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On the Study of the Native Language of the Ob-Ugric Ethnos: Scientific Foundations

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Abstract. The authors of the article consider the issues of the formation of ethno-cultural and national identity on the example of the Ob-Ugric ethnic group living in the Arctic. Much attention is paid to such ethno-cultural component as native language. The problem of bilingualism, as well as the development of communicative competence in native and foreign languages, their practical application in the cultural sphere and social life under the influence of social, pedagogical and psychological factors is topical. Despite living in harsh climatic conditions, the northerners have for centuries cultivated such feelings as responsibility, justice, readiness to help. The authors noted the interest in the deep historical roots of their ethnic group and presented indisputable facts of educating children in the spirit of preserving and increasing values, passing them on to subsequent generations, spreading throughout the world. Based on the analysis of modern ethnopedagogical trends in the educational space of the Ob-Ugric ethnos, some recommendations on the main issues of ethnoculture and folk pedagogy development are presented. The study is based on the ideas of Wilhelm von Humboldt about the spiritual power of people, the role of language in the spiritual development of mankind, the peculiarities of the national character, the thinking of the people, their spiritual nature and way of life, conceptualization of knowledge about the world and the ways of its transmission. The authors assign a special role to ethnopsychology, the science of individual and collective consciousness, and ethnopedagogy, which integrates the ethnocultural component into the system of training sessions and contributes to the formation of a national identity in the younger generation, understanding and preserving the spiritual and moral values and traditions of their people.

Keywords: *ethnopedagogy, ethnopsychology, ethno-linguistics, linguoculturology, ethnopedagogy, ethnography, anthropology, indigenous peoples of the North (SIPN), Ob-Ugric ethnos, national identity*

Introduction

The topic is relevant due to the challenges of modernity and is associated with such concepts as the national idea and national identity. It is known that the issue of strengthening the all-Russian civic identity is a key topic at the moment, and the Basic Law of Russian Constitution enshrines the key guidelines of the state national policy, including the preservation of the ethnocultural and linguistic diversity of the country. In addition, as part of the government's preparation of the concept of State language policy, amendments to the Law “On the Languages of the Peoples of

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the Russian Federation” will be adopted on the responsibility of the state for preserving the native languages of the peoples of the country¹.

The basis of the national idea is national identity, which determines the significance of a particular people, ethnic group or nation. It was the national idea that prompted us to talk about the historical mission and the meaning of existence of the Russian people, to characterize the people themselves as a historical and cultural community, to understand their original path of development, spiritual kinship with all the peoples inhabiting our state, as well as their role as part of the world whole.

The subject of the study is language as an ethnocultural component, its development and preservation, as well as the process of acquiring communicative competence skills based on bilingualism. The purpose of the article is to study and describe the factors influencing the study of languages (native and foreign) in the formation of spiritual and moral values and to solve several problems: to consider the influence of language on the spiritual development of humanity (using the example of the ideas of W. von Humboldt), to identify the features and problems of intercultural communications, to justify possible ways to solve them, to describe the system of continuity of educational organizations of Ugra in the field of ethnopedagogy, to prove the need for ethnopedagogical trends in the educational space in order to generalize and disseminate experience, to provide some recommendations on these issues.

The spiritual and cultural traditions of ancient civilizations have been preserved in Russia. Our research is at the intersection and in the interaction of such sciences as ethnoculturology, ethnopsychology, ethno-linguistics, linguoculturology, ethnopedagogy, anthropology. These sciences are closely related to each other, since the object of their research is ethnos, which means “people” in Greek. Already in ancient times, scientists observed differences in cultures, appearance, and mentality of representatives of ethnic groups, many of them tried to determine the nature of identity. Many texts of ancient scientists — Herodotus, Tacitus, Plutarch and Pliny the Elder — describe the peculiarities of the mental behavior of neighboring barbarian tribes and peoples. Among the medieval researchers who made a certain contribution to the development of ethnopsychology as a science, one should name Marco Polo, Ferdinand Magellan, Vasco da Gama, Christopher Columbus, Cortez, Pizarro, Diego de Landa, Amerigo Vespucci, the Russian explorer Afanasiy Nikitin, the Chinese traveler Zhang Qian. All of the above-mentioned chroniclers were navigators, conquerors and explorers; their works are full of descriptions of the psychology of those peoples through whose lands the routes of conquest or research expeditions passed [1, pp. 1–2].

In the works of researchers of the 17th–19th centuries, such concepts as “general spirit” and “spirit of the people” appear. “Volksggeist” is one of the central categories in the concept of W.

