

THE INTERNATIONAL ROLE OF THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE

Rajabova Svetlana MixaylovnaSenior Teacher, Department of
«The Russian Language and Literature»,
«ALFRAGANUS UNIVERSITY», Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Abstract: Languages have four functions outside their basic territory. These functions are the function of the world languages, the function of the regional language, the function of the contact language and the function of the diaspora language. The Russian language has all these functions. The world role of Russian was indisputable in the Soviet time; it was the main competitor of English. However, the international role of Russian diminished after the defeat of the Soviet Union in the cold war. The role of the regional languages remains in the territory of separate parts of the former USSR but it is reducing too. However, everyday contacts of people of different nationalities (commerce, health resorts, etc.) on Russian are increased. Besides Russian has become the language of minorities in the new states on the territory of the former Soviet Union.

Keywords: language functions, world language, regional language, contact language, diaspora language, the Russian language.

INTRODUCTION

According to the total number of speakers, the Russian language ranks among the top ten world languages, but it is rather difficult to determine this place exactly. The number of people who consider Russian as their mother tongue exceeds 200 million people, 130 million of whom live in Russia. The number of people who are fluent in Russian and use it as a first or second language in everyday communication is estimated at 300-350 million. In Uzbekistan, the number of people who speak spoken Russian is between 50 and 80 percent of the population. As of 2018, there are 903 schools with the Russian language of instruction in the country. The Russian language continues to be used in business circles, the financial and banking systems, in some

government agencies, TV channels continue to broadcast in Russian. The President of our republic, speaking Russian at the highest level, speaks to them perfectly. In total, more than half a billion people in the world speak Russian to one degree or another, and according to this indicator, Russian ranks third in the world after Chinese and English.

The Russian language has become one of the world's leading languages used in all major international organizations -The Soviet education system also made a great contribution to the spread of the Russian language abroad, which, according to Western experts, was one of the best in the world in the 1989/1990 academic year in various civil, military, party, trade union, Komsomol educational institutions trained in Russian about 180 thousand foreign citizens. At the same time, Belarus is the only post-Soviet state where the state status of the Russian language was confirmed in a referendum by an overwhelming majority of votes. It is constitutionally formalized to give the Russian language the status of an official language in Kyrgyzstan. In Kazakhstan, in accordance with the Constitution, the state language is Kazakh. Legislatively, the status of the Russian language was raised in 1995. It can "officially be used on a par with Kazakh in state organizations and self-government bodies." In the Republic of Moldova, the Constitution defines the right to the functioning and development of the Russian language. In accordance with the Constitution of Tajikistan, the state language is Tajik, Russian is the language of interethnic communication. The status of the Russian language in Azerbaijan is not regulated by law. In Armenia and Georgia, the Russian language is given the role of the language of the national minority. In Ukraine, the status of the state language is constitutionally assigned only to the Ukrainian language. In Uzbekistan, the development of the Russian language is approved and stimulated by the government. In most CIS member states, there is a again becoming in demand by those who are directly involved in the development of relations with Russia and the implementation of international projects.

The functions of a language outside its core territory can be reduced to four: the function of a world language, the function of a regional cultural language, the function

of a contact language and the function of a diaspora language. Not all languages have all the listed functions, but the Russian language in the past performed and, to some extent, still performs all these functions.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Such a language has international significance for all states of the world, or at least for the majority of them. It is the official language of international organizations, texts in it are internationally famous, and the international prestige of the language is consistently high. Obvious examples are English and to some extent French.

In the recent past, this function of the Russian language was undeniable. It was especially significant during the Cold War era, when there was a struggle between two models of life, associated primarily with English and Russian languages. The global role of the Russian language at that time had, first of all, three components, which can be conditionally called “the language of Lenin”, “the language of Gagarin” and “the language of Dostoevsky”. In Japan in the 1960s, it was considered necessary among science students to master the Russian language. Russian literature also enjoyed prestige, which was read throughout the world both in translation and in the original. Of course, interest in the Russian language could also be associated with the desire to know the enemy’s language.

After the victory of the United States and its allies in 1989–1991. During the Cold War, the situation changed dramatically. The global role of the English language has increased even more, and the corresponding role of Russian language has decreased. The main reason for the decline, which we don’t always like to talk about, was clearly indicated in 2005 at the conference of the International Association of Teachers of Russian language and literature in Verona (Italy): “Russia no longer embodies the great utopia. Now it has become a country like all the others” [Globus, 2006].

