GENERAL AND DIFFERENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS IN THE LEXICAL MACROSYSTEM OF THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE

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The authors of the article compare the manifestation of national and cultural identity in communication in different languages and considers the problems of interrelation and interaction between a language and a way of thinking and between a language and a society. Special attention is paid to the intensive penetration of regional words into the lexical system of the Russian language and to the national variant of the Russian language, which influences the mental lexicon formation. The study provides the examples of the texts taken from the Russian periodicals and containing words borrowed from the closely related languages.

Keywords: regional word, concept, background vocabulary, Russian language macrosystem, multinational language, culture, ethnic group.

The phenomenon of cultural exchange has been known and studied by ethnographers, archeologists, historians, culturologists, and linguists for a long time. Any ethnic culture inevitably exists in contact with that of other ethnic groups. This contact being direct or mediated by other intermediary cultures leads to cultural exchange, which is reflected in the lexical system of a multinational language. The processes of intercultural exchange reflected in the language are analyzed mainly by studying the borrowings of the words from one language to another.

The national peculiarity of the verbal communication in the Russian language finds its expression in the presence of specific features reflecting both linguistic (primarily lexical and semantic) and extralinguistic (social, cultural-historical, psychological, ethnic) facts. National and cultural characteristics of linguistic units are manifested with varying degrees of frequency and intensity, and the forms of their expression are also different.

While considering the national and cultural identity in communication, special attention is usually paid to the comparison of its manifestation in different languages. According to N. M. Firsova, the study of multinational languages also requires the understanding of the national peculiarities of communication of the natives speaking different national variants of one and the same language [12]. "Regional variation" or, in other words, the functioning of a language in the language environment of another nation has long attracted linguists' attention and seems to be the most controversial problem of modern linguistics.

The problem relating to the interrelation and interaction between a language and a way of thinking as well as between a language and a society is of great interest for modern linguistics. The increasingly intensive penetration of regional words into the lexical system of the Russian language leads to the development

of linguistic parallelism and variation, and, on the whole, to the increase in expressiveness of the Kazakh variant of the Russian language. Moreover, interaction and interrelation of the national variants of the language do not lead to the blurring of the differential characteristics but result in better awareness and preservation of linguistic identity, which is equally important for the Russian language and manifests itself as the so-called borrowings from Russian at the level of the lexical system.

In fact, regional words being common in the oral Russian speech and recorded in the written (publicistic and literary) texts in a certain region of the Russian language spread neither change nor affect the lexical system of the Russian literary language as a whole. They complement it, and a certain layer of the Russian language word stock becomes variable. The vocabulary of the language expands not only on the territory of the original functioning of the Russian language (the territory of Russia) but also on the limited territory of a certain region (mainly the territories of the former Soviet Union republics), with borrowings being different in each particular region and depending on the language with which Russian contacts.

Considering national variants as private systems (or "microsystems" as A.D. Schweitzer puts it), modern linguistics views a multinational language as a single macrosystem existing in the form of a number of practical realizations. Each variant microsystem contains both general and differential characteristics. A. D. Schweitzer claims that private systems of national variants interacting with each other form a "common core" of the macrosystem. Those parts of microsystems that do not coincide with any parts (elements) of other private systems are known as differential or distinctive characteristics [13]. The idea of a "common core" was borrowed by A. D. Schweizer from C. Hockett, who used it trying to explain the proportion of idiolects to di-

alects within a single language system. Defining a common core as "a set of identical elements of two microsystems", A. D. Schweitzer gave great importance to this part of microsystems. As he wrote, "the concept of a common core is extremely important and essential for a comparative analysis of such interacting linguistic systems as dialects and variants of one and the same language." Reflecting the national culture, the language participates in the formation of the mentality of people as its native speakers. Being closely connected with a person's thinking, activity, social and psychological type, and knowledge of the world, the language structures a linguistic personality, in particular his linguo-cognitive (thesaurus) level. In a multinational state, a multinational language contacts with other languages and, accordingly, acquires new knowledge reflecting social and cultural conditions in which it develops and corrects its thesaurus.