¹ Etnopsikhologiya - eto... Opredelenie, istoriya razvitiya nauki, predmet izucheniya, metody [Ethnopsychology is... Definition, history of the development of science, subject of study, methods]. URL: <https://fb.ru/article/428477/etnopsikhologiya---eto-opredelenie-istoriya-razvitiya-nauki-predmet-izucheniya-metodyi> (accessed 21 January 2023).

von Humboldt: “the language of a people is its spirit, and the spirit of a people is its language, and it is difficult to imagine anything identical” [2, p. 171].

These terms were embedded in the features of the national character, the interrelation of mentality, way of thinking, spiritual structure and way of life of an ethnos. Ethnopsychology deals with issues of self-awareness of people of any socio-ethnic community. G.A. Sidorov, writer-historian and traveler, can be named among the researchers of ethnopsychology. His work “Ethnopsychology of the peoples of the former Tartaria” [1, pp. 4–5] reveals the deep foundations of the collective psychology of these indigenous peoples and gives an idea of the ethnocultural world and the traditional way of life of the Tungus, Yakuts, Evenks and Khanty. The author observed the difference between the individual and collective consciousness of ethnic groups and explained why people show certain qualities and character traits in certain situations, for example, Evenks and Evens have extraordinary resilience, endurance and fearlessness. In his work we find the answer: the people received all these qualities from their ancestors. The Tungus ethnic group is rooted in the history of Manchuria, and the Ob Ugrians, together with the Scythians, came from northern Tibet and settled in the Urals. The nomadic way of life of their ancestors, according to the assumption of G.A. Sidorov, passed to the modern Mansi, Khanty, and Yakuts. The ancestors of the Yakuts are the Kyrgyz, Tuvan Chiks, Kurykans and Russian Cheldons. Therefore, it is not surprising that the psychology of the Yakuts is distinctive: on the one hand, this people is somewhat similar to the Slavs, and on the other, they are typical steppe nomads who, by the will of fate, settled in the taiga [1, pp. 5–6].

Wilhelm von Humboldt’s ideas about the language of an ethnos

The German scientist Wilhelm von Humboldt studied the relationship between language and culture of an ethnic group. At present, the problems of the relationship between language and culture in our country are dealt with by such sciences as linguoculturology and ethnolinguistics, the tasks of which coincide. Linguoculturology is focused on the current state of culture and its synchronous representation in linguistic entities, and ethnolinguistics carries out its research on the ethnic material of languages in their retrospective [3, p. 67]. According to the definition of V.A. Maslova, “Linguoculturology is a humanitarian discipline that studies material and spiritual culture embodied in a living national language and manifested in linguistic processes. It allows us to establish and explain how one of the fundamental functions of language — to be an instrument for the creation, development, storage and transmission of culture — is realized. Its goal is to study the ways in which language embodies, stores and transmits culture in its units” [4, p. 30]. Linguoculturology studies language as a cultural phenomenon. The methodological basis of linguoculturology is cognitive linguistics, which relates language and culture to forms of consciousness. The focus of these sciences is on human, considered as a carrier of language and culture. Therefore, the main attention of modern linguists is concentrated on the native speaker as a representative of national culture, a certain social group, who has his own psychological, social and other character-

istics. “Language – culture – personality (ethnicity-person) – self-knowledge” — these are the components that determine the essence of the anthropocentric approach to the study of language and correspond to the general trend of modern humanitarian research [3, p. 67].

W. von Humboldt saw the true purpose of language as an “organ of thought formation” to “serve as an inspirational instrument for newly emerging generations”, since mutual understanding arises not because a certain word expresses the same meaning for all speakers of a given language, but because people “... touch the same keys of the instrument of their spirit, thanks to which everyone’s consciousness flashes corresponding, but not identical meanings” [5, p. 227].

Language is closely intertwined with the spiritual development of humanity and accompanies it at every stage of its local progress or regression, reflecting every stage of culture. The connection of a person with a people, a race and the entire human race is carried out primarily through language. Language is essentially “the property of the entire human race”, “it is in language that each individual most clearly feels himself to be a simple appendage of the human race: Language belongs to me, because what I call it into being is what it becomes for me; and since all of it is firmly rooted in the speech of our contemporaries and in the speech of past generations — to the extent that it was continuously transmitted from one generation to another — the language itself imposes a limitation on me. But what in it limits and defines me came to it from human nature, intimately close to me, and therefore what is alien in language is alien only to my transitory, individual nature, but not to my original nature. Like human himself, each language is an infinity gradually unfolding in time. Through the variety of languages, the richness of the world and the diversity of what we learn in it are revealed to us; and human existence becomes wider for us, since languages in distinct and effective ways give us different ways of thinking and perceiving” [5, p. 228].

