

Native Languages of the Indigenous Small-Numbered Peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East of the Russian Federation as an Educational Tool for Sustainable Development: Problems and Development Prospects

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ABSTRACT

The article examines the problems and prospects of the development of the native languages of the Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East - a tool for sustainable development. The results of an empirical study of the quality of teaching native languages are presented. Based on the analysis of the information received from the respondents - the parents of the students, the problems affecting the quality of teaching the languages of the indigenous peoples of the North and Far East were identified, and six blocks of offers were formed for their solution.

Keywords: *education for sustainable development, indigenous peoples, native languages of the indigenous peoples of the North and Far East of the Russian Federation.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The topic of sustainable development is a trend in modern research. Technological efforts, political regulation or financial mechanisms are insufficient to achieve it. Achieving sustainable development is impossible without the inclusion in this process of the education system, which is able to form the value orientations of the younger generation, to contribute to a change in the lifestyle of the families of students, the behavior of people [1].

Implementation of the education strategy for sustainable development in Russia began in 2006 and has not lost its relevance to this day. This is also emphasized by the fact that on June 9, 2021, at the St. Petersburg Economic Forum, several panel discussions were devoted to sustainable development, including those concerning the northern territories, indigenous peoples, the language of the indigenous peoples of the North and Far East.

The goal of sustainable development is to improve the quality of life of the population and maximize the preservation of the same level for future generations. V.B. Kalinin, D.S. Ermakov, O.B. Lapshina define signs

of the world of the future as follows: in the social sphere - the unity of various cultures, in the ecological sphere - the harmony of man with nature, in the economic sphere - labor for the good of society [3].

The Concept of Sustainable Development of the Indigenous Peoples of the North and Far East [4] notes that at the beginning of the 21st century, the level of ethnic self-awareness of the small peoples of the North and the Far East has grown significantly compared to the 20th century. This factor made it necessary to revise the approaches to the organization of education for the indigenous peoples of the North and Far East on the basis of the obligatory consideration of the national culture and traditional way of life, in general, and to teaching native languages, in particular.

All over the world, the education of indigenous peoples has both its own characteristics and specific problems. The heads and the public of various states pay great attention to the discussion of these problems, the issues of preserving and developing the language as a tool and guarantor of sustainable development, and the search for solutions. It is no coincidence that 2019 was declared the year of indigenous languages by the United Nations.

For the Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East, the issue of preserving national languages, traditional knowledge and cultural heritage is of critical importance, since the linguistic diversity of indigenous peoples is under threat of extinction. Currently, there is not a single school in Russia where teaching in the languages of the indigenous peoples of the North and Far East is at all levels and an integrated model of subject-language education is applied. Currently, there is also a decline in the natural language environment, which is reflected in the communication of indigenous peoples within the framework of traditional farming.

The situation is aggravated by the predominantly dispersed pattern of settlement of indigenous peoples, in which various ethnic groups, represented in small numbers, are concentrated in one territory, which gives rise to ethnic and linguistic assimilation. As a consequence of the fact that in recent decades, children have lived and studied in boarding schools, the mechanism ensuring the continuity of knowledge, language and culture has collapsed or partially lost. Therefore, at present, a paradoxical situation has developed: young people and parents are carriers of different languages and cultures, which complicates mutual understanding, erodes linguistic traditions, does not provide an opportunity to inherit and disseminate the linguistic and cultural characteristics of their ethnic group.

All this emphasizes the relevance of the development of the languages of the indigenous peoples of the North and Far East for the sustainable development of the territory. The leading role of the education system is determined by the fact that it is able to provide:

- preservation and development of the languages of the indigenous peoples of the North and Far East;
- building the ability of learners to make choices for sustainable development;
- assistance in the formation of critical thinking of students' parents, changes in their environmental principles, the manifestation of responsible behavior and feasible solution of problems in the field of sustainable development;
- inclusion of the pedagogical community in the development of new methods and approaches to implement the ideas of sustainable development [9].

