

THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE IMAGE OF THE WORLD AND THE PROCESSES OF CULTURAL GLOBALIZATION

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Abstract. *The paper deals with the analysis of the relation between processes of cultural globalization, dissolution of language boundaries and completion of the language field with vibrations in the scale of hierarchy of a system of values in the national language image of the world.*

The study of transformation of the bases of the national cultural codes, attitudes towards the national cultural traditions and processes of development of the living modern language (changes in frequency of usage of a series of lexical units, completion of the language field, paths and speeds of penetration of new lexical units) is offered as one of the methods of the investigation of the specificity of national processes of accelerated cultural adaptation.

Keywords: *language image of the world, traditions, cultural boundaries, system of values, cultural globalization.*

Introduction

The process of dissolution of cultural boundaries, within the scope of contemporary globalizing humanity, demands from individuals acceleration of cultural adaptation. It is accompanied by significant vibrations in the hierarchy scale of the system of values, affecting the stability of the system. It is most urgent for the cultures with multi century cultural traditions, for example, for Georgian culture. Such processes are mirrored in the language and, as a rule, make relevant corrections in the created language image of the world. We believe that the analysis of the changes that take place in the language image is available by the study of the bases of national cultural codes and their transformation as well as by the study of changes in the attitude to national cultural traditions. We will try to substantiate our opinion.

1. The Language Image of the World

For the native speaker the mother tongue represents a form of the conceptualization of the world characteristic for the given culture. The system of values, created within the culture, has its reflection in the language. Moreover, according to W. von Humboldt, each language reflects some definite worldview. Consequently, “to the extent perception and activities of a person depend on his views,” person’s attitude towards “objects” are completely defined by the language¹. The same can be said about the famous statement by H. G. Gadamer “the tradition in which we live,” as it comes from the correspondence of Gadamer with V. Malakhov, it implies, first of all, “linguistic tradition.” It is V. Malakhov who comments the thesis in the following way: “Our reasoning and superstitions are determined by the language we think in. That means that, firstly, our thoughts—at predication level—are defined by the inner structures of the native language. Secondly, our reasoning—‘the experience of reasoning’ is determined by ‘the experience of the language’—by the history of the culture created in that language”². Similarly, according to the so called Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, the language and the mode of thinking are closely interconnected. As “there are no symbols before the speaking man, though the symbol itself has much deeper roots, and the language is the instrument where the universe, desires, imagination find their expression, we inevitably need a word to reproduce the world and make it sacred”³, the cultural values, ideals, guidelines, the opinion of an individual about the universe and its role in this universe find their realization in the language: the language *reflects* the fundamental values of the given

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- 1 Gumboldt, V. *O razlichii v stroenii chelovecheskikh jazykov i ego vlijanii na duchovnoje razvitie chelovecheskogo roda v Khrestomatija po istorii jazykoznanija 19-20 v.v.* [On the difference in the structure of human languages and its influence on spiritual development of humanity]. Moskva, 1956, p. 184.
 - 2 Malakhov, VI. *Germenevtika i tradicija. Tradicija, v kotoroj my zhivem* [Germaneutics and tradition. Tradition in which we don’t live]. *Logos*. 1999, 1(11): 3.
 - 3 Rikjor, P. *Konflikt interpretacij. Očerki po germenevtike* [Conflict of interpretations. Assays in Germaneutics]. Moskva: Academia-Centr Medium, 1995, p. 13.

culture and at the same time *forms* them. Thus, for the native speaker, the mother language represents a form for the conceptualization of the world, characteristic for that given culture.

2. The System of Values and the Cultural

For understanding this aspect of human culture, some lexical unities represent “Priceless clues” as A. Wierzbicka puts it: “Key words—the words which are extremely important and meaningful for the given culture”⁴. From this we may conclude that the accumulated experience somehow is encoded in the language. For example, C. Geertz gives to the notion of “culture” the following definition: “historically transferred model of notions, put in symbols, as a system of inherited conceptions, that are expressed by means of symbols, through which people communicate with each other and based on which their knowledge about life and their attitudes are formed.”⁵

During extreme periods, when histories shake, or sometimes when existing systems of values or of consciousness even collapse, the reason striving to secure them always resorts to eternal models.⁶ As the process of any type of mythmaking (among them national, political and etc.) develops on the sub-conscious level and is fixed with the traditions, in respect of Georgian relationship, which has centuries-long orthodox cultural traditions—we talk about some definite morale values. These values are embodied not only in relevant cultural archetypes and archetypical images, but are also fixed in the language itself. Linguistic data confirm the influence of religious consciousness on the language while forming the fundamental landmarks for the system of values and basic morale guidelines for the bearers of a certain type of cultural conscience.