The complex of anthropolinguistic problems identified and partly solved by Humboldt is very relevant in modern Russian linguistics, which persistently declares its own anthropocentricity. The indication of the “continuity of ideas” that foreshadowed the interest in human being is not always found in modern literature, therefore the new branch of linguistics, linguopersonology, the object of which is the linguistic personality as a phenomenon of manifestation of the “human factor in language”, can be considered as a very peculiar synthesis of the Humboldt’s “comparative anthropology” and “comparative linguistics”.

The Arctic is the circumpolar storehouse of the planet

The circumpolar Arctic is the main storehouse of the planet, which is called the Far North, the Arctic, and the Tundra with the Arctic Ocean; the attention of the entire planet is drawn to it today. To conquer this harsh region, a person should have a certain level of technology. The indigenous peoples of the North did not try to conquer the North, they radically changed themselves, adapted to live in this region in constant labor and care, which modern people are often incapable of. When the children of Pomors, nomads, and reindeer herders are taught literacy and numeracy

in boarding schools, they are essentially torn away from their native environment and deprived of the skills they need to survive in a harsh climate ².

The Arctic today is a good example of successful multilateral cooperation between different states and peoples. Due to the fact that in the modern period there are processes related to the industrial development of the North, more and more materials are appearing in the media reflecting positive changes in the northern territories, migration flows are intensifying, tourist and excursion routes related to the study of history, culture of the small peoples of the North are being developed and are very popular, the problem of improving the communicative competence of pupils and students, improving their philological training arises. Teachers of foreign languages, as well as native languages, are faced with the task of forming a personality that can adapt to modern conditions and be able to participate in intercultural communication. The government of the Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Okrug—Ugra has legislatively enshrined initiatives aimed at supporting ethnopedagogy and ethnic education of Khanty, Mansi, Nenets and other indigenous peoples' children. The educational direction on the territory of Ugra has its own characteristics and developments, which we would like to share in this article. The harsh climate and special economic and fishing activities have had and continue to influence the socio-economic development of the region, creating a unique system of education that harmoniously fits into the modern traditional way of life of the small indigenous peoples of the North (SIPN).

Formation of the national culture of the Ob-Ugric peoples

The process of formation of the national culture of the SIPN living on the territory of Ugra covers huge time layers, as well as all spheres of life of these peoples, including historical factors, primarily related to migration flows, territories of placement and management, assimilation processes, natural and climatic factors, geographical environment, climate change, landscape features, hydrosystem, the presence and extraction of minerals, the need to adapt to difficult living conditions. L.R. Berezina in her research calls this culture "rational, archaic, unique" [6, p. 638]. According to E.G. Fedorova, "the process of formation of the culture of the Ob-Ugric peoples is a combination of different cultures, the origins of which lie in the cultures of the taiga settlements of Western Siberia, cattle breeders of the forest and forest-steppe zones, as well as other peoples with whom the Ob Ugrians neighbored at different stages of their history" [7, p. 75].

In the 18th–20th centuries, many scientists (G. Novitskiy, A.M. Kastren, A. Reguli, U.T. Sirelius, A. Ahlquist, B. Munkacsi, K.F. Karjalainen, A. Kanisto, A.A. Dunin-Gorkavich, V.N. Chernetsov, V. Steinitz, Z.P. Sokolova, etc.), including those belonging to the Finno-Ugric group, collected data related to the culture and ethnography of the indigenous peoples, and described them.

The researchers note that the culture of the Ob-Ugric groups is a striking example of a combination of various ethnocultural features that unite material and spiritual cultures. It is well

² Eroshkin A.S. Tsirkumpolyarnaya Arktika. Okhota na slova [Circumpolar Arctic. Word hunt]. URL: <https://proza.ru/2019/10/02/858> (accessed 21 January 2023).

known that the main types of ornaments made on birch bark, chess-fur mosaics from different types of fur were created by the Ural-Siberians; the cut of embroidered clothing is very similar to the clothes of the inhabitants of Kazakhstan and Central Asia; the image of a bear (as the image of an Iranian hero), costume details, the use of metal tools, and horse riding are associated with Iranian traditions; Sargato-Sarmatian influence was noted, a population that was a neighbor of the Scythian state and later moved to the southern regions of Western Siberia.