In the education system, children gradually learn about the world, gradually and systematically form their value orientations, therefore, starting from the preschool level, it is important to lay the foundations for understanding their role in the preservation and well-being of the environment, develop the language, conduct broad environmental education of family members, shift the emphasis from the transfer of knowledge to

implementation chains of action: understanding the problem - finding possible solutions - practical application. For this, it is necessary to change teaching methods, use interactive technologies to develop a culture of communication in the decision-making process towards sustainable development.

There are *several trends in the development of education in the field of sustainable development in terms of goals and content* [3].

- ecological education;
- education on the topic of "sustainable development";
- "education for sustainable development".

Now the heads of educational institutions are more interested in the third trend, since without changing the professional competence of teachers, it is hardly possible to orient the younger generation to the future, to form clear guidelines for solving and preventing risks and possible problems. The problem is that this is a new direction for education. In fact, we shall talk about a new model - "education for the future". Modern children live and study in conditions of increasing complexity and increasing information flows. In this regard, education needs to be ahead, it needs to futurize, really pave the way into a sustainable future [11], it cannot be reduced only to the study of the past and the present [12], it is necessary to form predictive skills in order to prevent potential problems. For this, it is necessary not only to expand the methodological tools of teachers through forecasting, strategic planning, modeling, design, teaching the use of these tools in collective and independent activity.

In this regard, the goals of learning for sustainable development in education are changing significantly. Graduates must learn to:

- think critically and systematically;
- act and apply knowledge in practice;
- be independent and self-confident;
- live and work together - respect each other and bear collective responsibility;
- speak the language of the indigenous people in their place of residence and work.

Improving the model of education for sustainable development includes:

- creating partnerships with local communities to form a list of questions and problems of a practical orientation in order to develop real projects by students based on fluency in their native language and in the future use of the results obtained by society;
- creation of platforms - platforms for critical analysis of the opinions of participants, identification and coordination of various interests based on the

methodology "discussion through dialogue in the native language of the indigenous peoples of the North and Far East";

- integration of academic disciplines, innovative training programs (environment, multicultural interaction, globalization) and the native language of the indigenous peoples of the North and Far East;
- use of health-saving and environmentally sound technologies in teaching the native languages of the indigenous peoples of the North and Far East.

To do this, in an educational organization, it is necessary to create such a training system that allows, on the basis of eco-management decisions, to train pedagogical personnel in the direction of sustainable development, ensures the involvement of students in the process of solving problems of the environment, national culture, economy, language, and obtain practical skills for the rational management of a traditional household, maintaining a healthy lifestyle, etc.

The central aspect in such a system of education is the native language of the indigenous peoples of the North and Far East as a tool for sustainable development. This aspect was the subject of a study conducted at the Russian State Pedagogical University named after A.I. Herzen within the framework of the state assignment of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

To collect primary information, a survey method was used - an individual interview using standardized tools (questionnaires) to determine the main positions of respondents in assessing the quality of teaching the native languages of the indigenous peoples of the North and Far East as instruments of sustainable development.

The survey was conducted from May 5 to May 31, 2021 and was anonymous. The selection criterion for the participants was their belonging to the indigenous peoples of the North and Far East, the status of a parent (the presence of their own or adopted children of early, preschool, school age).

The subject of study is the languages of the Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East: Dolgan, Chukchi, Even, Evenk, Yukaghir, Vepsian, Khanty, Mansi.

In the survey to assess the quality of general education in the native languages and cultures of the Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East as a tool for education for sustainable development, 1,802 respondents - parents of students - took part. Most of them, 49.3 % have higher education, 24 % - secondary specialized. The predominant number of respondents are parents of school-age children: 37 % - primary school, 50 % - primary and high school.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The survey showed that 71 % of parents are sufficiently informed about the languages and cultures of the indigenous peoples of the North and Far East of the Russian Federation taught in the educational organization, as well as about the procedure for providing educational services in this direction.

