The Relationship of Language and Culture - as the Main Object of Linguoculturology

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A B S T R A C T

The article discusses the problem of defining linguoculturology as a science.

A generally accepted fact in modern linguistics is the perception of "linguoculturology as a complex scientific discipline of a synthesizing type, studying the relationship and interaction of culture and language in its functioning and reflecting this process as an integral structure of units in the unity of their linguistic and extralinguistic (cultural) content using systemic methods and with orientation towards modern priorities and cultural institutions (system of norms and universal human values)" [1: 36-37]. Accordingly, when understanding linguoculturology, a closer examination of the terms "language" and "culture" acquires special significance.

Turning to the content and nature of the term "language", one cannot ignore one of the most outstanding linguists of the 19th-20th centuries, F. de Saussure, who distinguished between "language", "speech" and "speech activity". Speech activity is a system of expressive capabilities of a given people. It is very diverse and comes into contact with a number of areas: physics, physiology, psychology. In the totality of speech processes, F. de Saussure identifies two polar aspects - language and speech. Language is a grammatical system and vocabulary, i.e. an inventory of linguistic means, without mastering which verbal communication is impossible. Language as a lexical and grammatical system potentially exists in the minds of individuals belonging to the same linguistic community. Thus, language is a social product, a means of mutual understanding between people, it does not depend on the individual who speaks it. On the contrary, the latter must make considerable efforts to master the language system perfectly.

So, based on the above, we can give the following definition of language as a linguistic category. Language is a universal sign system that is formed in interactions and communications and is capable of expressing any new content.

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, many scientific theories have been based on the idea of the inextricable unity of language and culture. Culture began to be viewed not just as a science adjacent to linguistics, but as a phenomenon, without a deep analysis of which "... it is impossible to comprehend the secrets of man, the secrets of language and text" [2]. The relationship between language and culture, in our opinion, can be defined as follows: the symbols (signs) with which people communicate are language,

and culture is a historically transmitted model of meanings embodied in language.

There is still no exact definition of the subject, as well as methods of linguoculturology, which is apparently explained by its relative "youth". This branch of linguistics in its current form is believed to have emerged in the last quarter of the twentieth century as a product of the anthropological paradigm in linguistics. However, its origins go back to the 19th century, when W. von Humboldt, in his work "On the difference in the structure of human languages and its influence on the spiritual development of the human race," formulated a position on the relationship between the character of the language and the character of the people. The theoretical and methodological basis of this discipline is currently in its infancy. The generally accepted definition of linguoculturological research is the study of a language in inextricable connection with the culture of native speakers of a particular language [3].

Along with the generally accepted definition, the following attempts are found to define linguoculturology as a science. For example, a popular textbook on linguoculturology by V.A. Maslova defines linguoculturology as "a branch of linguistics that arose at the intersection of linguistics and cultural studies", as "a humanitarian discipline that studies material and spiritual culture embodied in a living national language and manifested in language processes" or as "an integrative field of knowledge that incorporates the results of research in cultural studies and linguistics, ethnolinguistics and cultural anthropology" [2].

According to V.V. Vorobyov, the main object of linguoculturology becomes "the relationship and interaction of culture and language in the process of its functioning and the study of the interpretation of this interaction in a single systemic integrity," and the subject of this discipline, in his opinion, is "national forms of existence of society, reproduced in system of linguistic communication and based on its cultural values" - everything that makes up the "linguistic picture of the world" [1].

The study of linguocultural objects is proposed to be carried out using a systematic method, which consists in the unity of semantics, sigmatics, syntactics and pragmatics, i.e. semiotics, and allows one to obtain "a holistic idea of them as units in which the actual linguistic and extra-linguistic contents are dialectically connected" [1].

Semiotics is understood as a general theory of sign. She examines the nature of signs and the sign situation, the basic operations on various signs.

