

Dialect and its Representation in the Fictional Literature: on the Problem of Multilingualism

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Abstract. *The paper deals with multilingualism, which is understood as a necessity to master another language to be able to use it at proficient level or any other below. A dialect is regarded as a primary linguistic object in relation to the national literary language, which is a secondary linguistic object. The authors use examples from the artistic discourse to contrast a dialect with the French literary language and analyze ethnic, cultural, cognitive and socioeconomic aspects of multilingualism.*

Key words – *dialect, national language, state of language, infosphere, dialect functional field**.

I. INTRODUCTION

This paper is dedicated to multilingualism, which is increasingly drawing researchers' attention. Processes in political, economic and social life are reflected in the language. Our hypothesis is that multilingualism is a complex social and cultural process, catering for society development, resulting in a higher status of a person, community or society, and making up for the missing piece in their lives.

The objective of this paper is to distinguish the notion of multilingualism from other cases of using two or several languages. We study multilingualism analyzing the state of the language in France, when several rival dialects formed a nationwide language that later became the national language. For our research, we use comparative analysis.

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

To define multilingualism as the most important process of “cultural edification of a society as a whole” [7, p. 72], in the opposition of a dialect to the national literary language, it is vital to define a dialect. The term “dialect” has been used in different meanings. In structural linguistics, it was regarded as a variety of a language; the language and the dialect used by a particular group of people of one region, profession or community were closely related. At the same time, it was understood as a complex of similar subdialects and a subdialect or local lingo as such [9, p. 17]. Traditional linguistics recognized a

dialect's independence, integrity, functioning within well-defined boundaries.

With the rise of lexicography, the term “dialect” was specified. A dialect was understood as a relatively separate linguistic entity that unites in its structure nationwide and regional speech patterns and that is limited by a bundle of isoglosses, lines with a distinct centre and transition regions. Researchers working on the history of languages believe that languages evolve in time and space [6, p. 234–235].

Another viewpoint forms the basis of modern understanding of multilingualism that we share in our research. According to its social function, a dialect is inferior to a national literary language, which is a superior form, and is opposed to it in terms of the following criteria: it is mostly used in oral speech and informal everyday communication; it has no unified norm; it is a characteristic of a particular social class (peasants). A dialect differs from subdialects in that it is mutually intelligible, and that is why it is regarded as an entity within a language [9, p. 18].

Understanding a dialect as a variety of a language spoken by a separate clan rather than a tribe is connected with transition from the slave-owing society to the feudal society and the split of Frank state into the French and German parts in 843. Feudal fragmentation and self-contained economy resulted in few links, if any, between different provinces. Each province had its own political and economic centre, and unique linguistic features that formed individual dialects: Norman, Picard, Walloon, Lorrain, Poitevin, Burgundian and Central French (Ile de France), which later on formed the basis of the national literary language of the country. The Duchy of Normandy on the coast of the British Channel was founded in 911 by Vikings from Scandinavia (the Normans). Before that, they had been involved in steady wars and looting along the Seine and the Oise, as far Paris, for 60 years. However, when in 1066 they invaded England, they were already pure French, according to Sergievsky [4].

The first dialect division began in the IX century. It grew strong in the X century and resulted in three big groups: langue d'oïl – in the North and West, langue d'oc – in the South, including a substantial part of the Massif Central, and Franco-Provençal on the territory around

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Lyon, from the Alps to the Jura. Langue d'oïl was spoken by the least Romanized population including the Gauls, who were under a great Germanic influence as a result.

Specific dialects dominated in the Medieval literature up to the XIII century. The first literary monuments were written in the Anglo-Norman dialect but starting from the late XIV century all literature reflected the speech patterns of Paris, which took the lead in the cultural centralization of France.

Step by step, French wiped out the dialects around Paris. As Sergievsky puts it, the victorious French language crushed its long-time rivals [4, p. 431]. Only Picard and Norman did not lose strength because they were unique and used as regional languages. After the 1794 decree to enforce the use of French for official purposes, the situation was of advantage for speakers of Norman.

The victory of the national literary language facilitated by multilingualism helped fill the missing pieces in the economic, cultural and social spheres. To prove it, we will analyse phonetic, morphological and lexical characteristics of Norman, and factors that influence their deviations from the French literary language.