A number of studies undertaken by us have displayed that the use of relevant methods of analyses in regard to the definite layers of lexis can facilitate decoding of principles of mentality of the studied culture, the specific features of cultural orientation and, finally, to modelling the versions of socio-cultural behaviour of its bearers.

3. The Principle of Coding of Basic Notions

The system of values, worked out in the cultures that had been formed within the common Orthodox paradigms of the Christian mentality (such as Georgian and Russian) not only coincide with each other in designation of fundamental values, but also the coding of basic notions—basic values—in relevant national languages, happens within the frameworks of a common symbolic system. Registered in the figurative-symbolic

4 Vezhbickaja, A. *Ponimanie kultur cherez posredstvo kljuchevykh slov* [Understanding Cultures Through Their Key Words]. Moskva: Jazyki slavjanskoj kultury, 2001, p. 35.

5 Geertz, C. *Meaning and order in Moroccan society: Three essays in cultural analysis*. Cambridge: University Press, 1979, p. 89.

6 Parsons, T. *Structure of Social Action*. N.Y.: McGraw-Hill, 1937.

form, they are granted to a bearer of the given language from birth, and it effects the formation of his worldview on a sub-conscious level. Very often they pose as key words of the cultural code, some kind of marking system for designating the boundaries of the system of values. Discovery of such words in common semantic field and later their decoding (discovery of their genesis and interconnection of notions, reconstruction of their mythological symbolic, i.e. decoding of formula, which facilitated transmission of valuable information) seems to be one of the most prospective methods for studying national cultural code.⁷

As “the method of naming a certain phenomenon or notion, the method of expression of relationships in the language inevitably leads to ideological trends, which in their way facilitate familiarization of this phenomenon or relationship with the previous experience in societies with different conditions and world visions.”⁸ In this respect the particular importance acquires the very layer of the language in which the traces of metaphorical interpretation of the fundamentals of world vision characteristic to a certain national culture (which after all comprise the foundation decoded in the language—a national picture of the world) are preserved the most vividly.

Mythological mode of thinking is the sphere of knowledge which approximates the understanding of ancient languages, on which the first editions of holy script were written. Majority of the Church representatives are against the creation of new “modern” versions of the Holy Scriptures due to the fact that the ancient languages are more polysemantic and figurative than modern languages. “New languages are primarily directed to the reason of the men—to its analytical ability, which is poorer in comparison with the spiritual intuition. Nobody denies that they can express an emotional-sensory, a passionate state of a man, but for expression of the spiritual state, which is most vividly displayed in the prayers, new languages seem bloodless and feeble, as muscles of an old man” explains the Archimandrite Raphael. “The ecclesiastic language is nearer to the inner logos—the language of the spirit, the language of ecclesiastical intuition and spiritual contemplation, than modern languages. This is not the language of the reason but of the heart, the language of the insight vision, the language of intensive spiritual energy and peculiar dynamics. Ancient languages trigger in the soul of a man some kind of distant ‘recollection’ about the lost ability to transfer his feelings via thoughts, ability to understand the other soul and perceive the illumination from the God. [...] An

7 See Modebadze, I. I. «Oderzhimost», «dissociacija lichnosti» i «stabilnost obshhestva» (khristianskaja mentalnost, psichoanaliz i socio-kulturnye procesy). V: *Gruzinskaja rusistika (literaturovedenije, lingvistika, kulturologija)* [Possession, personal dissociation and stability of the society (Christian mentality, psychoanalysis and socio-cultural processes). In: Russian Philology (Literary criticism, linguistics and culturology)]. Tbilisi: TGU, 2005, p. 252–301.

Modebadze, I. მოდებაძე, ირინე. „უძღებები შვილის დაბრუნება“: ქრისტიანობა და მარქსიზმი (მასობრივ ცნობიერებაში მომხდარი მემკვიდრეობითი ტრანსფორმაციის საკითხი) [Modebadze, I. *Prodigal Son's Return*]: *Christianity and Marxism (towards the issue of continuity of transformations of mass mentality)*]. “Sdjani” [“Meditations”], 2004, p. 171–175 (in Georgian).