Thus, the peculiarity of the material and spiritual culture of the Ob Ugrians is the persistence and constancy of ethnic traditions, the origins of which lie in deep antiquity. These traditions were formed on other territories and in other natural conditions, but turned out to be so resilient that they changed little in the process of adaptation to the new environment, which began several centuries ago [5, p. 638]. It was the resource-rich taiga that for centuries provided the local population with the opportunity to live through hunting, fishing, and gathering, while for other peoples the taiga was considered unattractive for living.

Modern teacher-researchers Bakieva O.A., Bagapova N.V., Kolchanova E.A., Shokhov K.O. consider a wide range of educational problems related to the development of children of indigenous peoples of the North. The main attention in their work is paid to the possibilities of education and upbringing through traditional art, artistic and museum activities. According to the authors of the study, the integration of the ethnocultural component into the system of classroom and extra-curricular activities contributes to the formation of national identity among the younger generation, understanding and preservation of the spiritual and moral values and traditions of their people [8].

Ethnopedagogical trends in the educational space of SIPN

The system of education verified by centuries and generations is the basis of modern ethnopedagogy, which, as folk pedagogy, has absorbed centuries-old knowledge of indigenous minorities, habits, concepts, traditions, customs that help students understand natural phenomena, the connection between people's lives and work, and the basic principles of intercultural communication.

Despite the fact that much traditional knowledge was lost as a result of severe deformations to which the culture and way of life of the indigenous peoples were subjected in the 1930s–1950s, in various psychological, pedagogical, sociological studies, the increasing role of ethnic factors in the formation of personality and the strengthening of the interaction of ethnic cultures is noted. According to T.A. Grosheva [9, p. 5], in philosophy, pedagogy, psychology today there is a certain experience on the problems of developing communicative competence among students in the conditions of the traditional way of life of SIPN on the territory of Ugra, which is described in the works of E.D. Aipin, V.I. Baymurzina, G.I. Baturina, A.S. Belkin, A.L. Bugaeva, M.S. Vasilyeva, G.V. Volkov, E.V. Korotaeva, G.F. Kuzina, V.M. Kulemzin, V.M. Kurikov, A.M. Sagalaev, T.G. Kharamzin and others.

Ethnopedagogy, which fosters in children a sense of dignity, benevolence, respectful attitude to people and the surrounding nature, readiness to help any living creature, allows to accu-

multate and transmit pedagogical experience from generation to generation. The main tasks of ethnopedagogy are: differentiated education of boys and girls; attracting children to work at an early age; socialization; teaching national-Russian bilingualism, which will facilitate easier learning of a foreign language in the future; the formation of such qualities as independence, responsibility, self-development and others necessary for a child's communication in any team.

Ethnopedagogy contains various educational and upbringing technologies that take into account local characteristics and capabilities, including a differentiated approach to the educational process, practical teaching methods, in which the main form is independent work, including the development of creative projects, filling out technological maps, using reference books, scientific popular literature, information and communication resources.

The most popular forms of mastering ethnocultural values on the territory of Ugra are "pedagogical workshops", health-saving technologies, elements of museum pedagogy using local history material, and extracurricular general educational activities that include a sociocultural component. Thus, ethnopedagogy is aimed at the peculiarities of the way of life of the SIPN, the methods of cultural development, the involvement of the indigenous peoples in the regional community, and the preparation of children for life in a multicultural society.

Continuity and consistency play a very important role in teaching languages, especially in the formation of communication skills. If a child has been familiar with a second language since childhood and has acquired skills in using two languages or a second language, then the bilingualism of such a child can be classified into two types: either it is communicatively initiated bilingualism, or it is educationally spread one [10, p. 112].

Bilingualism: problems and prospects

Bilingualism is a child's fluency in two languages (native and non-native) and their alternate use in everyday life, and the use of languages does not interfere with each other. Spontaneous childhood bilingualism arises from the need of children, often of different ages, speaking different languages, for mutual communication. There is a so-called educationally widespread bilingualism, when at a certain age the study of a native or foreign language begins. The problem is that bilingualism formed at an early stage of a child's development does not always continue outside the educational organization. Communication skills acquired at school sometimes do not provide students with the opportunity to use them as a means of mutual communication. When students, in order to receive further (professional) education, plan to move from their native village, where their communication took place in their native language, to a city where communication is carried out in another language (for example, Russian), the motivation to study their native and foreign languages sharply decreases. The solution to the problem is to create on the territory of Ugra such conditions for maintaining a holistic and homogeneous cultural and linguistic environment in which young people from among the indigenous minorities will continue their studies in an educational institution, using their skills and abilities. The system of continuity of educational organiza-

tions built by the regional government using the example: kindergarten – school – college – university, continuity of teaching native and foreign languages in all educational organizations throughout the entire period of study within the framework of approved curricula increase the effectiveness of language teaching and students' confidence in the need to use them.