Speaking about the “language of Lenin,” I mean not only the language in which communist ideas are expressed, but the language of any philosophical, political, social

ideas, any ways to explain the world and plans for its reconstruction. Despite everything, there are still both communists and Trotskyists in the world, and

Tolstoyans are noticeable in Japan. Even the work of I.V. Stalin “Marxism and Issues of Linguistics” is still known and is discussed in Japan, India and other countries. In general, the influence of Russian thinkers was stronger on the left than on the right. Now I cannot name a single such popular modern Russian thinker. A.D. Sakharov is perceived exclusively as a political figure, and A.I. Solzhenitsyn was accepted as a politician and rejected as a thinker.

Russian science, of course, to some extent retains international importance even now, but its role has also decreased. The example of space exploration is well known, but here is the humanities of the Soviet period, which in Russia itself is often now viewed exclusively as a science that “was tightly isolated from the rest of the world and, under the supervision of the party apparatus, was forced to revolve in the circle of long-outdated ideas” [Ilizarov, 2003: 186]. But in the West the names of L.S. Vygotsky, V.Ya. Proppa, M.M. Bakhtin, V.B. Shklovsky and others are still respected. They also study Soviet linguistics, including Marxist (E.D. Polivanov, N.F. Yakovlev, L.P. Yakubinsky and even T.P. Lomtev). And among our modern linguists, Russian scientists are mostly known abroad, if at all, as specialists in particular areas, mainly in the languages of Russia or the former USSR: Russian scholars, Turkologists, Caucasian experts, etc., but not as theorists.

As for literature, of course, Russian classics remain significant. Here is “a list of works of Russian literature published in various publishing houses in Japan in the 90s” [Gerasimova, 2004: 234–235]: from the literature of the 19th century, A.S. Pushkin (including “Eugene Onegin” in interlinear form), N.V. Gogol and A.P. Chekhov (both as playwrights) and the book of the forgotten writer S.V. Maksimova were published. Neither L.N. Tolstoy, nor F.M. Dostoevsky has never been published. Later, however, something came out, and a new translation of “The Brothers Karamazov” even made it onto the bestseller lists, but in the publication the text was shortened and a presentation of Suvorin’s version of Alyosha’s execution was added. In a film from the

beginning of the 21st century, where the action takes place in the late 1950s, there is the following dialogue: “I was in the war, but you weren’t. “But you haven’t read Russian literature.” That is, Russian literature is as much a memory of the past as the World War. Literature of the 20th century. somewhat more are published (for example, the fact that among the famous Russian writers of the last half century, two at once - Arkady Strugatsky and Boris Akunin - are professional Japanese scholars, plays a role, and they (Strugatsky, naturally, together with his brother) were published there quite often). And Solzhenitsyn published a lot.

But in general, Japan has lost the habit of both fighting and reading the literature of the former great power, including the original. For some, of course, even now Russian literature is interesting in itself, without connection with the results of the Cold War, but the general situation is affecting many countries.

Academician V.N. Toporov wrote in 1989: “The present time is the boundary after which (and here there is no need to be a prophet) the mutual acquaintance of two cultures, the role of literary connections, the emergence of new forms of cultural contacts and the interpenetration - the mutual enrichment of these cultures will increase very quickly” [Toporov, 1989: 49]. And even: “Probably, from the point of view of the 21st century, everything that has been achieved so far will be attributed to the prehistory of Russian-Japanese cultural relations or to the very initial period of their history [Toporov, 1989: 51]. To the scientist it seemed that the main obstacle was communist ideology, and without it everything would work out on its own. But the opposite happened, and while rapid cross-fertilization does not occur, this also applies to the sphere of language.

Russian remains the language of many international organizations, including the UN. It can also be a language of communication between speakers of very different languages. They write, for example, that at the NATO summit in 2008, German Chancellor A. Merkel and US Secretary of State C. Rice “stood separately from the men and spoke loudly to each other in Russian - they both speak this language fluently” [Zygar, 2021: 188].

However, this situation is a legacy of the past; both interlocutors studied Russian in Soviet times. Language habits are very inertial, but the change of generations will stop such situations if they are not fed from the outside. Of course, there are unpredictable factors, for example, a famous writer can appear anywhere. But it is obvious that “a country like all others” has less chance of its language playing a global role than a superpower.

Such a language performs the same functions as the world language, but on a limited scale. For example, Portuguese has never been a global language, but in the former Portuguese colonies in Africa its cultural role remains. Most often, the regional cultural language is either the language of the former colonialists, or the previously dominant language of a collapsed multinational state: the post-Soviet situation or the situation after the collapse of Austria-Hungary. The cultural role of such a language can last for a long time. At least in the late 1990s in Hungary, among foreign languages in importance, German language, although this country has been outside the German-speaking zone since 1918. In second place was the Russian language and only in third place was English. In the extreme case, a regional language, especially if it is also global, it can displace the national language from the spheres of communication, as happened with the English language in Ireland.

