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SCHOOLS AND TERMINOLOGY AS THE MEANS OF PRESERVING LANGUAGE DIVERSITY

Abstract. Any language which acclaims the position of a state (regional) language should be able to function in all walks of life, including families, offices, schools etc. The Finno-Ugric languages of the Russian Federation do not fulfil these requirements at their present state of development. To use a simplified categorisation the levels of language functions are the family/every day level, the cultural-sociological level and the political/sociological level. The third level is a typical sphere badly in need of terminological innovation. In case of those Finno-Ugric languages of Russia which have a bigger community there is a chance to maintain the mother tongue if the instruction of all school subjects is re-introduced in the vernacular. If a language is the tool of education its prestige will definitely rise. Only the school can be able to save the language. To achieve this the institution of national schools should be re-introduced, meaning all school subjects should be taught in the given Finno-Ugric language. The Terminologia scholaris project of Collegium Fenno-Ugricum (Hungary) serves this very purpose. The terminology of ten subjects have been created in five Finno-Ugric languages with the greatest population: in the two official Mordovian languages (officially called Erza and Moksha), in Mari (Cheremis), Komi (Zyrjen) and Udmurt (Votjak) in co-operation with local specialists. 50 terminological mini-dictionaries have been published, the linguistic analysis of which is being carried on. The continuation of the project: 1) a total renewal of the Mordovian languages, 2) writing schoolbooks in the vernacular using the material of the terminological dictionaries.

Keywords: Fenno-Ugric languages, linguistic development, terminology, the Terminologia scholaris project, Institut Collegium Fenno-Ugricum (Hungary).

0. The linguistic map of Europe is predominantly determined by Indo-European and to a smaller extent by Finno-Ugric languages (Hungarian, Finnish, Estonian, Saami and the Finno-Ugric languages of Russia). Not at the same level but the latter can be regarded as endangered languages. In theory jurisdiction and political declarations ensure the preservation and the development of these aboriginal languages, however practice shows something else. The present study reports on an experiment, the successful realisation of which can save at least the bigger languages in question with a speakers' community of at least 100 thousand.

1. The linguistic picture of the world

Biodiversity is widely being discussed nowadays, although specialists do not find it sufficient. One can hear about species of plants and animals disappearing every day, not forgetting about the harmful impact of this on mankind. Languages and

cultures interrelated with them also disappear at a great speed, however this phenomenon seems to interest only few people.

The overwhelming majority of the 6000–7000 languages of the world are small or "dwarf" languages. It means that the average number of speakers per language does not exceed 5000–6000 (all in all the average number of speakers is 5000–6000 per language (Krauss 1992; 1998; Grenoble 2006)). It is easy to image the multitude of small languages and communities when at the other end of the scales you can find Chinese with billions, English with 350 million, Spanish with 250 million speakers etc.

This disadvantageous situation explains forecasts about the future of languages. According to optimistic opinions half of the languages spoken today will have disappeared or become absolutely endangered by the end of this century. Pessimistic opinions differ from one another when it comes to the rate of extinction. More positive ones believe that 10–20% of present-day languages will survive our century, more negative ones say only 300–600 languages will survive, some even calculate with only 40–50 languages.

The reason for the disappearance of languages is globalisation, as well as the assimilating tendencies in multi-national states. It is sad to state that appr. 500 years ago the number of languages could have been twice as many as these days, i.e. half of the languages have become the victims of political-economical aspirations (cf. geographical discoveries, colonisation).

In multi-lingual and multi-national countries one can observe the assimilation of minorities. It is the responsibility of the majority nation, too whether this process takes place at all and if yes, at what rate. In some countries assimilation and creating a homogenous state is a political programme of the majority nation, sometimes not even lacking violent measures. In some other countries, however minorities are the victims of "indifferent politics" such as in Hungary (Pusztay 2009).

Policies concerning national minorities can be regarded as Potemkin villages in several countries. It may not be a surprise that in such questions it is still Potemkin's homeland which is the largest Potemkin village. There are laws in accordance with international law but behind them there is reality, often totally opposing the ideas of the paragraphs (Pusztay 2009).

