

Research on Chinese and Russian Language Contact in the Border Port Cities of Heilongjiang Province from the Perspective of "the Belt and Road"*

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Abstract—The research of language contact is a frontier field in the discipline of sociolinguistics while the Chinese and Russian language contact in border ports is an important topic in this field. Based on "the Belt and Road" strategy, this paper studies the history, characteristics and results of Chinese and Russian language contact in border port cities of Heilongjiang Province. A theoretical preliminary exploration was made on Chinese and Russian language contact.

Keywords—border port city of Heilongjiang Province; Chinese and Russian language contact; "the Belt and Road"

I. INTRODUCTION

As an important gateway for China's opening to the outside world and a window to the north, Heilongjiang Province is the core area connecting Northeast Asia. Due to the natural advantages of geographical location, Heilongjiang Province is the window for economic and trade cooperation between China and Russia. Heilongjiang Province has played an important role in promoting the connection between the Silk Road Economic Belt and the Eurasian Economic Union, building the "China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor" and developing key areas for regional cooperation with Russia. The border between Heilongjiang Province and Russia is more than 3,000 kilometers long. Since the reform and opening up, it has become one of the provinces with the largest number of ports open to the outside world. In 2013, China proposed "the Belt and Road" strategic initiative, which is a new model of regional economic cooperation proposed to promote the deep development of economic globalization. It involves more than 20 cities and regions along the border of Heilongjiang Province, with a large coverage area, a wide range of cooperation areas, and a complex cultural environment. It is inseparable from the guarantee of language to promote this

great cause. Therefore, the demand for Chinese and Russian language in the "Belt and Road", the way to provide corresponding services in the field of Chinese and Russian language contact, using this opportunity to promote the development and utilization of Chinese and Russian language resources, promote the cultural exchange between China and Russia, and develop the Chinese-Russian language industry and language economy have become the new propositions that we must think about now.

II. HISTORY OF CHINESE AND RUSSIAN CONTACT FORMS IN THE BORDER PORT CITIES OF HEILONGJIANG PROVINCE

A. Mixed Habitation of Immigrants

The situation of immigrants in the border ports of Heilongjiang Province is complicated. In history, Russians have twice moved in large scale to the northeastern border areas of China. One was in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In 1896, Russia coerced the Qing government to sign the "Sino-Russian Secret Treaty" and obtained the privilege of building a Middle East railway in northeast China. With the construction and operation of the Middle East Railway, thousands of Russians moved into the border area of Heilongjiang Province, China. As the site of the Middle East Railway Construction Headquarter, Harbin quickly developed from a small fishing village into a large city, and the majority of residents are Russians. The other time was during the October Revolution. The victory of the October Revolution made the Russian aristocrats and military officers feel that situation is hopeless, so they fled to China's Heilongjiang Province, and at the same time, a large number of Russian ordinary people who did not know the truth were brought here and settled in cities such as Harbin. In 1930, there were 111,584 Russians in the northeast of China, of which 64,470 were in Harbin, showing that the number of Russian immigrants in Northeast China was large.

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B. Situation of Economy and Trade

The nature and scale of trade between the border port cities of Heilongjiang Province are closely related to their political and diplomatic relations and other political factors. From the middle of the 17th century to 1917, the political and diplomatic relations between China and the Russia were in the "stage of unequal contact". Therefore, the bilateral trade in the border ports of Heilongjiang Province always has an unequal nature. From 1917 to 1949, although the political and diplomatic relations between China and Russia were in the "core intimate contact phase", bilateral trade in the border ports of Heilongjiang Province has been not stable due to the war. From 1949 to 1960, the political and diplomatic relations between China and Russia were in a "comprehensive and intimate contact phase." The bilateral trade in the border ports of Heilongjiang Province also entered the "golden period." During this period, the Soviet Union was always China's largest trading partner, and the share of Russia's foreign trade occupied the first place in that of China. From 1960 to 1989, the political and diplomatic relations between China and Russia were in the "comprehensive confrontation stage", and the bilateral trade in the border ports of Heilongjiang Province also entered the "depression period." From 1989 to the present, the political and diplomatic relations between China and Russia are in the "recovery development stage", and the bilateral trade in the border ports of Heilongjiang Province has also entered a "rapid growth period."