III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

As a material for this research, we use representation of Norman in the fictional literature on the example of *Le Retour* by Guy de Maupassant. The short story tells about several families which live on the coast. Men go fishing, women take care of their children and modest houses. One day, Martin went to sea and came back only 12 years later. His wife with two children waited for him for 10 years but then lost hope of ever seeing him again and married Levesques, a widower with a 12-year-old son. Two years spent as a captive of African savages changed Martin so much that his wife did not recognize him. Notably, Martin's return is described naturally, without fanfare, just like a moment in life of simple people. The short story almost entirely consists of dialogs and polylogs.

Through linguistic description, comparative, cognitive, systemic, structural and functional analysis we will describe the way Maupassant presents Norman with its phonetic, morphological, syntactical, and lexical characteristics which we consider the representation of multilingualism in the fiction.

IV. RESULTS

4.1 Phonetics. Vowels

The Old French diphthong *ei* later evolved into *oi*, *oe*, *oa* and finally *wa*. In Norman *ei* becomes the monophthong *e*. In Norman literary monuments of the XIII century, we can find *devers*, *saver*, *monaie*, where it is now *me* (instead of *moi*), *fre* (instead of *froid*) [4, p. 134]. The influence of Norman is seen in a great number of words, which have the vowel *e* instead of *we* starting from the XVI century, which is rendered as *ai*, less often *e*: *faible*, *raide*, *tonnere*. In the text by Maupassant, instead of the diphthong, we

find the monophthong that froze in development starting from the XIII century:

Pour qué qu' vous êtes quasiment en espionance?
Pour qué instead of *pourquoi* in Modern French.
mé-> instead of *moi* [mwa] in Modern French.

In the XVI century, before the rise of nasal vowels in the vocalism system, disappearance of a sonorant before another sonorant resulted in the loss of nasalization [5, p. 322]. This phenomenon was overcome in the next century, and as a result nasal vowels appeared as phonemes. In the text under analysis, denasalization is an atavism, which persists in Norman.

J'aideux éfants.

The XVII – XVIII centuries saw a tendency for dropping the neutral vowel *ə* in the first syllable in the French language informal speech. Norman shows a similar tendency.

Vous venez de loin?
J'viens d'Cette.
J'prends la fraîche.
Je n'fais d'mal à personne.
Mev'la.
J'suisd'ici.

At the same time, the text contains several deviations that are typical of the dialect: not only the neutral *ə* is dropped in the first syllable but the closed *ø* as well, which indicates differences in pronunciation of different sounds: *P't-être*.

Other vowels can be dropped in the first syllable too:

a: M'man, le r'voilà !
o: C'est té qu'es s'n homme?

4.2 Consonants

Palatalization of *c* before *a*, common in central and northern Gaul in the VII century, did not affect Norman and Picard [1, p. 53, 422]. Instead of the affricative *tʃ* we can see the consonant *k* that stopped its development starting from the Old French period:

mâquer > *mâcher*; [k] instead of [tʃ].

The consonant [l] is dropped out before another medieval consonant [5, p. 323] in Norman, which is generally typical of vulgar pronunciation.

C'est quéque fouineur ou quéque malicieux;
Quéque j'allons fé à c't'heure?

Loss of a consonant at the end of a word in Middle French was a common phenomenon. The consonant *r* was the first to be lost (XV c.). In the XVIII century a consonant at the end of a word was restored mostly in monosyllabic words. "Its restoration was necessary to solve the problem of short words getting shorter, to make words more independent and help avoid ambiguity arising from homonymy" [1, p. 79]. Norman resisted that restoration. In the text, the loss of *r* at the end of a word is

a normal phenomenon of the time. Even parts of words can be dropped out in Norman, not just individual sounds.

Quéque j'allons fé à c't'heure? – instead of *Qu'est-ce que nous allons faire à cette heure?*

Baiser votre pé! – instead of *Baisez votre père!*

In the XVIII century, due to the loss of consonants at the end of a word, *z* or *t* could be added instead in French with no change in meaning whatsoever [5, p. 424]. The text under analysis has examples of “extra” consonants in Norman too.

J'allais t'ici;
...qui m'a pris-t-en passant.