According to the law in the republics of the Russian Federation, i.e. in the ethnic homeland of Finno-Ugric peoples – within the borders of the given member state – their languages, with the exception of Karelian, are equal to Russian as (regional) state languages. Karelian, a close relative of Finnish could not be included among regional state languages as according to a federal law, all state languages in the Russian Federation, even regional ones must be written with the Cyrillic alphabet. Karelian has traditionally used the Latin alphabet. This situation opposes international law, violates basic human and language rights and opposes the Russian constitution, too which declares the right to use a language freely. A language and its written form can hardly be separated (Pusztay 2009).

The language law is not realized even in those member states where the law was passed. These languages are getting marginalised in family life, are hardly present in education and are not at all used in politics, economic life and administration.

As far as education is concerned it is primarily in the villages of the aboriginal population that the language of instruction is the vernacular in the first 3–4 classes. In towns the mother tongue is only one of the school subjects if it is taught at all. The regional component is 25–30% in the general curriculum which should serve the educational purposes of the languages and cultures of national minorities. This very often becomes a task not compulsory to realize and only optional, i.e. when trying to put it in a politically correct way: a dependant of possibilities.

No matter how unfavourable the situation is, slowing down the process of assimilation can be hoped – at least in the case of major Finno-Ugric peoples. This however, requires certain political, linguistic and psychological conditions.

2. Language policies and terminology

Any language which acclaims the position of a state (regional) language should be made suitable to meet the requirements of that, meaning it should be able to function in all walks of life, including families, offices, schools etc. The Finno-Ugric languages of the Russian Federation do not fulfil these requirements at their present state of development. To use a simplified categorisation the levels of language functions are the family/every day level, the cultural-sociological level and the political/sociological level (among others Pusztaý 2002 : 246). The above mentioned Finno-Ugric languages can be used without difficulty at the first two levels, provided the speakers' community is determined to do so. The third level is a typical sphere badly in need of terminological innovation. This level can function regardless the determination of native speakers only if the terminology of the fields concerned here (politics, administration, science) is elaborated.

I have many times written about the necessity of terminology (in a narrower sense) as the key to the survival of languages as this would enable the languages in question to fulfil the needs of every life- and speech situations (among others Pusztaý 2006). Creating terminology is an integrate part of language policies. In Russia's Finno-Ugric republics there are terminological committees, nevertheless their activity is somewhat accidental and language development often depends on the enthusiasm of one or another expert.

3. Schools as the last resorts of languages

The negative approach to minorities throughout several centuries by the majority of society has launched unfavourable processes in terms of the attitude to one's own vernacular (cf. in the 1960s the closing of nationality schools, nowadays making the regional component optional in education). Census facts reveal that within the Finno-Ugric population, although varying in each nationality, 25–75% speaks and admits speaking their vernacular. Sociological studies have proven that using the mother tongue and qualifications, as well as age relate to one another in inverse relation. I.e. the more qualified and the younger somebody is, the less they identify with their vernacular. Even in homogeneous Finno-Ugric families the younger generation prefers Russian. In bilingual families the language of communication is exclusively Russian (among the Russian population bilinguals are represented by only 3.5% – Leontiev 1994 : 64).

This way it is only the school which can be able to save the language. To achieve this the institution of national schools should be re-introduced, meaning all school subjects should be taught in the given Finno-Ugric language. In order to realize this both political willingness and the elimination of psychological obstacles are necessary, not forgetting about suitable terminologies either. The terminology of school subjects was successfully elaborated in the 1920–1930s but with the closing of national schools in the 1960s it was forgotten. At the same time the themes and the knowledge included in schoolbooks have changed, creating new needs. To elaborate a new terminology a proposal was made as one of the projects of Collegium Fenno-Ugricum.

