

Ethno-Lingual Aspect of Modern Functioning of Russian Dialects in North Kazakhstan (On an Example of Kostanai Region)

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Abstract: Modern functioning of Russian dialects of North Kazakhstan has been analyzed in the article. Research has been carried out on the base of data of dialect expeditions governed by authors. Ethnography of descendants of Russian immigrants' speech allows defining ethno-lingual specifics of Russian language functioning in Turkic environment. Authors consider a certain usages of modern Russian dialects in Kostanai region, define their localization, note specifics that remain from mother dialects and manifested as a result of contacts with Turkic languages. Authors come to a conclusion that native speakers of Russian dialects in North Kazakhstan are example of Russian Turkic-speaking person.

Key words: Ethno-linguistics • Anthropology • Speech ethnography • North Kazakhstan • Russians • Kazakhs • Interference • Russian dialects • Mother dialects

INTRODUCTION

Ethno-lingual research in modern science originates from the works of American scientists who studied Indians. Since that time areal research has been becoming more and more topical [1]. Territorial proximity of Russians and Kazakhs, their economic and cultural links as well as close connections in everyday life inevitably led to creation of favorable conditions for lingual-ethnic assimilation. According American scientific tradition relations “language – culture – ethnos” is anthropological problem referring to interaction between material and spiritual culture of society [1].

Every time researcher starts ethnographically oriented analysis of language facts in historical and theoretical part he has to count on the works of American scientists [2]. It is natural because American linguistics has developed in such historical and geographical conditions when ethno-cultural component was its natural attribute. It was caused mainly by direct contact of European (English- and Spanish-speaking) culture with cultures and languages of numerous of aboriginal tribes of North and Central America [3].

There are certain parallels between the research of language functioning and culture of aboriginal peoples of American continent and post-Soviet space [4, 5, 6].

For example researchers of Russian-Kazakhstan near-border territories note that native speakers of Russian dialects of this zone retain the features of mother language and culture. «The population of this region is stable and the Russian dialect speakers are mainly the descendants of the first settlers, coming here from the Northern Russian districts - Vologda and Perm» [6: 854]. North-Russian features characteristics for most part of Kostanai region dialects may be explained by inhabitation history of Kostanai region. It also explains the “relationships of these dialects with Archangelsk, Vologda, Kirov (Vyatka), Perm dialects. Lingual relativity is added by thesis of “cultural” (or “culturological”) relativity. Clifford Geertz metaphorically wrote about this relativity noting that “The communicative dance of two bees, one of which has found nectar and the other of which seeks it, is another, somewhat different, more complexly coded» [7: 94].

Researched dialects that evolved from North-Russian dialect have been developing in new conditions kept a number of inherited dialect characteristics: at the same

time during a long period of existence Russian dialects of this region as a result of interdialect and interlingual contacts underwent significant changes so we consider that they are not identical to mother dialects. Russian people settling in lower reach of Tobol, near salted lakes, came in very close contact with Kazakhs – both economical and cultural.

It is known that Siberia initially had been inhabited by Russian immigrants from North districts of European part of Moscow Rus – from Novgorod, Arckhagelsk, Vologda, Vyatka regions from Perm the Great. Siberian *voevode* sent to North regions special agents - “sadchik” and “slobodchik” who urge the hunters to settle in new places. They promised them benefits and aid - “klikali klich”, in Siberia “asked idle and free people, good and family peasants, only not runaway” [8].

Organized settlement was followed by unauthorized inhabitation. Peasants went to Siberia not only forced by “pribor”, order but independently secretly. People run to Siberia and further to Kazakh steppe from poor harvests, arbitrariness, from bribery that stirred up discontent of Kazakh people [9]. Despite negative attitude of Orthodox church to marriages with non-christen people Kazaks, merchants and peasants and people from other classes in Siberia almost without exception were married local women. As a results Russian sub-ethnic societies emerged – groups of metis people anthropologically close to neighboring people having in their culture features of both contacting cultures [10]. Logical question arises: how did this confusion influence languages of contacting people?.

Analyzing Russian inhabitants of Kostanai region we turned to the history of Russian settlement on this territory. According to researchers, urban settlement in Kostanai hole appeared at the time “when immigration was the most massive. Peasants – immigrants were impressed by expanse and the wealth of ground especially in Kostanai hole. Without any aid, benefits only due to hard work they created here large Russian settlement. Tatar village grew near it. Church, local administration, local court, collectors and other attributes of Russian village society up to coaching inn and baths appeared in new place” [8: 45-46].

