common root or suppletive roots [2]. The content order of the forms is the following: object — process — property — property of property.

The part of speech order of the forms (English) is the following: noun — verb — adjective — adverb.

Phraseomes as a rule do not distinguish the lexemic paradigm of nomination. Compare: a fly in the ointment; never say never; solar system; Paradise on earth; in good time; tastes differ...

The very list of nominations in the idiolect of some personality is colored by that personality’s ideology and worldview, and through the personality some trays of the personality’s interpretations can penetrate into the consciousness of the collective body where the personality belongs, and through the collective body in the consciousness of a people – a tribe, a nationality, a nation. For example, the names of snow and ice for people living in

the North are not the same as for people living in the South; likewise, for different nationalities both in the North and in the South, these names are not at all the same. Behind the names, there is their content which is expressed by a certain text understood as topically identified speech. And speech is formed by the grammatic subsystem [5].

Consequently, grammar functions are the structural regulator of the semantic content of words as well as names of things and their properties. That is why comparing lexis as the set of nominations of things and their properties and grammar as the set of means of expressing ideas from nominations of things and their properties, the author jokes that lexis nominates and grammar thinks. Grammar holds that a word in its true sense is assisted by its mother tongue, not by any foreign language, however, this role is important in general culture, profession, or any other text application.

Thus, we have shown the functional essence of the three sides of language in general, as well as the three sides of mother tongue in particular. These sides, i.e. subsystems, are the divisions that modern linguistics identifies traditionally [6].

VII. THE FOURTH SUBSYSTEM OF LANGUAGE: STYLISTIC

The author will add a fourth side to these three that is the stylistic subsystem; this side is not less important than the first three. This is motivated by comprehending the notions of speech and text (the latter being the topically identified speech) as the final result of a purposeful action of language: language is activated for expressing ideas, and the ideas are rendered by speech. And speech is of necessity prepared stylistically to attain the corresponding impressive force, i.e. to answer duly what it is produced for, whom it is produced for, in what kind of situation it is produced.

Compare: *Mr. Smith hasn’t changed his disapproval of the project.* – *Mr. Smith remained a stubborn brute in his rejection of the project.*

Mary surprised us all with her practical jokes. – *Mary? Her practical Jokes? That ordinary, modest girl – and where are her manners?*

Tell him I can’t receive him today. Ask him to wait till the end of the week. – *Let him go to hell. I’m busy today. And tomorrow too. And the day after tomorrow as well. If this impostor really wants my consultation he should wait till the end of the week, etc.*

As is seen from the examples, stylistic preparation of speech continues its grammatical preparation. The stylistic subsystem of language makes the uppermost level of the grammatical subsystem. And it seems self-evident that it is in the stylistic subsystem, responsible for the impressive force of speech, that the foundation is concentrated of the national identity of Mother Tongue.

VIII. THE THESIS OF THE NATURAL BILINGUALISM OF A NATION

Turning attention to the stylistic subsystem makes it obligatory for us to consider the problem of the two major

varieties of national language. These varieties are radically opposed to each other as to their immediate communicative purposes. The first variety is common language as such used in different types of real communication (daily life communication, professional communication, public speech communication, e.a.). The second variety is the language of artistic literary speech, and the speech is called the French word *belles lettres* in broader sense. This variety of language is not used in genuine communication, and its purpose is to embody creating artistic imaginative speech meant for recitation or silent reading by users of literary works. I gave the first variety of language the name “vital language”, and gave the second variety of language the name “imaginative language”. The phenomenon of the division of a national language into the shown two varieties is called “the natural bilingualism of a nation”. This bilingualism is especially important to distinguish in connection with various problems of mother tongue (such as the problem of intercultural communication, the problem of genre and style division of language, e.a.). Both varieties of mother tongue, the vital and the imaginative, exist in the constant state of interaction that results in enhancing the progressive historical development of the integral national language.

IX. THE CONNECTION OF LANGUAGE WITH CULTURE

Mother tongue is connected with culture by most transparent ties. The culture of society is taken here in the meaning of integral intellectual activity together with the results of this activity. Especially important sphere of culture relevant to our problems is humanitarian part of culture together with its aesthetic division referring to the broad field of literature. It is the humanitarian aspect of culture that is meant by “intercultural communication.” [4]

Dialectics of the connection of language with culture, as well as its connection with a personality, consists in the fact that, being the key part of culture, language is at the same time the leading instrument of the existence and development of culture. Indeed, the essential volume of the composition of culture consists in the innumerable texts, and language serves as the instrument of their creation. Fundamental cultural notions are born in cultural texts. These notions have received the name “Culturemes”. The cultureme is a term presenting a name of a cultural phenomenon-object, person, event, anything worthy of noting as a fact of culture. For example, the following nominations belong to the set of typical Russian culturemes: Time of Troubles, Reformation (Perestroika), katusha (multi-rocket moving military machine), felt boots, Michurin’s follower, Star City, vergin soil, bolshevik, holy father, etc. Each of these and similar culturemes deserve a separate scholarly investigation – philosophical, sociological, historical, linguistic. A special type of culturemes contains an assessment of the nominated object. In other words, they present the mentality of a human being. The author has given the name “meneme” to these culturemes deriving it from the nomination of a graphical image popular in internet texts. The assessing content of meneme changes from one personality to another one, from one historical time to another. This semantic quality makes the whole subclass of

menemes extremely important in the intercultural communication. In the list of culturemes presented above, to typical menemes belong Time of Troubles, reformation, bolshevik, holy father.