Relating to the language analogues of a person's thesaurus, cultural categories (symbols, etalons, mythologemes, ideologemes) give him the status of a national language personality. The analogues of cultural concepts are mainly found in the language complementarity, in the factor of discrepancy between the national linguistic views of the world. A large number of the words borrowed from another language and reflecting the realities of the world around and, in its turn, the mentality formed this way change the basic vocabulary of the Russian language, let us speak about a somewhat different lexical system with a different content, additional words and expressions having no lexical equivalents in the Russian language developing on the territory of its original spread. This problem is typical for many former Soviet Union republics where the Russian language is still actively used.

According to Humboldt's ideas and Sapir-Whorf's hypothesis, a language and a way of thinking are interrelated. A language not only provides communication but also determines thoughts and feelings, so its consideration from the standpoint of these categories is "the basis of a genuine language research" [3, p. 377]. The combination of an anthropocentric view of a language with an anthropocentric approach to the analysis of a text being a concrete reflection of the elements of a lexical system makes it possible to provide deeper insight into the problem of a human factor in linguistics of a text since a text is always the creation of an author also representing a certain aspect of a human factor.

In all the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Russian language being under the influence of a closely related language as well as social and cultural conditions constantly expands its lexical system. It happens because its basic knowledge reflected in the lexical system and primarily meant to be used for communication in its home country appears to be insufficient for adequate communication in the situation of bilingualism and multilingualism. In a specific situation, by means of a closely related language the Russian language can also borrow the units of a lan-

guage with which it does not come into close contact. For example, by means of the Moldavian language the Russian language can borrow Romanian vocabulary.

The analysis of the Russian newspapers published in Moldavia, Ukraine, Armenia, and Uzbekistan reveals that the Russian texts contain a considerable number of the words borrowed from the closely related languages and reflecting the indicated categories.

The examples of such borrowings are taken from the Russian periodicals published in Armenia.

"Henrik Kochinyan says that this year the region will put together about 5 billion *drams* (Armenian monetary units) for the construction ..." (The Republic of Armenia, 2000.06.02); or the title of the article "Is there life in the *marzes* (Armenian regions)?" and further in the article, "journalists bombarded the leaders of the nongovernment organizations working in the *marzes* with questions ... life in the *marzes* goes on ..." (The Republic of Armenia, 2000.06.02), etc.

Since we do not have close contacts with the Armenian people and the Armenian language, we can only guess the meaning of these units. However, the newspaper text proves that the Russians living in Armenia can understand these units without any difficulty.

The following texts are taken from the Russian-language newspaper "Pravda Vostoka" published in Uzbekistan in the period from 2000 to 2013.

"On November 21, The *Kengash* (Council) of the Senate of the *Oliy Majlis* (Supreme Assembly of the legislative branch) of the Republic of Uzbekistan held a meeting in the Senate of the *Oliy Majlis* of the Republic of Uzbekistan... The *Kengash* began its work with ... The *Kengash* highly appreciated the initiatives of the President ... The *Kengash* adopted a resolution ... Accordingly, the *Kengash* set a number of tasks before the committees and the members of the Senate of the *Oliy Majlis* of the Republic of Uzbekistan ... " (Pravda Vostoka, 2006.11.22); "*Shavat* (irrigation canal) water will come to people's houses ..." (Pravda Vostoka, 2006.11.23); "The *mahalla* (part of the town), where the theologian lived ... We live in the old part of Tashkent, in the Hastimom *mahalla*" (Pravda Vostoka, 2006.11.22).

The provided factual material abounds with examples of social and political vocabulary and lexical units representing social and cultural life of a given society. The same processes conveyed by completely different lexical units can be observed in the Russian texts published in the newspaper "Moldavskie vedomosti" in the period from 2000 to 2013.