Of course old residents of rural territory of Kostanai region were not uniform in origination. Great part of them was descendants of Kazaks, administrative workers, first Russian inhabitants, other part – individual immigrants who run away looking for better life.

Nomads settled and started to work on the ground in immigrants’ villages more and more often. For example, the village Alchanskoye of Denisov district admitted as a members of local society “on free share equally with the rights of Russian population” Kazakhs of aul (village) No 1 of Ayatskaya district who expressed the will to “settle equally with Russian people and what regards nomadic life – to give it up” [11: 108].

During the years of Stolypin reformation and lean years in 1920s new groups of many thousands peasants arrived forced by the need to run away. For example in field expeditions we found out that pensioner Valakjovski G.I. Who lived in the village Yesekol of Karabalyk region recalled migration history of his family. “I was taken here by my parents from Orlov region when I was a boy. My father told me that hard life forced them to go to this place, predecessors of my neighbors came from Kursk region. In our region almost only immigrants lived. They were even from Perm and Saratov regions”. [8: 51]. Later at the very beginning of the Second World War (1941 – 1945) a strong wave of refugees and displaced persons poured into the region. They were evacuated with the industrial enterprises. By October 1, 1943 in Kostanai region there were 32 394 evacuated people [8: 52].

The process of interaction of languages and cultured on the territory of North Kazakhstan was complicated because Russian population of regions neighboring with Tumen and Omsk regions earlier had assimilated Ugric (Khanty, Mansi, Komi), Turkic (Tatar, Kasakh), Slav (Ukainian, Belorus) people that had influenced Russian language functioning in the region as well. “The researchers fairly mention that in local speech Of the Russian there are also observed some peculiarities, passed from the source language: kyrgyzy, kyrtma, tyngyte, kysy, bashkyry.” [6: 854].

Dialectological expeditions provided unique material on Russian dialects of Kostanai region. Analysis of this material allowed separation of dialects into “o” and “a”-pronouncing.

Pure dialect features of mother (Orlov) dialects have been preserved in the speech of old residents of such villages as Kurskoye (10 people), Grachevka (9 people), of Fedorovskoye region; Grenaderka (12 people) Presnegorkovka (9 people), Sibirka (11 people) of Uzunkolski region; Beloglinka (15 people) Dalnee (10 people) of Karabalykski region. It is worth noting that villages Sibirka, Peschanka, Presnegorkovka, Yesenkol,

Kosoba, Lesnoye are far away from regional and local centers. For example, Presnegorkovka is 74 km far from village Uzunkol (local center), 239 km from the city of Kostanai; village Yesenkol is 83 km far from the village Karabyaluk (local center) and 200 km far from Kostanai. Distance between these villages is not big in kazakhstan terms. Presnegorkovka is 18 km far from Peschanka, Peschanka is 5 km far from Sibirka, there is 16 km between Yesenkol and Kosoba, 4 km – from Kosoba and Lesnoi. Inhabitants of these villages are permanently contacting many of them are relatives so in conditions of uninterrupted contacts dialect is being preserved as the unity with all common elements of lingual system.

Characteristic of researched places in Kostanai region (tape recordings, dialect records, questionnaire)

Researched settlements	Number of inhabitants, (people)	Speech in dialect			Speech in literary language		
		60 and older	Between 50 and 60	from 50	60 and older	Between 50 and 60	Between 40 and 50
Karabyalyk region							
v. Akkuduk	229	30	35	24	12	38	30
v. Beloglinka	943	40	37	25	22	80	118
v. Dalneye	150	34	30	23	8	30	20
v. Yesenkol	132	26	20	16	7	22	23
v. Kosoba	841	68	46	38	19	66	84
v. Priozernoye	177	20	26	15	9	30	20
Uzunkol region							
v. Simbirka	378	49	38	27	18	43	55
v. Ksenievka	303	30	30	22	19	47	50
v. Pochinovka	112	13	12	11	4	20	24
v. Presnegorkovka	1819	64	56	35	21	69	80
v. Peschanka	259	30	27	21	8	31	37
v. Grenaderka	158	28	22	15	5	30	34
Fedorov region							
v. Gachevka	181	29	22	17	10	30	36
v. Kurskoye	286	30	26	20	11	35	42
v. Novoukrainka	148	25	20	19	6	27	30
v. Novoye	168	24	18	14	6	28	32
v. Poltavka	176	20	18	16	7	30	33
v. Malorossiika	918	18	19	12	15	57	70

We have discovered that fully “o”-pronouncing dialects developed on the base of interaction of different North Russian dialects (Vologda, Perm, others) in the following territory:

- Uzunkol eregion (villages Ershovka Troyebratnoye, Novopokrovka, Ozernoye, Mirolubovka);
- Sarukol region (villages Barvinovka Varvarovka, Annovka, Ermakovka, Limanovka, Dudakovka, Urozhainoye, Zhanacy);
- Karabyalyk region (villages Peschanka, Yesenkol, Dalneye, Svetloye, Ornekskii, Tselinnoye, Slavyanski, Malorossiiski, Lesnoye).