Modebadze, I. მოდებაძე, ირინე. ეროვნული კულტურული კოდის სესწავლასათვის [Modebadze, I. *National Cultural Code*]. Criterion, 2004, Tbilisi, №11-12, p. 45-49 (in Georgian).

8 Kipiani, N. V. I. Abaev: ideja “maloj” i “bolshoj semantiki” [V.I. Abaev: the Idea of “Small” and “Great” Semantics]. *Caucasian Messenger*. 2001, 3, Tbilisi, p. 171.

ancient language is nearer to the inner logos, and that's why it enjoys the most powerful influence over a person. [...] a man recollects about the lost paradise and about the language to which all living beings obeyed, the language he used while talking with angels. Here's the mystic of the language.”⁹

As we can see, our topic is not just about the language itself (some definite, national language), but about the mode of thinking, types of communication, differing in the degree of translating and understanding the information (information, expressed in ancient languages, is directed towards spirituality—the information of modern languages are mainly directed towards the reason of the recipient). In this case we cannot rule out the possibility that under the influence of “mystique of the language” (the works of the different levels of perception) older symbols turn out to be more polysemantic for perception.

The reconstruction of old symbolic notions of lexical layers that are interesting for us acquire greater importance when considering the registered system of values in languages, which, similar to the Georgian language, managed to carry throughout the centuries and preserve in the active lexis considerable number of words, that simultaneously belong to the old language lexis too. Such reconstruction gives us the possibility to talk about the changes in the hierarchy in the evaluating matrix of archetypical notion-symbols, expressing the most significant moral and aesthetic categories.

According to the definition of G. Duby, mentality—“is a system (precisely a system) in movement, thus becoming the subject of history, at the same time all its elements are tightly interconnected; this is a system of images, conceptions which in different groups or countries (which in their own turn comprise social formation) are differently interpreted, but always lay in the foundation of human understanding of the world and his/her role in this world and consequently determine the behaviour and deeds of people.”¹⁰ Studied differences in word formation of Georgian and Russian languages are the clear verification of the validity of G. Duby's definition, when he characterizes the mentality as a mobile system. As for the explanations of noted differences in aggregation with the basic archetypical notion-symbols, it seems that we should look for them in the history of mentality of Georgian and Russian nations, who although belong to one and the same context of Christian culture, have chosen individual routes to it. The accomplished analysis proves that differences in additional connotations are relicts of the pre-Christian experience, the differences in aggregation with the basic archetypical notion-symbols, the difference in their further transformations are the basic indicators of specifics of functioning of this system in every national culture.

Thus the system of values, worked out in cultures and formed within the frameworks of common paradigms of Christian mentality, not only comply with each other in determining the fundamental values, but the very coding of basic system of values—

9 Archimandrite, R. (Karelin). *Khristianstvo i modernism* [Christianity and modernism]. Moskva: Izdatelstvo Moskovskogo Podvorja Svjato-Troickoj Sergievoj Lavry, 1999, p. 363–364.

10 Djubi, Zh. *Razvitie istoricheskikh issledovanij vo Francii posle 1950 g.* V: Odissej. *Chelovek v istorii* [Development of historic studies in France after 1950. In: Odysseus A man in the history. Cultural-anthropologic history today]. Kulturno-antropologicheskaja istprijia segodnja. Moskva: Nauka, 1991, p. 52.

the guidelines of the fundamental values—in corresponding national languages also proceed within the frameworks of the common symbolic system. Given in the notion-symbolic form, they are presented to the individual involved in the context of the native language from the very birth and has decisive role in the formation of fundamental theses of his worldview, on the sub-conscious level. Very often these guidelines of the fundamental values at the same time are the key words of the cultural code, a certain identification codes of polar borders of the value system of national cultures; and the key to the decoding the national peculiarities of the mentality of nations, belonging to common Christian cultural paradigm, lies in the correlation of historical peculiarities of their formation.

The traditions are used as the defence mechanism for preserving the formed, stable systems of values. Studying their functioning (rather dying out) in contemporary society, gives us the possibility to judge the existing system of guidelines for the fundamental values in the system of hierarchies, for evaluating the array of changes (from the extreme negative to ideal).

4. The Dissolution of the Cultural Boundaries and Language Field

The process of dissolution of the cultural boundaries under the conditions of the sweeping globalization of mankind (which demands from the individual prompt responses to the accelerated cultural changes and their adoption), is accompanied by the intrusion of an enormous number of terminologies in the actual and common language vocabulary. These terminologies are connected with new activities and with certain forms of social being. These lexical units, particularly the latter, carry some additional connotations, characteristic for the system of values of the culture, from where the unities had originated. Sometimes, these values are different from the determined hierarchy of the fundamental system of values. The accelerated process of their assimilation by national culture, with centuries old traditions, may aggravate cultural confrontation and sometimes even provoke explosive processes in some cultures individually.