Collegium Fenno-Ugricum (CFU)

With government aid and under the auspices of the foundation "House of Nations", Budapest a research institute called Collegium Fenno-Ugricum was established by János Pusztaý in Badacsonytomaj, at Lake Balaton, Hungary in 2008. Its main purposes are to support the preservation of the languages and cultures of Finno-Ugric peoples of Russia, to ensure a better understanding of themselves and other

Fenno-Ugrians and to provide information about them for the rest of the world. To realize these aims we have launched several projects.

As part of our publishing programme a scientific-popularising short monograph has been written about seven Finno-Ugric nations in Russia in the series "Bibliotheca Fenno-Ugrica" (Karelian, Komi, Komi-Permian, Mari, Mordovian, Udmurt and Vepse) which were published in Russian and in the language of the given nation in 16 volumes altogether (as the Mordovians and the Karelians have two standard languages, both were included, resulting in 2–2 books for them.) The primary aim of publishing these books in the vernacular was to prove that it is possible to write about scientific issues in these languages as well. In most cases this volume was the first of its kind in the given language.

Anthologies of the literatures of Finno-Ugrians have been published in the series "LiteratUral". The books illustrating the poetry of these nations are in four languages: besides the original and a Hungarian literary translation there is also a word-to-word translation in German and French. The volumes are accompanied by a CD, each with the poet's/poetess's own interpretation in the original language. In the same series we try to publish some Hungarian literature in Finno-Ugric languages.

CFU organises a two week Hungarian studies summer course in Russian where university and academic lecturers acquaint their audiences with Hungarian history, literature, minority questions, education, economy etc. The choice of topics to be discussed — *mutatis mutandis* — may be of interest for the Finno-Ugrians of Russia, providing comparisons of successful or unsuccessful answers given to such questions by the Hungarians. In the small audience (up to 20 people due to financial reasons) various groups of intellectuals are represented. Our aim is to invite people who would spread the information they hear at the course in a wider circle but this is not always achieved.

CFU acts as the initiator of the terminology project serving a real revitalisation of Finno-Ugric languages in Russia. By this project the conditions of enabling these languages to be used as the languages of school instruction can be created after a gap of 50 years. To achieve this, a series called "Terminologia scholaris * Школьная терминология" has been created.

The terminology project

Earlier it has been mentioned that schools represent the last refuge in preserving these languages. To serve this purpose we aim at re-introducing those Finno-Ugric languages in education which can still be saved and developed. We consider those peoples can be saved which have a relatively larger number of speakers (min. 100 thousand) and at least some form (even a limited one) of statehood (the member state status of the Russian Federation) so being entitled at least in theory to make local decisions about the use of language and education. Such languages are both Mordovian languages (Ersa and Moksha), Mari, Komi, Udmurt and Karelian. In case of peoples with a population of only a few hundred or a few thousand speakers or those with a larger population but lacking the member state status we do not see a chance for survival, consequently it would not make sense to elaborate school terminology for them. Should real needs arise in case of these languages as well, we are decided to support their aspirations.

To sum up the aim of the project: it is to work out school terminology and therefore create the possibility of writing school textbooks in the vernacular in those subject, too which are taught in Russian at the moment.

Teaching in Russian and marginalising school instruction in the vernacular can be explained with the need to create a linguistically homogeneous state. Jurisdiction serves this purpose. The Russian federal constitution and education law — on which regional constitutions and education laws are modelled — do not allow

teaching school subjects not in Russian with the exception of subjects related to the vernacular. At the same time the amount of lessons for the vernacular is also diminishing.

There is a wide range of explanations for this in official documents.

1) Non-Russian vernacular as an obstacle:

- those who learn subjects in their own language will be in a disadvantageous position if they want to enter higher education as they will not know the necessary Russian terminology of their chosen subject

(Just a few remarks on this: 1. in a predominantly Russian environment it is unimaginable that someone cannot acquire the couple of hundred words forming the terminology of the given subject. 2. In Bashkortostan and Tatarstan — against the law — all school subject are taught in the vernacular, including final examinations in secondary schools; in these two states the rate of intellectuals is 150% more than the rate of Russian intellectuals in the whole federation);

- lessons in/of the vernacular take up a lot of time and more useful subjects in one's future career such as mathematics and the Russian language will not be dealt with long enough;
- bilingualism causes harmful effects in the mental development of children (in this case views prevalent until the middle of the last century can be referred to but they disregard recent studies of the past decades proving the benefits of bilingualism).