44.2 % of parents believe that the educational organization provides an opportunity to build an individual educational route for students to master the native languages and cultures of the indigenous peoples of the North and Far East of the Russian Federation. 44.6 % of parents who found it difficult to answer are probably not aware of this and do not know what an individual educational route for mastering the native languages and cultures of the indigenous peoples of the North and Far East of the Russian Federation is.

The overwhelming majority of parents – 62 % believe that the educational organization has opportunities for the development of the creative abilities and interests of students in the native languages and cultures of the indigenous peoples of the North and Far East of the Russian Federation, since children participate in competitions, olympiads, exhibitions, shows, sports events for national types sports, etc. at the level of an educational organization, a municipality, a region, the Russian Federation and even in international competitions in national sports of the northern peoples.

To determine the degree of parental satisfaction with the competence of teachers and other specialists who provide services in the field of learning the native languages and cultures of the Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East, the following question was included in the questionnaire: "Are you satisfied with the competence of teachers who provide services in the field of learning the native languages and cultures of the Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East in an educational organization?" 55.4 % are fully satisfied with the professional competence of teachers, 14.5 % of parents are partially satisfied with the competence of teachers of the native languages and cultures of the indigenous peoples of the North and Far East of the Russian Federation. 27 % of parents who found it difficult to answer, either are not interested in the issue of the child learning their native language, or they did not choose it for study (the open answers further contain the following answer: "We don't need this"), or the children do not learn it. Only 3.1 % of responding parents were not satisfied with the professional competence of teachers of their native language.

Fully satisfied with the quality of educational services in the native languages and cultures of the indigenous peoples of the North and Far East of the Russian Federation - 48.4 %, partially satisfied with 16.8 %. 30.2 % of parents found it difficult to answer. 4.6 % of parents are

not satisfied with the quality of educational services in the native languages and cultures of the indigenous peoples of the North and Far East of the Russian Federation.

The last two questions of the questionnaire were open-ended. They are aimed at obtaining high-quality answers – the opinions of parents, which must be taken into account when making management decisions to improve the process of teaching the native languages of the indigenous peoples of the North and Far East.

To the first open question: "From your point of view, how can the work of an educational organization be improved in the field of teaching native languages and cultures of the indigenous peoples of the North and Far East of the Russian Federation?" 351 people answered: "everything is fine and nothing needs to be improved" and 429 respondents when answering this question found it difficult to answer.

The remaining 1,022 responses contained actual offers of the respondent parents, which were grouped by the authors into blocks.

1 block. Contains offers on the number of hours devoted to the native language ("The study of native languages must be conducted from kindergarten, make the subjects "native language and literature" compulsory with the passing of the exam for the course of the basic school, including for the Russian-speaking population in a specific area of residence" and etc.).

The study of the offers of the responding parents allowed the authors to draw the following conclusions:

- at present, lessons in the native language and literature are not included in the compulsory part of the curriculum (this is determined by the educational organization independently) and are held 1 hour per week in extracurricular activities (in fact, optional, at the request of the students);

- additional educational programs do not contain the hours necessary for learning the language;

- the bulk of parents agreed that all students, regardless of nationality, shall study their native language, since from the point of view of sustainable development, it is professional and public dialogue in one language that can ensure the stability and planned sustainability of both the educational system and territory as a whole.

Block 2. Improvement of the material and technical base

The suggestions of the responding parents led to the following conclusions:

- not all schools have a separate classroom for their native language, a developing subject-educational environment has been created;

- classrooms of the native language are not well equipped with modern equipment;

- not all schools have high-speed internet.

Block 3. Offers for provision of textbooks and teaching aids. Parents point out that textbooks, dictionaries, workbooks are very necessary. This is a really relevant topic for the system of teaching the native languages of the indigenous peoples of the North and Far East.