4.3 Morphology. Pronouns

Division of personal pronouns into stressed and unstressed due to their position in a sentence started in the XII century and finished in the XVII century [1, p. 296]. However, Norman resisted that change, which partly was connected with the phonetic characteristics and partly with interchangeable functions of pronouns in sentences. For example:

- *C'est-i'té?* - *Oui, c'estmé.*

Instead of *C'est toi?* – *Oui, c'est moi.*

- *C'est té, Martin?* – *Oui, c'est mé.*

- *C'est toi, Martin?* – *Oui, c'est moi.*

- *C'est té qu'es s'n homme?* – *C'est toi qui es son mari?*

Since old personal pronouns had become prefixes by the XIX century, new independent forms took their place. *Elle* can also be pronounced *alle*, and *elles* – *elz, el, ez, az*. The pronoun *il* more often sounds like the old form *i*, and the plural *il* is more frequent than *ilz* or *iz* [4, p. 234]. Examples from Norman:

Qu'asontgrandes! – *Qu'elles sont grandes.*

I n'a rien mâqué depuis avant-hier.

Idécidera.

In Old French, personal pronouns with a preposition are used rather than possessive pronouns. “*Celivreestlemien* is still used but *Celivreest à moi* takes its place more and more often” [1, p. 331]. The possessive pronoun is preserved in Norman (*C'est – i les miennes?*) just like the personal pronoun (*La maison est à moi*).

The way pronouns are used serves to indicate different types of relations: to family, to daughters, to an object, to a house.

In the XV century, the relative pronoun *que* is increasingly used as a general form that substitutes *qui* and *cui* to denote relation with no account for number or case [1, p. 111]: *Martin, qu'étaitperdu.*

The pronoun *en* (Modern French) changes into *n-* if the following word begins with a vowel: *Tu n'as trois* – *Tu en as trois.*

4.4 Verbs

The text under analysis shows that Norman verbs do not have a well-defined category of number. As a result, a singular form of a personal pronoun can be used with a plural form of a verb: *J'ons sombré sur un banc!*

In some cases, a plural form of a verb can simultaneously be used with a singular and a plural form of a personal pronoun: *J'nous sommes ensauvés à trois.*

In our opinion, such indiscriminate use of forms reflects the clan psychology of Norman, which did not reach in its development the stage of the national French language.

4.5 Lexis

Lexis is used to denote concrete objects and is characterized by poor axiology. It is still another manifestation of the primitive original system. Instead of the French word *marim* (husband), Norman has *hommem* (man), which places mundane relations above society. In some cases, we can see contraction: *p'tieu > petitpeu.*

4.6 Word order

Each linguistic unit denotes a certain element of reality. The syntactic structure S – V – C allows speakers to understand a situation as a whole by mentally dividing it into components: subject, predicate, object. In a discourse, the syntactic structure retains its three-element predicative character. However, each part of a sentence can acquire additional connotations that make its meaning more complex.

In Norman, monotypic predicates determine the similarity of syntactic structures and the words used [8, p. 523]. The topic-comment articulation in a sentence is formed by using monorhemic or simple type structures with a zero theme that is implied in the previous context [2, p. 196]. As a result, the structure S – V – C ceases to be logically sound [3, p. 146] and creates an impression of a repeatedly used primitive structure.

To preserve the direct word order in a sentence, the emphatic question particle *ti* was introduced in the XVI century, which can be added in any person and is a reminder of the inversion that is not used in the modern common speech [1, p. 332]. We can see such examples in Norman.

J'vousfais-titort?

C'est-i point permis de s'asseoir sur la route?

For the same purpose *que* is used after the question word: *Comment que vous vous nommez?*

The following factors determine the narrow functional field of Norman: lack of strict norms in pronunciation and morphology, poor monotypic syntactic system, words that denote only concrete objects and people, and lack of words with axiological meanings. As a result, readers may not understand what the author wanted to say in the short story.

V. CONCLUSION

The analysis of the material helped prove the original hypothesis. The problem of multilingualism lies in discord between the primitive character of Norman, which reflects an impoverished existence of people in a socially, economically and culturally backward region of France of the time, and the national French language. Due to the richness of the latter the author managed to give a realistic description of the events in the short story. The national literary language, as a stratum above dialects, is, in the first place, the key to a wider and more credible infosphere [7, p. 433]. Multilingualism gives an opportunity to widen the national sphere of concepts, to effectively deal with cultural, cognitive and socioeconomic backwardness of communities.

The result of this research can be used for comparative analysis of the text with regard to cognitive, communicative and emotional richness of certain situations described using the means of the dialect and the national language.

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