LUMEN 2014

Linguistic Behavior as a Social and Cultural Potential in the Multiethnic Community

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Abstract

In the light of inter-disciplinary approach, linguistic behavior has been considered as a social and cultural potential in the multiethnic community. Based on the available in linguistic, sociolinguistic, sociological literature and methodological ideas, analysis has been made of empiric data of the Republic of Tatarstan. The most significant results of that analysis are presented as accessions and conclusions implicitly containing recommendations on optimization of inter-cultural communications with the purpose of improving the effectiveness of their influence on the unification and cooperation of peoples of the multi-lingual Tatarstan community.

Introduction

Ethno-cultural life of Tatarstan is characterized by rich and diverse customs and traditions of many peoples inhabiting this multiethnic region. According to the census conducted in 2010 in the Republic of Tatarstan 3, 78 million population consists of 53, 2% Tatars and 39, 7% Russians. The representatives of the Volga region – Chuvashs, Udmurts, Mordovians, Mari, Bashkirs and others account together 5.6% of the population. This layered multiethnic “cake” is in the field of view of humanitarians, especially sociologists studying the phenomena of social life in the family, educational institutions, organizations, and events of the country or region. During the last 10

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years (2004-2014) a number of sociological investigations has been held revealing various aspects of the multilingual situation in the republic, taking into account the opinions of experts in the area of sociology, ethnology, political science, history about the relationship “language – culture - society”.

Linguistic behavior in the multiethnic society is influenced by a number of social factors: the necessity of improvement of linguistic behavior as a powerful social and cultural potential of the population in the multilingual region in order to achieve a decent level of language competence of the members of a multi-ethnic community; the expansion of cross-cultural, ethnic, interlinguistic contacts between representatives of different nations in the multi-ethnic environment, based on a dialogue, mutual respect and mutually beneficial business cooperation in the political, economic and cultural spheres; the need to overcome the radical inter-ethnic conflicts and wars, negative ethno-nationalist tendencies, aspirations for ethnic separatism and isolation; insufficient development of this problem in sociology (the theory and methodology of the question). On the whole in the context of globalization there exists a strong need to analyze the social factors that affect linguistic behavior in order to create a model of social behavior of this species in the multi-ethnic region; to study the linguistic behavior as an important integrative factor of the social differentiation. It is, at its best, an extraordinary stimulating interpretation of a great scope of problems including identification of the relationship between the social structure of language and social structure of the society, the need of accounting the component of the national language as a clear manifestation of linguistic behavior of the population in the language policy of the Russian Federation, the need of further improvement of the national language policy concerning the theoretical program and its promotion and the legal regulation of relations between Russian and Tatar languages in Tatarstan and administrative regulation, the adoption of economic measures for the implementation of language policy in a multi-ethnic region. There exists a real need for democratic principles enshrined in the laws of the language with the appropriate training conditions for their implementation (in the field of education, economy, and culture) and creating the real guarantees for national and linguistic minorities. Each factor is inextricably linked to the others revealing the necessity to disclose the nature of modern society as a regulator of linguistic aspects of communication and to identify conflicting trends in the development of language behavior. All this allows us to consider the linguistic behavior as a social and cultural potential in a multi-ethnic community.

**Literature review**

Cultural potential is considered to be one of the components of the social potential. L. I. Shayhlislamova rightly emphasizes that the cultural potential should be defined as the totality of accumulated cultural resources, tools, sources, supplies and opportunities that are on one side in the nature of society in the form of accumulated material and spiritual results of human labor, and on the other side they are preserved as cultural property and objects of cultural heritage. On the narrow point of view, cultural potential is a set of objective and subjective features or factors contributing to the cultural space of the city or region. The objective factors are socio-cultural institutions. Subjective factors belong to the relationship of citizens to the existing social and cultural institutions, the nature of ethno-cultural ties and relationships (L. Shayhlislamova, 2013).