Regional and local authorities organize the implementation of a high-quality educational process, increasing the professionalism of teachers, engaging in their timely retraining, ensuring the organization of the educational process with the necessary sets of teaching aids, assessing their effectiveness and timely replacement of outdated manuals.

The formation of communicative competence in native languages also occurs outside educational organizations under the influence of social, pedagogical, and psychological factors. A vivid example is the activities of regional and local groups, such as: the theater of the Ob-Ugric peoples "Sun", television programs and broadcasts "Ugric Heritage", "Severnny Dom", "Uvas Mir Putar" ("Word of the Peoples of the North"), "Yugorskiy kolorit", "Yomvosh shunyang yoh" (stories about indigenous people), publication of the journal "Bulletin of Ugric Studies", books, anthologies in native languages, development of educational and methodological complexes in ethnography, Khanty, Mansi, Nenets languages, active use of IT technologies, publication of electronic collections on ethnocultural topics, as well as the following events: Bear Games, Crow Day, Reindeer Herder Day, Region Day, Lunar Treat Festival, Elk Festival and others, when indigenous peoples pass on their traditions, values, foundations to the new generation, where children show their communicative competencies in their native language, receive additional motivation to study their native languages, and use the opportunity to become more sociable, active, and learn to interact in a team. Important factors in this direction are additional classes, electives, participation in folk language festivals, linguistic Olympiads in native languages, global dictations, author meetings with famous writers and poets, ethnocultural summer recreation programs at camps, master classes, oral journals and roundtables, debates and discussions, folk games and competitions, folk art; it is important to listen to folk tales, study folk proverbs, sayings, riddles, music, play folk instruments, during which teaching activities are organized in such a way that every child feels included in the creative process, which also has a positive impact on the formation of communicative competence, makes them proud of knowing their language and culture, allows them to honor and preserve the traditions of the indigenous peoples [11, p. 423].

Conclusion

On the need to preserve and develop ethnocultural education and native language

The idea that language is the soul of any nation is very important, and in the case of the indigenous peoples, the peculiarity of the form of human community, based on the parity interaction of human and nature [12, p. 12], and not on the assertion that man is the king of nature, is clearly manifested. Since Russia is a multinational country, its distinctive feature is the presence of multicultural education, that is, ethnocultural education, where language and culture necessarily

imply respect and interest in other languages and cultures. Ugra is a region where ethnocultural education is considered ethnoregional, based on the richness of the cultures of the peoples living here, especially the SIPN. They have a predisposition to figurative and symbolic thinking, to creating a holistic figurative picture of the world. Obviously, in the future of development and further modernization of culture, the traditional, holistic should continue to exist in society in parallel with the modernized, rationalized, technologized as the foundation of culture [12, p. 13] in order to preserve ethnic individuality and continuity. Russian education has to solve many problems in matters of ethnic education.

In order to obtain good communication skills in native and foreign languages, it is necessary to fulfill all the above conditions. According to A.A. Burykin, in the absence of a communicative environment, there is no language attraction [10, p. 120]. Currently, educational strategies for indigenous peoples are aimed at introducing them to their native language and traditional national culture; however, it is necessary to note the insufficient level of development of various methodological recommendations for the formation of communicative competence among indigenous children. There is a need for legal regulation of the situation of the native languages of the indigenous peoples, the creation of ethnopedagogy programs using new innovative technologies for the development and preservation of language and culture, as well as special programs to improve the ethnological qualifications of many specialists working in the social sphere, primarily teachers, the introduction of the subject of ethnography in educational institutions, the active use of distance forms in the implementation of educational ethnopedagogy programs, and the development of fruitful cooperation with the local community. Currently, there is a growing interest in the culture of their peoples, a revival of folk traditions and rituals, but despite this, the problem of introducing a child to the origins of folk, national culture remains relevant and requires further study and search for effective ways to form communicative competence, educate and instill a sense of respect for the cultural and spiritual values of each nation. The most unique thing is that language is the accumulator and keeper of knowledge in a constantly changing world; it is language that plays the main role in the conceptualization of the human world [3, p. 68].

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