At the same time Kostanai region represents the mixture of different Russian dialects. For example, South Russian dialects are characteristic for the following settlements of researched region:

- Ubagan-Uzunkol region (villages Grenaderovka, Presnegorkovka);

- Karabyaluk region (villages Beloglinka, Boskol, Ogneupornoye, Magnai Zhanaaul, Fadeevka, Pobeda);
- Syarykol region (villages Bol. Dubrava, Vishnevka, Dudakovka, Zapadnoye).

Social and lingual changes that happened in the areas of contacting of native speakers of North-Russian and South-Russian types caused development of mixed dialects having characteristics of “o” and “a”-pronouncing that creates a certain difficulties for dialect specialists analyzing them. Such mixed type of dialect is represented by such regions as Uzunkol (villages Suvorovo, Molhovoye, Ksenievka, Sibirka), Fedorovskoye (villages Novoukrainka, Novoborisovka, Kurskoye, Grachevka), Sarukol (villages Minskoye, Semenov), Karabyalyk (villages Novotroitskoye, Pervomaiskoye, Priyralskoye), Taranovo (villages Archangelskoye, Orenburgskoye, Scherbinovka, Yekaterinovka), Kavystinkoye (villages Tuganovka, Pripechnoye, Sakharovka, Klochkovo).

It is used to think that women are better keeper of language and culture due to conservative nature of gender motivated role of women in traditional society. Filling in the passport of informants we found out that native speakers of dialects were mainly Russian women who consider Russian as native language born in the area or living here most of the life. Dialect characteristics of their speech were preserved in a better way.

So considering non-uniform origin of first Russian immigrants on North Kazakhstan and consequently the differences in language it is possible to separate the dialect of Russian population of this region into two types: 1) "o"-pronouncing Russian dialects, 2) "a"-pronouncing dialects of "new residents" - the dialects of the latest immigrants from European Russia that had formed in XIX century on the base of dialects of South Russian dialects.

They didn't lose main lingual characteristics until now. Many of them are characteristics for European area. For example, for many Russian dialects in Kostanai region it is characteristic soft velar consonants under the influence of preceding soft consonants. This phenomenon is preserved in our dialects due to contacts with Tatar language. Assimilative softening of velar consonants in Kostanai region may be observed mainly in dialects of Karabalyk region where Russian language had been influenced for a long time by Tatar language.

Phonetically unconditioned variants of consonants by sonority-voicelessness in Russian dialects of Kostanai region reflects long term interaction of Kazakh, Tatar and Russian population (villages Koibagor, Chelgashi, Karamyrza, Suigensai, Uiskoie, Aidarly, Tselinnoye, Kozubai). Orthoepical and orthographic mistakes of local population reflect interference processes in Russian language under the influence of Turkic languages of the region.

Ethno-lingual processes are the main part of ethnic processes, because they demonstrate changes in sphere related with the most important features of ethnos – language. Our research of ethnography of the speech of Russian people in the environment of the other ethnoses demonstrate powerful interference processes that goes on in Russian dialects of North Kazakhstan. Forecasting the further development of Russians on North Kazakhstan we may say that a new type of lingual person is being forming here – Russian Turkic-speaking person in whose speech there are reflected both mother dialects and modern lingual practice of communication with local Turkic people.

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Given the modern language policy of the RK, it is necessary to analyse an increasing linguistic imperative of English language (policy of trilingualism). The Russian language became the official language of interethnic communication on a par with the Kazakh language used in public organizations and self-governing authorities (the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan 1997, article 5). Shift of emphasis in the learning and using of English in the professional sphere and daily living took place, an increase in the number of students studying Chinese, Arabic and Turkish languages was noticed, the number of schools with Uzbek, Tajik and Uigur languages of instruction is increased. Noticeable changes have occurred in functioning of the Russian language i

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