A great social and cultural potential of the linguistic behavior in the multiethnic society inherent in the content of the phenomenon is clearly reflected in the multitude of definitions. Primarily it is an intentional system of stimuli and responses in the form of a chain of actions taking triadic form of communication, internal monologue and expressive modes of evaluation defined in the language. This triad contains the main social functions of language - communicative, cognitive and modal. In addition, if we make the focus on the communicative function of this kind of social behavior, it would be more correct to speak of verbal behavior. Moreover, it is considered as a consistent set of linguistic acts committed by an individual or a group as actors of the process of linguistic communication and the outward expression of linguistic activity. Extremely vivid characteristics of the linguistic behavior is the fact that it is externally observable social behavior and one can clearly see and hear the actions of social actors related to the operation and development of the language. Our approach to solving the problem of the correction of linguistic behaviour in a multiethnic region is focused on identifying its features on the scale of each of the sciences such as linguistics, pedagogy, psychology, demography, sociology, logic, and aesthetics. This set is defined in the research areas of speech components and respectively in the aspect of linguistic behavior. Each science has its own view on the problems of language, speech, speech culture, ethnic identification. At the same time, we observe insufficient
Sociology as a science investigating social behavior is intended to consider the linguistic behavior as a social and cultural potential of the multi-ethnic society. Relying on scientific developments of cultural potential (D. Davletshina, 2012), we define cultural potential of the individual as the characteristic of possibility of personal self-realization when the internal personality traits combine with the individual characteristics prevailing in the course of socialization and enculturation in the language environment. Linguistic behavior as a cultural potential consists of a multitude of congenital and acquired individual features such as actual human qualities realized through communicative abilities and unique psychophisiological qualities of a person, expressed in the attitude to the language and linguistic activity.

There is a great number of scientific papers devoted to the consideration of socio-cultural factors of linguistic behavior in a multinational environment, among which we find the problems of the integration of employment and linguistic behavior among the multilingual population, the influence of urbanization on social (linguistic) behavior (A. Valeyeva, M. Nugayev, 2014) as well as socio-professional stratification as an important condition for the development of the linguistic behavior (R. Tukayeva, 2003). L. Ismagilova reveals the development of multilingualism through the prism of social science and in the context of economic culture of modern society in general, which is one of the components of the social culture of modern society (L. R. Ismagilova, 2005).

Another no less significant problem is the expansion of cross-cultural, ethnic, interlinguistic contacts between representatives of different nations in the multi-ethnic environment, based on a dialogue, mutual respect and mutually beneficial business cooperation of Tatars, Russians, Chuvashs, Udmurts and representatives of other nationalities in the political, economic and cultural spheres. Actually, it is a problem of dialogue of cultures, where the authors emphasize the fact that the cultural dialogue is becoming a foundation of educational system in the schools with native (Tatar) language of teaching (so called national schools) and this encourages formation of humanitarinan culturological model of literature studies (R. Mukhametshina, A. Galimullina, 2014). The work “National and Cultural Concepts” reflects the picture of the interactions of cultures in a multiethnic community and diagnose the scale, degree and depthness of the inter-penetration of cultures (R. Zamaletdinov, F. Sibgayeva, 2013).

In the modern sociological investigations we observe the concepts, giving a more subtle view of the influence of legislative regulation of the linguistic behavior in a multiethnic society (L. Fakhreyeva, 2007). Formation of a complete system of the linguistic education based on the principle of bilingualism is a great intellectual potential and rich historical tradition (K. Minnullin, 2006).

Representatives of the political science, traditionally close to the sociology, have successfully developed language problems considering the international political dimensions of political issues from the view of international relations and global development (L. Muharyamova, N. Muharyamov, E. Taysina and others). B. Khalitov (2006) successfully generalized the study of linguistic aspects of the political process in supranational organizations, states and regions on the example of the European Union, Spain and Catalonia. No less interesting is the work by O. Yanush (2006) “Language factor of interstate integration” dealing with the role of language in international integration processes on the example of the European Union, the Southern Common Market and the Commonwealth of Independent States (O. Yanush, 2006) The investigations of political scientists are saturated with factual material; they vividly present vast information for the sociological view of the problem “language-culture-society” and for generalizing sociological patterns in the development of the communication processes.

Approach

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operation and development of the language. Our approach to solving the problem of the correction of linguistic behavior in a multiethnic region is focused on identifying its features on the scale of each of the sciences such as linguistics, pedagogy, psychology, demography, sociology, logic, and aesthetics. This set is defined in the research areas of speech components and respectively in the aspect of linguistic behavior. Each science has its own view on the problems of language, speech, speech culture, ethnic identification. At the same time, we observe insufficient development of this problem in sociology (the theory and methodology of the question). Sociology as a science investigating social behavior is intended to consider the linguistic behavior as a social and cultural potential of the multiethnic society. Sociology is an integral science whose source is a man as a social being. The matter consists not only in one single person as a human being but in the great variety of subject links acquiring the opened or closed social character. From the point of view of the representatives of this science any kind of society has at its disposal a certain composition and structure, it performs definite roles and functions experiencing many influences. All this affects the modus vivendi of the representatives of different nations as social communities. There exists a whole number of mechanisms and ways of securing of such influences. Linguistic behavior is one of the most important integrative factors among them. The social vector of the communication realized by means of the linguistic behavior acquires more dominating character in the system of social relations in the field of interpersonal contacts, social group communication, management and self-realization. In this vein, quite openly declares itself the social dynamics. Linguistic behavior as a social phenomenon bears traces of ethnicity, literacy, cultural level, goal setting, and the operational initiative. Due to linguistic behavior as one of the fundamental types of social behavior, the relationship between cultures and peoples occurs more efficiently. Calling to consider the language in close relationship with the human agent who uses it Y. Ikegami comes to a conclusion that “language and the human agent are presumed to be interrelated to each other in terms of “coevolution”, each instigating an evolutionary process in the other” (Y. Ikegami, 2007). Undoubtedly it is an important component of the social potential which is understood as a set of interrelated economic, proper social, political, spiritual capabilities of individuals, groups, ethnic groups, the population of the region as a whole, contained in the structure of society, but not yet implemented due to one or other reasons (M. Nugayev, 2008). Social potential is a complete characterization of the feasibility revealing the internal man’s essential powers, his animal spirit (as K. Marx noticed – A.V.), as well as a set of conditions and factors using society’s abilities, talents and skills of its members (M. Nugayev, 2010).