C. Russian Education

In the foreign language education of border cities in Heilongjiang Province, the Russian-based teaching model has a long history. In nearly half a century from the 1920s to the 1960s, Chinese Communist Party has always strongly advocated and supported Russian teaching. The liberated areas have also set off a series of "Russian hot". In addition to the formal Russian teaching in the Harbin Foreign Language College, mass Russian teaching has spread throughout the cities in the liberated areas and the border port cities of Heilongjiang Province. After the founding of New China in 1949, Russian almost became the only language in Heilongjiang foreign language teaching in the border port cities of Heilongjiang Province at that time. In the early 10 years of liberation, the "Russian hot" reached the "white-hot" level in the education sector and even all walks of life of Heilongjiang Province. It can almost be said that "the whole country learns Russian."

The Chinese and Russian nations in the border port cities of Heilongjiang Province have had many contacts since ancient times. During 1917-1960, the Chinese and Russian nations in the border port cities of Heilongjiang Province experienced an unprecedented "intimate contact phase". The inevitable result of the contact between Chinese and Russian nations in the border port cities of Heilongjiang Province is the mutual contact and mutual influence between Chinese and Russian languages. Inferred from the depth and breadth of contact between the Chinese and Russian nations, it is clear that the period from 1917 to 1960 is the phase with the most frequent language contact between Chinese and

Russian languages. The influence of Russian on Chinese, in theory, should also be concentrated at this stage.

III. CHARACTERISTICS OF CHINESE AND RUSSIAN LANGUAGE CONTACT IN BORDER PORT CITIES OF HEILONGJIANG PROVINCE

A. Compatibility of Active and Passive Contact

From the aspect of human subjective desires, Chinese and Russian language contact includes both active contact and passive contact. For example, in the 1920s and 1930s, a large number of revolutionary patriots in China came into contact with Russian because of the need to study Marxism-Leninism theory, which is a typical free and non-mandatory active contact; in border port cities of Heilongjiang Province, especially Harbin, Chinese were forced to engage in non-free and compulsory language contact with Russian when they are mixed living with Russian nationals, which is a typical passive contact. Judging from the spatial characteristics of language contact, Chinese and Russian language contact includes both natural and unnatural contact. For example, the Chinese and Russian language contact that occurs when the Han and Russian ethnic groups live in Harbin is the language contact between people who speak different languages in the same space, which is a typical natural contact; the large-scale Chinese and Russian language contact that took place in the rest of China between 1917 and 1960 was basically carried out through Russian communication or Russian translation books, which is a typical unnatural contact. Judging from the information carrier of language contact, Chinese and Russian language contact has both verbal contact and written contact. For example, in the early days of the People's Republic of China, a large number of Chinese Russian translators who served as translators for Soviet experts made their verbal contact with Russian during interpreting; and their contact with Russian during translation was called written contact. Judging from the way of language contact, Chinese and Russian language contact includes both direct contact and indirect contact. For example, after the victory of the October Revolution, China sent a large number of revolutionary patriots from the border to Russia for study. Most of them directly interacted with Russians and read Russian literature directly. Their contact with Russian was direct contact; in terms of the relationship between the languages that contact with each other, the contact between Chinese and Russian is also a non-relative language contact. Obviously, the types of Chinese and Russian language contacts are complicated. This is the diversity of Chinese and Russian language contact.

B. Explosive Growth

Chinese and Russian language contact also has obvious explosiveness. Although the Chinese and Russian nation contacts have existed since ancient times, before the October Revolution, except for Harbin, the contact between the Chinese and Russian nation was very narrow, and the influence of Russian on Chinese was also small. The sudden expansion of the Chinese and Russian national contact has led to a profound impact of Russian on Chinese, beginning

