



ETHNOLINGUISTICS AND MODERNITY

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Annotation: The article is an overview of the current state of ethnolinguistic research and its relevance in the modern world. The article also highlights the importance of ethnolinguistics in understanding cultural diversity and preserving linguistic heritage.

Keywords: ethnolinguistics, modernity, cultural diversity, research methods, linguistic heritage, challenges.

Traditional culture must be studied in its ethnic, regional and “dialectal” forms, and the main source for the study of traditional culture is language. Culture, like natural language, is understood as a system of signs, as a semiotic system, or as a language in the semiotic sense of the word.

It is also necessary to take into account the fact that the transition to an anthropological (or anthropocentric) paradigm, i.e. to the study of culture and language in close connection with man - his consciousness, thinking, subject-related practical and spiritual activity. In this approach, the main thing is the understanding of the “integrality” of culture, i.e. the semantic unity of all its forms and genres (language, ritual, beliefs, folk art), which is determined by a single picture of the world of a person who perceives and comprehends the world and creates culture.

Such an integrated approach to the study of culture is carried out with the help of ethnolinguistics - “a discipline that studies language through the prism of human consciousness, mentality, everyday and ritual behavior, mythological ideas and mythopoetic creativity” [1, 5] (or, in a different formulation by the same authors, “a complex discipline that studies traditional folk spiritual culture and its reflection in language” [1, 488]).

This interpretation of ethnolinguistics can be considered the most authoritative, because with this approach, the subject of science becomes clearly defined, separating itself from related linguistic disciplines - sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, etc. (of course, this does not exclude their interaction and interpenetration). For this reason, the above narrowed understanding of the subject of science seems more appropriate than the broad definition of A. S. Gerd, for whom “the subject of ethnolinguistics is language in its relation to ethnos and ethnos in its



relation to language”; “the goal of ethnolinguistics is to show how language in different forms of its existence, at different stages of its history, influenced and influences the history of a people, the position of a particular ethnic group in modern society” [2, 3-5].

The term “ethnolinguistics” (ethnosemantics, anthropolinguistics) was introduced into science thanks to the research of American scientists F. Boas and E. Sapir, who revealed the relationship between ethnicity, culture and language.

According to the generally accepted definition, ethnolinguistics (from the Greek *éthnos* - tribe, people) and linguistics, anthropolinguistics, ethnosemantics, a direction in linguistics that studies the relationship between language and culture (ethnic psychology).

One of the objects of ethnolinguistics was kinship terminology, on which new methods of linguistic analysis (for example, component ones) were tested. In the middle of the 20th century. Other areas of vocabulary and levels of language began to be explored. The fact of a close relationship between language phenomena (for example, ways of structuring linguistic meaning) and non-linguistic cultural phenomena was established - the hypothesis of E. Sapir and B. Whorf about the so-called linguistic relativity. On the basis of ethnolinguistics, reactionary theories of a racist nature arose at different times, but were not widespread in science.

Ethnolinguistics is a field of linguistics that studies language in its relationship with culture. Central to ethnolinguistics are the following two closely interrelated problems, which can be called “cognitive” (from the Latin *cognitio* - knowledge) and “communicative” (from the Latin *communicatio* - communication):

Ethnolinguistics emerged as an independent field in the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. within the framework of the so-called “cultural anthropology” (or, according to the American tradition, “anthropology” itself, from the Greek *anthropos* “man”) - a complex science, the subject of which is a comprehensive study of culture using ethnographic, linguistic, archaeological and other methods.

Therefore, in works focused on the American tradition, instead of the term “ethnolinguistics” (or along with it), the term “anthropological linguistics” is often used - for studies devoted primarily to cognitive issues, or the term “linguistic anthropology” - for studies devoted primarily to communicative issues .

The use of the term “anthropology” in the American scientific tradition should not be confused with the use of this term in Russia and many European countries, where anthropology is understood primarily as “physical anthropology” - the science



of the origin and evolution of man, the study of variations in the physical structure of man using descriptive and measuring techniques. Most of the problems that, according to the American tradition, are dealt with by “cultural anthropology”, the Russian and partly European traditions consider to be related to “ethnography”.

Today, at the turn of the century, sciences are being integrated, sciences are interacting with each other, and ethnolinguistics is one example of such interaction. Each nation creates its own model of the world, determines spiritual and moral priorities, forms ethnic identity and a system of life values. At the same time, language, religion, anthropological characteristics of an ethnic group can be repeated among other peoples, but the only thing that distinguishes not only an Uzbek from a Finn, but also a Russian from a Ukrainian is a spiritual culture, saturated with rites, rituals, beliefs, ideas that find their expression before everything in language and folklore. But the speakers themselves cannot formulate the essence of their ethnicity. Moreover, there are no such answers regarding the time of formation of the ethnos, when sometimes, not only scientists, there was no writing itself. That’s when an ethnolinguist comes into play, reconstructing hoary antiquity and exploring the current state of folk culture.

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