A number of surveys indicate that on the word formation level, these processes have been differently manifested in different languages. Namely, if in the Russian language the tendencies of transformation, change of lexical unities are clear (phonetic changes, changes within the paradigms of case grammar and etc.) and involves the fashion of “word creation”, which in its turn gives the basis to talk loudly about the problem of preserving the purity of the Russian language, for the Georgian language (where the subjects concerning the preservation of the purity also enjoys hot discussions), if the words are taken from the European languages (basically having English roots), we mainly encounter the direct adoption.

All these processes found their reflection in the specifications of contemporary literary style: in contemporary Georgian literature these lexical unities more often have the form of foreign language insertions, having preserved their graphic writing in the native language. The same tendency is observed in the spoken language: while

pronouncing a certain “popular” word the users always try to reproduce all phonetic sounds in the original language. And even as the process of assimilation is accomplished in the accelerated speed, nevertheless all its stages are vividly identified and can be used both as indicators of the geopolitical situation, as guidelines in defining political, economic and national values.

As a rule, new lexical unities have distinct connotations and are divided into two basic groups according to their functional meaning. The first one is generally accepted (international) expressions, that acquire the character of transliterated expressions, denoting new concepts – marks of the changed reality under the process of globalization; the second is introduction into the actual spoken language foreign “clones” in some concrete expressions and clearly differentiating them in meaning from the relevant word in the mother language (as a rule having the polysemantic meaning).

Generalization

The process of dissolution of the language boundaries and changes accompanying this process, taking place in the life of the modern languages (the changes concerning the usage of number of lexical unities), also reflect the basic tendencies of the oscillation—the change of the system of values in our society. Their study under the given aspect (on the one hand the natural process of dating of some lexical unities and their transfer from the general usage into the obsolete vocabulary, and, on the other hand, the enrichment of the language with new lexical unities as well as the ways and the velocity of their penetration into the language) seems rather prospective direction of studies, which can facilitate the definition of the basic tendencies in changes, that take place in our society, through their reflection in the ideo-semantic language fields, as well as working out practical measures for neutralizing possible negative effects, which as a rule accompany similar processes.

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PASAULIO ĮVAIZDIS TAUTOS KALBOJE IR KULTŪRŲ GLOBALIZACIJOS PROCESAI

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Santrauka. Straipsnyje tiriami kultūrinės globalizacijos procesai, kalbų ribų nykimas ir kalbų laukų vibracinės pabaigos lyginant šiuos reiškinius su tautinių vertybių hierarchija ir tautiniu kalbos pasaulio vaizdo atspindžiu.

Tautos kultūros kodų transformacijų studija, požiūris į tautos kultūros tradicijas ir gyvos šiuolaikinės kalbos procesų vystymasis (leksinių vienetų vartojimo dažnumo pokyčiai, kalbos laukų uždaramas, naujų leksinių vienetų skverbimosi būdai ir greitis) aptariamas kaip specialių nacionalinių greitos kultūrinės adaptacijos procesų tyrimo metodas.

Kalbos ribų nykimas ir su šiuo procesu susiję pokyčiai, kurie vyksta šiuolaikinės kalbos gyvenime (pokyčiai, susiję su leksinių vienetų vartojimo skaičiumi) atspindi virpėjimo principą – vertybių kaitą mūsų visuomenėje. Jų tyrimas tokiu aspektu (viena vertus, natūralus kai kurių leksinių vienetų senėjimas ir jų traukimasis iš bendros vartosenos į pasenusios kalbos sferą ir, kita vertus, kalbos praturtinimas naujais leksiniais vienetais, jų patekimo į kalbą būdai ir skvarbumas) atveria naujas tyrimo kryptis, kurios padės apibrėžti esminių pokyčių,

vykstančių mūsų visuomenėje, tendencijas žvelgiant į jų atspindžius ideosemantiniuose laukuose ir formuojant praktines priemones neigiamų pasekmių, kurios dažniausiai susijusios su tokiais procesais, neutralizavimui.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: *pasaulio įvaizdis kalboje, tradicija, kultūros ribos, vertybių sistema, kultūrinė globalizacija.*

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