The Russian language performed this function along with the function of the world language both before the revolution, and in Soviet times, and now. No matter how it is treated in the Baltic countries, communication, for example, between neighboring Latvians and Estonians in many cases takes place in Russian; Of course, English competes with it, but so far the middle and older generation there usually knows Russian better. Knowledge of the Russian language was also widespread in a number of countries in Asia and Africa, where there were many graduates of Soviet universities, where, unlike Europe, the USA and Canada, a positive attitude towards the Russian language still prevails, which played there and partly plays now the role of a “window to the world”. The Russian language, however, declines sharply where the dominant desire is to quickly fit into Europe and master the European system of values.

This is especially noticeable in the Baltic states and countries of the former Warsaw Pact, and in connection with government policy has intensified in recent years in Ukraine. However, in most Ukrainian lands, except for the western regions, bilingualism prevails and is far from Ukrainian monolingualism. Several years ago, I observed the following situation in Kyiv: a taxi driver and a passenger from Kiev were engaged in a lively dialogue, while the driver spoke Ukrainian and the passenger spoke Russian. No one had any communication difficulties.

However, Ukraine and, to an even greater extent, Belarus, where the linguistic situation is still similar to the Irish one with Russian in place of English, are special cases. And, for example, Turkmenistan, where even in Soviet times the level of proficiency in the Russian language was low, apparently has finally left the zone of distribution of the Russian language. In general, everywhere except Belarus (where the situation can change dramatically if A.G. Lukashenko's opponents win), the process of ousting the Russian language in this function is taking place at different speeds.

Recently, the process of globalization has not only reduced the number of world languages, but also smoothed out the differences between world and regional cultural languages. It is proposed to use English in both functions. This is opposed not only by political, but also by psychological factors. People who are accustomed to any language, it is usually not easy to change it. According to Levada Center data for 2010, 9% of Russians declared fluency in English [Novaya Gazeta]. And this not only in Russia. We prepared quite a lot of English translators for the 2018 FIFA World Cup, but it turned out that the guests were from Japan or Latin America countries, as a rule, did not speak English, and translators from Japanese or Spanish were not prepared.

Situations when speakers of different languages must communicate with each other are very diverse: trade, labor migration, recreation, etc. All these are not cultural, but everyday spheres. Methods of communication can be different: the use of a world or regional cultural language (usually more prestigious than the mother languages of the interlocutors), the development of a special contact language (pidgin), communication in different but mutually intelligible languages (see the example above

with the Kiev taxi). However, the mother language of one of the interlocutors can also be used, which can also be “the language of a country like all others.” In Soviet times, the role of the Russian language in this function was small: cross-border communication was hampered by the border regime, and Soviet citizens traveled abroad relatively rarely, and if they did, it was more often with translators. Now these contacts have increased sharply while cultural functions have been reduced. For example, with the underdevelopment of resorts in Russia, vacations have spread to Turkey, Greece and other countries. But, as already mentioned, the percentage of Russians who even speak English is small, and a new type of business has appeared in these countries: hotels with Russian-speaking staff. On the other hand, in Russia migrant workers have to master the Russian language at the everyday level.

That is, the international role of the Russian language as the language of a great power is being replaced by its international role, characteristic of the languages of countries “the same as all the others.”

With the development of anthropology, the focus of humanitarian researchers became «the person in language», and the linguistic personality became the main object of 100 humanitarian sciences. The adoption of an anthropological research paradigm contributed to the abandonment of the grammar-translation method of teaching Russian. As a result, a consciously practical method focused not only on knowledge of the language system, but also on the development of speech skills, as well as on the speech practice of foreign students in Russian has become the leading one. The research interest of the humanities in «a person speaking to another person» and generally in communication has actualized the study of language as a means of communication, distinguished by its linguocultural, ethno-psycholinguistic and ethical-philosophical specificity. It is not surprising that the communicative method was found to be more effective, since it was aimed at «entering» foreign students into Russian linguocultural and academic space and was based on subject-subjective teaching-pedagogical interaction. When humanitarian specialists referred to the study of intercultural communication, their research also included the lifestyles characteristic

of linguistic personality. Thus, linguistic pedagogy and Russian teaching methods were able to transcend the boundaries of linguistics, philosophy, psychology, anthropology, cultural studies, sociology, and adjacent sciences.