X. TERRITORY AND A LANGUAGE TERMINOLOGY

Now let us turn our attention to the second problem of our topic, that is, to territorial expansion of language. Of all the multitude of aspects of the vexed subject – social, political, moral, even psychological, we have chosen the cultural aspect as touching upon the immediate structure of language as such.

To begin with, it would be reasonable to consider the terminological part of the question that will give us cause to escape trivial misunderstandings.

The main terms pointing to the geographical position of language and its orientation about its users, is “territory” and “area”. The drawback of both terms is that they lack the mention of language, i.e. the immediate subject whose position they describe. To cope with this drawback, I will venture to suggest adding the suffix “-ium” used to indicate the setting or the territory (as in auditorium, natatorium sanatorium); the effected renaming will be the explanatory term “linguatorium”.

Our next step will be to introduce several definitions whose content will point out the whole message of the work.

- Definition: Linguatorium – the territory on which the language is functioning.
- Definition: Linguatorium monolingual – the territory on which one language is functioning.
- Definition: Linguatorium polylingual – the territory on which two or more languages are functioning.
- Definition: Linguatorium centralized – Linguatorium polylingual in which one language is central (principal) and the others peripheral.
- Definition: Linguatorium non-centralized – Linguatorium polylingual in which languages are equal in rank, i.e. in which there is no central language.
- Definition: Territorial expansion of language – The spread of language beyond its original borders.

XI. RUSSIAN AS AN EXAMPLE OF LANGUAGE TERRITORIAL EXPANSION

It is worthwhile to turn to the Russian language as an example of a language historically increasing its territory of use and further on diminishing its territory due to political and social events.

Territorial expansion of the Russian language among the wide spaces of the Russian State began since the foundation of this state. The spread of Russian towards the East was enhanced by the superiority of Russian culture over the culture of aboriginal peoples inhabiting Siberia and the Far

East. As other countries become vassal states to Russia's metropolises, these things are less peaceful in the linguistic realm. Anyhow, Russia became a multinational state of vast proportions both in quantity and in quality. And it remained the same after the Great October Socialist Revolution.

XII. THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE USSR AND ITS CONSEQUENCES TO THE POSITION OF RUSSIAN IN CIS

The disintegration of the USSR led to the narrowing of the lingualarea of Russian in the sphere of the CIS. Still the practical use of Russian has survived in the majority of the states of the CIS being imbedded in the consciousness of the people and supported by the cultural, political and economic ties. The task is posed before Russia not to lose, but to strengthen the outer lingualarea of the Russian language.

XIII. THE PROBLEMS OF PRESERVING RUSSIAN AS THE LOCAL COMMON LANGUAGE FOR CIS

Those specializing in theory and practice of language should distinctly differentiate the levels of mastering the expanding language (here – Russian) according to the corresponding aims. The gradation of levels can be presented in terms of stages that are distinguished as follows:

First stage: presenting Russian as a foreign language understood in writing;

Second stage: presenting Russian as a foreign language spoken and written;

Third stage: presenting Russian as a foreign language embodied in the two natural varieties, namely the vital variety and the imaginative variety;

Fourth stage: presenting Russian as a foreign language mastered perfectly;

Fifth stage: presenting Russian as the second Mother Tongue.

Distinguishing the shown stages one should cherish the approach towards the central language of the lingualarea as the naturally related foreign language. Therefore, the opposition should be strengthened to those forces that are conducting activity for excluding Russian as a means of general communication, for ousting Russian as the central language in the lingualarea and for ousting it as the second Mother tongue.

Having in mind this opposition one should take into consideration by whose choice Russian is taught — by the choice of the state, or by the individual choice. And speaking about the individual choice special attention is to be given to teaching Russian in mixed families so numerous in CIS.

As is known, the expansion of Russian to the countries of the CIS is now in the state of renovation, especially the countries of Central Asia. It should be noted that at this point of the developing process it is absolutely necessary to display maximal tact and carefulness. Serious drawbacks in the organization of teaching Russian are to be extinguished in the bud. First of all it concerns the students' mistakes in grammar, style, choice of words. Such and the like are not to

be severely criticized, but tolerantly and quietly corrected repeatedly minding the stage of mastery that is to be achieved.

It is self-evident that what has been told about Russian can be transferred, *mutatis mutandis*, to other languages and lingual areas the number of which is ever growing in the contemporary epoch of globalization.

XIV. CONCLUSION

To sum up, mother tongue is presented as an organ of the personality in whose live activity, and it develops itself together with the development of the personality. The traditional division of the system of language into the three subsystems (phonemic, lexemic, grammatic) is supplemented with the fourth, namely, the stylistic subsystem. It is this subsystem that to a great extent inspires the personality with a feeling of national identification. The integral action of the four subsystems provides for the language mediation in all the human creative efforts. This destination makes it obligatory for the speaker of language to thoroughly understand the bifurcation of language into the two variants – the vital language and the imaginative language. These features of Mother Tongue put a special responsibility on society and state for organizing its learning and use in all its genre and style embodiments. A special responsibility on society and state is also put by Mother Tongue spreading beyond its original borders in the status of the language of metropolis. Its learning and use require careful political tactfulness and tolerance.

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