"They should not ruin their lives in order to earn 30 *bans* (Moldavian and Romanian monetary units) for a kilogram of potatoes ... the debt of urban transport is about 160 million *leys* (Moldavian and Romanian monetary units) ... The *primar* (mayor) of Kishenev, Serafin Urechean, called the situation with the public transport of the capital catastrophic ... according to the *primar* ..." (Moldavskie vedomosti, 2000.09.16); "The *ney* (flute) which has become a tradition. ... he dedicat-

ed all his life to his beloved "Pan's flute" which was the ancient Greek prototype of the modern *ney* ... The *ney* is popular in Romania, France ... after all, 500-600 *leys* are tangible to his budget ... The *ney* sounds good when being played together with the organ ... what unites *ney* players in the world ... The *ney* is a traditional instrument of Moldova and Romania ... The *ney* players can be invited ... In Moldova, there are professional competitions of the *ney* players ... "(Moldavskie vedomosti, 2006.10.06)"; ... The other day I went to the *primar* Panchuk ... as an invalid, Edik receives as much as 160 *leys* every month, but he needs at least 3000 *leys* to pay for his treatment" (Moldavskie vedomosti, 2006.09.20); "The elections of the *bashkan* (the governor of Gagauzia) will be monitored ... have created a microcoalition to monitor the elections of the *bashkan* of autonomous-territorial unit Gagauzia which will be held in November ..." (Moldavskie vedomosti, 2006.09.22); "In our country there will be a lot of *cumatrus* (nepotists) who will work according to the old schemes" (Moldavskie vedomosti, 2006.10.04).

The records of the oral speech in these countries are likely to reveal an even wider range of the assimilated words borrowed from a closely related language and used in Russian texts.

Thus, as a result of various processes of interlevel, intraregional, and international interaction, each of the national variants of the Russian language has a certain lexical inventory the fragments of which can be of general nature. The discrepancies between the vocabularies of the national variants of the Russian language are both inventory and distributive in nature and can affect the quantitative parameters due to the existence of parallel doublet notions, the qualitative indicators expressed in an unusual lexical, semantic, and stylistic interpretation of the lexical units, as well as the structural properties in case of a special use of word-forming means.

At the same time, according to E. S. Kubryakova, the researches on the structure of the lexicon, on the types of relations and connections represented in it, on the larger word classes (lexical fields, categories, frames, etc.) being formed here often require special experiments, thus encouraging the development of joint scientific research programs for the study of the lexicon in the framework of a cognitive science [6].

Over the past two decades, the number of research works demonstrating the linguists' interest and desire to study linguistic phenomena in a broad extralinguistic context has considerably grown. There are an increasing number of works making attempts to reveal the conditionality of the language in the meaning of its lexical units, to identify the so-called "cultural" component of the meaning, to discover the linguistic nature of "background knowledge," to show the peculiarity and uniqueness of its functioning in the linguistic community under consideration.

The study and description of the interrelation between a language and culture, between a language and an ethnos, and between a language and mentality are

one of the main problems of modern linguistics. A person lives in the context of a culture which cannot be understood without a language. As spiritual values comprising a culture cannot be translated into the language of scientific concepts, they are represented in various kinds of texts.

According to E. Benvenist's definition, linguoculture is based on the triad "language, culture, and human personality" representing a lens through which a researcher can see material and spiritual identity of an ethnos living in a multiethnic state [1, p. 65-67].

A language is variable in its nature. "Variability permeates all the levels and subsystems of a language and is regarded as its integral part. National and territorial variability presupposes the existence of territorial (or regional), social, and stylistic variants" [8, p. 10]. The national variant of the Russian language influences the formation of the mental lexicon (mentale Lexicon) which is understood as a system reflecting an individual's knowledge of the words and their equivalents and also performing complex functions associated not only with the specific language units but also with the structure representing extralinguistic (encyclopedic) knowledge.

The Russian language, functioning in a foreign environment, is more susceptible to the penetration of new cultural components into its lexical system, and consequently more conducive to the formation of the ethnic mentality. The manifestations of the new mentality find their expression in the oral and written texts of the given language. To perform their function, the texts must be understood by those who read them. Therefore, one of the first steps towards the understanding of the texts is the revelation of the cultural component of the meaning of nationally marked vocabulary, namely, the words whose peculiar semantics reflects the cultural identity. First of all, this applies to regional words, concepts, and background vocabulary.

According to E. A. Pogorelaya, the researcher of the Russian language in Trans-Dniester "A comprehensive description of linguistic nature of the ethnolinguistic processes in the unique conditions of the regions of the former Soviet Union republics is a long-term sociolinguistic task the solution of which requires the efforts of the specialists willing not only to evaluate the scope and nature of the problem theoretically but also to offer a certain language community a rational model of the effective interethnic interaction" [10, p. 44].

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