Although the cultural functions of the Russian language are narrowing, the total number of citizens who speak Russian is increasing in a number of countries. Emigration from Russia and some other parts of the former USSR is growing. Emigrants, of course, retain their command of the Russian language (although some of them are ready to forget it), but regardless of their attitude towards it, they do not always pass it on to their children. Another part of the Russian-speaking population are people who changed their state of residence due to changes in borders. Their feelings were expressed thirty years ago by the late Russian poet B. Chichibabin, who lived in Kharkov: "I didn't leave my homeland, why was I deprived of it?" For many, the problem arose of choosing between preserving their place of residence and preserving their familiar environment, including the language environment. The policy of the authorities (except for Belarus) comes down mainly to ousting the Russian language from cultural spheres while preserving only the Russian minority in everyday communication. The differences between the policies of different states, if they differ, are due to the attitude of the titular nation to the Russian language: at one pole is Kyrgyzstan, where the national elite often knows Russian better than Kyrgyz, at the other pole are the Baltic states and Turkmenistan. Russians themselves, as a rule, do not play a significant political role. But it's hard to forcefully learn a language, especially if it previously seemed less prestigious than the Russian language. The situation is complex and requires more detailed consideration.

The global Russian-speaking cultural space is narrowing and rests more on the traditions and inertia of the past than on new successes. At the same time, the position of the Russian language as a contact language and a language of the diaspora is expanding. But if Russia wants to maintain the world position of its language, it must present to the world something that no one else can present.

Possession of the wealth of the Russian language is an important indicator of the cultural level of any person, regardless of his specialty. To be able to express one's thoughts clearly and clearly, in compliance with all the rules of pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, means to be well understood by everyone who speaks Russian. There is also an aesthetic side to this, since the Russian language is a great miracle of culture, created by the Russian people, their best writers and publicists. At present, the degree of prevalence of the Russian language still ranks fourth in the world. Leading the way are English (an estimated 500 million people speak it as their first or second language and have over 1 billion more speak it as a foreign language) and Chinese (more than 1,350 million speak almost exclusively as their first language). The third place is occupied by Spanish (about 360 million people speak it, including an estimated 335 million as their native language). The Russian language has a great internal potential for further development and a rich cultural heritage. Nevertheless, the Russian language is the only one of the world's leading languages that has been steadily losing its positions in all major regions of the world over the past 15 years, and this negative trend will continue in the next 20 years if appropriate measures are not taken to effectively support the Russian language and culture within the country, in near and far abroad. Strengthening the position of the Russian language in the world requires not only more significant resource provision, but also improved interaction between all state and public departments and organizations designed to support, develop and promote the Russian language and culture. At the same time, it is necessary to better take into account the specific features of the following main groups of foreign and Russian citizens, in addition to students of educational institutions with the Russian language of instruction and Russian language teachers:

- 1) residents of countries near and far abroad who can potentially learn the Russian language in their homeland for educational, professional, domestic or cultural and educational purposes;
- 2) labor migrants from neighboring countries who are in Russia;

- 3) residents of non-CIS countries (adults, schoolchildren, students) who can potentially come to Russia to study the Russian language for various language courses;
- 4) foreign students, interns, graduate students who come to study at Russian higher and other educational institutions;
- 5) graduates of Russian universities and their national associations, which exist today in almost 70 countries of the world;
- 6) compatriots living in the near and far abroad, for whom the Russian language is native.

Today, the Russian language not only remains the main language of interethnic communication throughout the post-Soviet space. It is well spoken by the older generation and well explained by the younger, in many countries of the former socialist bloc. And it is hardly possible to say that the role of the Russian language in the world has fallen over the past twenty years. One can only rejoice that the role of national languages has increased over the years in the post-Soviet space. But the Russian language continues to be the language of interethnic communication and one of the world languages, which is not in vain one of the official languages of the UN. Thus, the huge role of the Russian language in the modern world is determined by its cultural value, its power and greatness.

REFERENCES:

1. Passov E.I. Communicativity: Past, Present, Future // Russian Language Abroad, 2010.
2. Vladimirova T.E. Russian discourse in intercultural communication: Existential and Ontological Approach. Ed. 3-th. revised, updated. M.: LENAND, 2018.
3. Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment. Strasbourg-Moscow: Department of Language Policy, 2011.
4. Stepin V.V. Scientific rationality in technogenic culture: Types and Historical Evolution // Problems of Philosophy, 2012.
5. Zinchenko V.P. Consciousness and the Creative Act. Moscow: Languages of Slavic Culture, 2010.