An analysis of the Federal List of Textbooks Approved for Use in the Implementation of General Education Programs of Different Levels (Order of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation No. 254 of May 20, 2020) showed that it includes textbooks only in two languages that are the subject of our research: Vepsian and Khanty. From the category of indigenous peoples of the North and Far East, it presents a complete set (primary, general, secondary education) in the Yakut language and several textbooks in the Nenets language.

Block 4. Suggestions for teaching methods ("Pay more attention to speaking in the native language", "More hours of practical activity in camps with reindeer herders, hunters who can "teach in action "and teach actions", "The emphasis is now on vocabulary work, not the development of oral speech - speaking").

The suggestions of the responding parents led to the following conclusions:

- subject-language integrated education of indigenous peoples of the North and Far East is not carried out;

- there is a shortage of practice-oriented methods and methods of "learning by doing";

- insufficient use of the possibilities of television and the Internet.

Block 5. Personnel offers ("Not all teachers who teaches a language can speak it", "There are not enough native language teachers who are native speakers of the language").

The suggestions of the responding parents made it possible to conclude that there is not only a shortage of teachers in their native languages, but also, which is very important, there is a shortage of teachers who are native speakers. A teacher who teaches the language himself/herself and at the same time does not speak it fluently is nonsense that takes place in the modern education system for the native languages of the indigenous peoples of the North and Far East.

Block 6. Offers for arranging the study of native languages ("Open Sunday schools, workshops for parents (young) who do not speak and partially speak the language, who understand their native language, but do not speak their native language. To assist the school in the development of spoken language in the family and to

teach parents, because they, as a rule, are not native speakers and did not study it at school”).

The study of the offers of the responding parents allowed the authors to draw the following conclusions:

- there is no continuity in learning the native language at the kindergarten - school level;
- insufficient number of nomadic kindergartens and schools, ethnic centers;
- there is no network interaction between schools in the direction of the language and cultures of the indigenous peoples of the North and Far East with cultural institutions, sports, additional education, public organizations.

The fact that not one of the native languages of the indigenous peoples of the North and Far East has been lost lately inspires confidence in parents and students, emphasizes the correctness of the chosen path of building sustainability in the future on the basis of the chosen direction “education for sustainable development”.

4. CONCLUSION

The study revealed a number of significant problems in the native languages of the indigenous peoples of the North and Far East as a tool for education for sustainable development. On the basis of public opinion, the need to change approaches to the organization of language learning was confirmed.

Prospects for the development of native languages for the indigenous peoples of the North and Far East are ambiguous from the standpoint of sustainable development. Currently, not a single language has been lost, significant work has been done to develop school textbooks, nomadic kindergartens and schools, agricultural schools, and ethnic schools are developing. On the other hand, the education system for the indigenous peoples of the North and Far East lacks qualified teachers with knowledge of their native languages and training is still carried out en masse with separation from the places of traditional residence, thereby further aggravating the emotional, psychological and linguistic gap between children and their parents, helping to reduce efficiency of communication, which does not correspond to the concept of sustainable development.

For effective education for sustainable development, leaders of educational organizations and governing bodies need to:

- integrate, on the basis of sustainable development, linguistic and subject knowledge and skills, to ensure their continuity in the direction of "education in the native language for sustainable development";

- use the experience of children in speaking in their native language;

- form a positive experience of teaching the native language in the direction of sustainable development, to disseminate it;

- establish close ties between the educational process and the life of society, traditional types of craft and crafts, national culture;

- promote awareness by the young generation and parents of regional and local environmental problems and practical actions to resolve them;

- for a more sustainable development of native languages through the prism of awareness of environmental problems, apply design and research activities and methods of enhancing learning.

Education for sustainable development requires the development of a language teaching system for the indigenous peoples of the North and Far East that integrates elements of traditional and ethnic learning systems, ethnocultural experience. Organization of works on the development of native languages for sustainable education should be carried out in unity with the activities of regional ethnocultural centers, mass media in native languages, organizations of additional education for children, culture and sports.

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