Methodology

Research goal

The aim of the research is to identify the value of linguistic behavior as a social and cultural potential of a multi-ethnic community.

Sample and data collection

Sociological research under the guidance of A. F. Valeyeva was held in January-February 2010, sample was formed by quota-cluster basis. The sample population was 700 people. Of these, 370 were surveyed in Kazan, in Naberezhny Chelni, Yelabuga and Nizhnekamsk - 50, Chistopol and Leninogorsk - 40, Almetyevsk - 30, Zelenodolsk - 20, in the countryside areas – 40 respondents. Obtained data were analyzed through the SPSS statistical packet program.

Analyses and results

Data from our research, conducted in the large, medium and small towns and in the countryside of Tatarstan show the most significant factors for the further development of the social and cultural potential. Based on Tatar-Russian bilingualism as a time-tested principle of the historical past 71, 6% of the respondents support it. The importance of national traditions and customs in the development of language behavior as a cultural potential in a multi-ethnic society can hardly be overestimated. The ethnic identity of the population is primarily connected with the language they speak (67, 3%). Culture, customs and traditions (64, 8%), the native land (43, 9%), religion (25,
5%) – these are the factors that make the people native speaking people with representatives of their nationality after the recognition of the superiority for native language. In respect of the social potential contributing to solving the language problems, the rate of factors is as follows: the improvement of the living conditions of the population (60, 0%); increase in budgetary resources for the development of education, science and culture (59, 4%); the overall level of socio-economic development (53, 4%). One of the most important factors in the renewed society is confessionism. Religion is an essential element in the ethnic identification; it is an important element of social and cultural potential. Many of the respondents believe that the knowledge of the Koran, the Bible, is promoted as a revival of the lost national traditions, culture, language and communication (46, 7%). However, a point of view insists on separation of religion from ethnicity and linguistic stereotypes (19, 7%). The results of the research show that there are opponents and proponents of religious teaching and learning in schools. Some consider this process appropriate in the improvement and enrichment of the linguistic behavior (9, 7%); others believe that it makes Russian and Tatar languages archaic.

Conclusion

Thus, we assume that there are some urgent problems in the field of investigations concerning the linguistic behavior as a social and cultural potential in the multicultural, polyethnic and multilingual society. In order to achieve a decent level of language competence of the members of polyethnic community we need the correction of linguistic behavior, which is the basis of the involvement of the subjects of speech culture into the interpersonal communication that acquires the character of predictive action. Human sociality, either personal or on the level of the ethnus and the total population of the region, as evidenced by the experience of the Republic of Tatarstan, is in a continual state of correction of linguistic behavior, which is proved by the sociological research. We present here an example of the innovative correction of the linguistic behavior for foreigners on the territory of the Russian Federation. Federal Migration Service has prepared rules of the colloquium in Russian language for foreigners who wish to obtain Russian citizenship. It contains specified requirements relating to the level of proficiency that will be offered for foreigners to recognize them as “native speakers”. Those who do not manage to pass the colloquium can make a second attempt but only within a year. As for the level of proficiency in Russian according to FMS the alien must show that he is able to “understand and adequately interpret” abstractly philosophical, professionally oriented, journalistic and literary texts including overtones. Moreover, he must understand the content of broadcasts and television programs, excerpts from films, dramas, radio plays, records, public speeches, etc., adequately perceiving social and cultural features of emotional talking of the speaker, interpreting famous sayings and hidden meanings. Overall, linguistic behavior is a powerful tool aimed to overcome the radical inter-ethnic conflicts and wars, negative ethno-nationalist tendencies, aspirations for ethnic separatism and isolation. We clearly see this in the modern world on the example of extraordinary political events in Ukraine, where the origins of the tragic fateful proceedings were Russian and Ukrainian languages.

References