Accordingly against this, three sections were distinguished in semiotics:

1. syntactics (syntactic rules), which studies the relationships of signs to each other within a given sign system or sign situation;

2. semantics (semantic rules), which considers the relationship of signs to designated (indicated) objects;

3. Pragmatics (pragmatic rules), which analyzes the relationship of signs to signs.

V.V. Krasnykh, in turn, defines linguoculturology as "a discipline that studies the manifestation, reflection and fixation of culture in language and discourse, directly related to the study of the national picture of the world, linguistic consciousness, and the characteristics of the mental-lingual complex" [4]. The researcher proposes the use of a linguocognitive approach to communication, since it allows one to analyze both its general linguistic aspect and its nationally determined component [4]. The author insists, in particular, on the commonality of the disciplines of ethnopsycholinguistics and linguo-culturology, asserts the commonality of their problems, and insists that the theoretical prerequisite for the emergence of both ethnopsycholinguistics and linguo-culturology is the E. Sapir-BL Whorf hypothesis.

The latter put forward a deep and beautiful hypothesis of linguistic relativity, according to which language is given priority role in the process of cognition. Based on materials obtained in the process of researching the languages of North American Indians, they came to the conclusion about the influence of linguistic categories on thinking. In other words, according to this hypothesis, Eskimos and French see the world differently, structuring it in different linguistic paradigms, flowing into divergent paradigms of perception. The Chukchi have three hundred terms to describe snow, and a city dweller, for whom snow is just "dirty porridge," will never understand what the happy trapper is singing about as he rides across the snowy tundra. The Brazilian Kamaiura Indians have only one name for blue and green colors: "parrot

color".

So, according to B. Whorf, language is a social contract, or a social agreement on the systematization of the world. According to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, linguocultural-turology as a scientific discipline is "a holistic theoretical-descriptive study of objects as a functioning system of cultural values reflected in language, a contrastive analysis of the linguocultural spheres of different languages (peoples) based on the theory of linguistic relativity."

The starting point of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis looks convincing. Indeed, the process of thinking occurs in a linguistic form, and since languages differ from each other, this leaves an imprint on the forms of thinking. However, according to Whorf, the relationship between language - thinking - reality looks dubious. Everything turned out to be the opposite: it is the environment that dictates the method of linguistic structuring and gives birth to the corresponding language. Subcultures create sublanguages; thus, physicists and football fans, rabbit breeders and literary critics have so different vocabularies within the same language that they practically do not understand other people's professional conversations.

Language, being a mediator between objective reality and consciousness, cannot play a leading role and be the ruler of consciousness. Without language, cognitive activity itself is impossible, but in no case should language be attributed the ability to change reality. When considering this problem, it is necessary to take into account three phenomena in their interrelation and mutual influence: reality thinking is language.

The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis aroused great interest and fair criticism. However, it was thanks to it that a new direction of linguistics was formed - ethnolinguistics and the resulting linguoculturology, which study the relationships between people, ethnicity and language. By the way, in American linguistics, along with the indicated terms - ethnolinguistics and linguoculturology - such definitions as anthropolinguistics and cultural anthropology are used.

Culture is the alpha core of any civilization; the establishment of moral principles and cultural imperatives in society is the most important and difficult problem of any society. In modern linguistics, the problems of ethnolinguistics and linguoculturology are very relevant and are actively studied both in domestic and world linguistics. In particular, the problems of linguoculturology are also being developed by scientists of the Volgograd school. For example, V.I. Karasik considers linguoculturology as "a complex field of scientific knowledge about the relationship and mutual influence of language and culture" and focuses on its comparative nature. He calls the cultural concept the main unit of linguoculturology, and as units of study he puts forward realities and "background meanings, i.e., meaningful characteristics of concrete and abstract names that require additional information about the culture of a given people for adequate understanding" [Cit. from: 5].

Professor Z.K. Tarlanov defines the inextricable connection between language and ethnicity: "A language within the ethnic boundaries of its speakers is not only and not so much a medium your communication, how much memory and use the history of the people, their culture... their worldview and psychology, the store of knowledge about nature and space that has been consolidated from generation to generation... about the education and preparation for life of new generations of people in the interests of preserving and multiplying the ethnic group and its identity. Thus, language is a form of culture that embodies the historically developed national type of life in all its diversity and dialectical inconsistency" [6].

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