with the October Revolution. Those who are familiar with history will not forget that after the October Revolution in Russia, due to the call of Mr. Sun Yat-sen for "taking Russia as a teacher", the propaganda and education of China's advanced intellectuals, and the yearning for the Soviet socialist revolution and socialist construction, a large number of Chinese revolutionary youths have a strong desire to learn Russian and learn from the Soviet Union. Therefore, the scope of contact between the Chinese and Russian people has expanded exponentially, and the influence of Russian on Chinese has also exploded. This is the first outbreak of Chinese and Russian language contact. The second outbreak of Chinese and Russian language contact was closely related to a mass movement in the early days of liberation in China that studied Russian and learned from the Soviet Union. At that time, Mao Zedong once spoke: "All the people in the Communist Party and out of the Communist Party, the old cadres, the new cadres, the technical personnel, the intellectuals, the workers and the peasants must learn from the Soviet Union sincerely... We must start the climax of learning from the Soviet Union nationwide to build our country." Under the strong advocacy and call of leaders such as Mao Zedong, at the beginning of the founding of New China, a mass movement to learn Russian and learn from the Soviet Union broke out rapidly and quickly developed into a craze in China. Thus, the Chinese and Russian language contact has developed from the "local outbreak" among the Chinese revolutionary youth after the October Revolution to the "comprehensive outbreak" among the entire Chinese people over 10 years after liberation. The Russian language boom was set off in the border port cities of Heilongjiang Province. After this climax, both in the period of Sino-Soviet split or escalating Sino-Russian friendly relations, the Chinese and Russian language contact has never shown such a long-lasting and so large-scale "explosive" climax.

C. Unbalanced Influence

Chinese and Russian language contact is prominently imbalanced. When Chinese and Russian languages come into contact with each other due to various forms of contact between the two ethnic groups, the influence between them is unequal. Generally speaking, the influence of Russian on Chinese is obviously greater, while the influence of Chinese on Russian is relatively small. The fundamental reason is that when the Chinese and Russian language came into contact in history, the Russian national culture was basically in a strong position while the Han culture is basically in a weak position. Before the October Revolution, the Russian nation was always the aggressor to China; during the October Revolution and the founding of New China, the Russian nation was also the representative of advanced political forces and political thoughts; in the early days of China's liberation, the Soviet Union became a "Big Brother" worshiped by China. Therefore, the language influence of Chinese and Russian language contact is unbalanced and has the "one-sided" characteristic: Russian has a significant influence on Chinese, while Chinese has little influence on Russian. In other words, in the Chinese and Russian language contact, Russian basically acts as a tribute language, while Chinese basically acts as a beneficiary language.

IV. THE MODEL OF CHINESE AND RUSSIAN LANGUAGE CONTACT IN THE BORDER PORT CITIES OF HEILONGJIANG PROVINCE

A. Language Influence to Multilingualism to Language Transfer

Once the languages contact, language changes will be caused. However, from the perspective of specific linguistic facts, not all language changes caused by language contact are able to complete the entire process of the above-mentioned language change chain. The specific situation of language change caused by language contact is quite complicated. Therefore, the study of language contact must be observed in connection with the entire language change chain, otherwise one-sided judgment may occur. Of course, Chinese and Russian language contact research in China must also be observed in combination with the language change chain. From the preliminary analysis of the existing data, in most parts of China, the Chinese language change caused by the contact of Chinese and Russian language is generally only at the stage of "language influence"; that is to say, the phenomenon of "language use" and "language transfer" caused by Russian has not yet appeared in Chinese. However, this "language influence" is extensive and profound, including vocabulary, morphology, syntax, and semantics and so on. That is to say, there are both "surface influence" and "deep influence".

B. Language Influence to Multilingualism to Mixed Language

The border areas of Heilongjiang Province have certain advantages over other regions because of the Chinese and Russian language contact. The changes in Chinese caused by Chinese and Russian language contact have basically completed the main process of "transforming from language influence to mixed language". And in the local area there has been a special pidgin Russian with word form change almost disappearing (commonly known as "pidgin Russian").

V. CONCLUSION

China and Russia are dependent on each other and are friendly neighbors with hundreds of years of relationship. Long-term exchanges in society, culture, and commerce have left a mark on the language of both sides. In general, the study of Chinese and Russian language contact in the border ports of Heilongjiang Province will help the development of border language services in Heilongjiang Province. Relying on the "Belt and Road" strategy, we are supposed to seize the opportunity of development, and give play to the advantages of border ports in Heilongjiang Province to achieve the goal of promoting the complementary advantages, mutual benefit and win-win situation of China-Russia neighboring regions and achieving the strategic upgrade of Sino-Russian cooperation. Based on language services, we will actively integrate "the Belt and Road" strategy, leverage the "Belt and Road" and assist the "Belt and Road".

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