2) So called specialist arguments:

- the obstacle of instructing subjects in the vernacular is the lack of terminology, textbooks using this and teachers being able to teach in the vernacular. These factors can easily be eliminated when there is a political will.

Teaching school subjects in the vernacular has antecedents of several decades. From the 1920s in nationality areas national schooling was created, covering the total spectrum of school subjects in the vernacular, backed by the necessary terminology.

The system of national schooling was maintained until the 1960s. Then it was abolished by the decision of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party. This meant school instruction in Russian, non-Russian vernaculars served as the languages of instruction only in the first few classes, in upper classes reduced to the level of one of the subjects with a few classes per week.

Re-introducing education in the vernacular presupposes several phases:

- first and foremost the necessary terminology should be created, i.e. the special vocabulary of school subjects,
- textbooks of these subjects should be written,
- teachers should be trained.

During the first phase of the project having lasted from September 2010 until July 2011, the terminology of ten subjects was created in five Finno-Ugric languages: in the two official Mordovian languages (officially called Erza and Moksha), in Mari (Cheremis), Komi (Zyrjen) and Udmurt (Votjak) languages (unfortunately and hopefully only temporarily the Karelian language could not be included in this work). The project was supported by the European Union.

The European Parliament, on the initiative of former Hungarian EP member, István Szent-Iványi, in accordance with Estonian and Finnish EP members donated EU resources for the support of Finno-Ugric peoples of Russia. The sum however, after long bureaucratic procedures ended up at the Russian Ministry of Regional Development and served the purposes of all national minorities of Russia. This ministry announced scholarships. An application was handed in by the Syktyvkar State University (Republic of Komi) and the project to create school terminology in Finno-Ugric languages was among the winners.

This work was realized by the intellectual support of the author of this very article under the leadership of Marina Fedina, former head of department, Syktyvkar University and Aleksei Rodnyakov, a key figure at Saransk State University, (Republic of Mordovia).

To carry out this work one coordinator was chosen in four Finno-Ugric republics who are teachers at the local university and their mother tongue is one of these languages. The colleagues from Syktyvkar and Saransk Universities have done their major share of the work by collecting Russian language terminology from Russian course books and providing them with Russian language explanations. This material was forwarded to the four coordinators who have organised the translation of both terminology and explanations into Finno-Ugric languages. The terminology vocabularies compiled this way were sent to the terminology committee of the given state which evaluated them, made suggestions and then approved of them.

If the terms created in the 1920–1930s have survived, they could count on them as well.

The results of the first phase of the project are as follows:

- the creation of 10 school subject terminologies (grammar, literature, history, social studies, geography, biology, mathematics, physics, chemistry, informatics), in 5 Finno-Ugric languages. This enables experts to write schoolbooks in the vernacular.

In our plans this is going to be the next step, the next application. This can be realized relatively easily. Russian language books used and approved of in education should be translated into the given Finno-Ugric language using the terminological dictionaries. To cut expenses it would be enough to produce online or CD variants.

- a further result of the project is that in some schools after 50–60 years, utilising the results of the project, some subjects are taught in the vernacular as an experiment.

The structure of the dictionary is as follows:

- in the first column the word is given in normal bold type in the given Finno-Ugric language,
- in the second column you can find its Russian equivalent,
- in the third column there is the annotation of the term in the Finno-Ugric language,
- the dictionary contains a Russian–Finno-Ugric index.

The material included in the terminological dictionaries provides us with useful scientific consequences.

1) These dictionaries give a surprisingly reliable mirror image of the state of Finno-Ugric languages in Russia. Russification is a characteristic feature of all, although at a different scale. This process is especially effective in the field of terminology, a lexical stratum much different from everyday vocabulary. To stop this, an absolutely conscious language-saving and developing attitude is needed. Furthermore it should be ensured that the results of this development become widespread. Feeling discomfort about terms created during the past two decades can be observed. It is more comfortable to use the well-known Russian term or expression than learning a new term in the vernacular. That is why it seems reasonable to begin the introduction of terminology at schools as for a child it absolutely the same in which language they have to learn and acquire a new term, concept, object etc. From the viewpoint of the vernacular on the other hand, it is not insignificant.

2) Dictionaries provide experts who deal with the development of languages in question with the opportunity of — owning actual material now — re-thinking basic questions of terminology such as terms of their own vernacular, terms from Russian and

terms, loanwords through Russian mediation or the proportion of Russian loanwords (excluding international "culture" words).

Purism strengthens the mother tongue but alienates from internationality. International terminology incorporated into the vernacular seemingly connects it with the outside world — i.e. without knowing the given language one can more or less guess what the given work is about, however it creates obstacles for a full scale terminology development in the vernacular. An intermediate solution is to be international in the mother tongue — this can be achieved through loan translations. This is also a kind of globalisation, after all (Galinski, Cluver, Budin 1999 : 2212; Pusztay 2008).

A general opinion shared by Finno-Ugric terminologists in Russia is that in the field of humanities and social sciences terms should be created in the vernacular, whereas in technical and natural sciences they are more permissive and accept international terminology through Russian mediation.

In 2013 the analysis of the Erza and Moksha dictionaries was published (Pusztay 2013a; 2013b) from which it can be seen that they seem to apply too many words of Russian origin or international ones through Russian mediation. The ongoing analysis of Komi, Mari and Udmurt dictionaries shows a more positive picture.

As language development is a long process (cf. the Hungarian language renewal started more than two hundred years ago and its afterlife), on the basis of these dictionaries I find it possible and even desirable to prepare the revised, closer-to-the-vernacular editions of them some time in the future.

Consequently the linguistic analysis of the dictionaries sets some urgent and up-to-date tasks of language development and language renewing.

Among the motivations of these aims and projects language relationship and saving related languages is just one factor. Creating suitable terminology enables speakers to use the language in many fields, thus meeting the requirements of a (regional) state language. Otherwise when a language is reduced from a sphere of usage, such erosion will set off which can hardly if at all be halted (Galinski 2004). Besides the idea of language relationship we are nonetheless motivated by the aspiration to contribute to the maintenance of the linguistic-cultural diversity of the world, to the slowing down of seemingly necessary assimilation processes.

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ЯНОШ ПУСТАИ (Сомбатхей)

ШКОЛЫ И ТЕРМИНОЛОГИЯ КАК СРЕДСТВА СОХРАНЕНИЯ МНОГООБРАЗИЯ ЯЗЫКОВ

Подавляющее большинство языков мира — это языки малочисленных народов, а потому им угрожает исчезновение. Во избежание этого изучаются и используются различные способы и возможности их спасения и сохранения. Употребление языка имеет как минимум три уровня — семейно-бытовой, уровень культурной сферы, общественно-политический и научный. Последний непременно предполагает наличие терминологии. Чтобы язык мог выполнять роль государственного (регионального) языка, ему необходимо функционировать на всех трех уровнях.

Что касается финно-угорских языков России (по крайней мере языков самых многочисленных народов), их сохранение возможно только при преподавании в школах всех предметов на родном языке. В качестве языка обучения престиж этих языков повышается.

Именно этой цели служил проект «Terminologia scholaris — Школьная терминология» института Collegium Fenno-Ugricum (Венгрия). На пяти более крупных финно-угорских языках РФ (коми, марийский, мокшанский, удмуртский, эрзянский) составлялись и издавались (с привлечением соответствующих специалистов) терминологические словарики по десяти школьным предметам (всего 50 словариков). В настоящее время они анализируются.

Предполагается продолжение проекта: 1) полное обновление мордовских языков, 2) создание школьных учебников на родных финно-угорских языках с использованием терминологических словариков.