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ETHNOCULTURAL PECULIARITIES OF POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

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Abstract. The main purpose of the study is the analysis of the peculiarities of development and functioning of the South Ossetian political communication in its presidential and parliamentary aspects. The South Ossetian political discourse is defined as a speech act of an institutional political communication development realized in the conditions of Ossetian-Russian bilingual community. Social life of the Ossetians was traditionally based on the relations within the South Ossetian community which represents quite a sophisticated social mechanism, implying territorial links between different segments of the community, stability of interpersonal and intergroup relations. Thus, traditions and mentality of the Ossetians find their reflection in the South Ossetian political discourse which is characterized by some ethno - specificity presupposing both the combination of all speech acts used in political discussions, and the rules of public politics, time-honoured and testified by tradition and experience. The strategies and tactics of oral political discourse and linguistic means of their expression are studied on the material of speeches of the leading South Ossetian politicians. The basic method of the research is the method of cognitive-discursive analysis which involves definition and description of the specificity of realization of speech interaction with reference to the contextual environment that influences the choice and usage of language means. The study is based on the material of Russian language scripts of such genres as press-conference and interviews. Live dialogue is interesting due to the fact that in contrast to official rhetoric it demonstrates the dominant, system-forming strategies and tactics of political discourse producers. Realization of the strategies of openness and feedback is regarded to be the specific feature of the political communication of South Ossetian political leaders. Role self-presentation of the representatives of two branches of supreme power is based on the South Ossetian cultural tradition, characterized by a certain hierarchy and community-based relations: the politicians exercise supreme power either through their individual “selves” or, in line with the principle of plurality, explicating the collective “we”. Speech behaviour of the South Ossetian political leaders acquires the structure of the Russian political discourse, as the South Ossetian political discourse is developing in association and close connection with the Russian political discourse.

Keywords: political communication; bilingual community; genres of political communication; system-forming strategies and tactics.

Development of political communication within the framework of the modern political linguistics has become important due to the numerous political processes such as formation of new states establishing their home and foreign policies and trying to be integrated into the world context.

Republic of South Ossetia is a new state which appeared on the geopolitical map in 1990 immediately after the declaration of its independence. The model of its political and administrative structures has been developing for about a decade since that time, the first stage being the establishment of unicameral parliament (64 members). It was elected on the basis of general suffrage on January, 9, 1990 and was called at that time "The Supreme Soviet". The core of the Parliament was represented by the active members of the organization "Adæmon Nykhas" ("People's Assembly").

Presidency as the Institution appeared some time later in accordance with the general laws of political development and was preceded by the domestic political crisis which could have erupted into civil war.

Inauguration of the first president of the Republic of South Ossetia took place in 1996.

Formation of a new political system and establishment of its ideology as well as tendencies of development - the main factors of putting down the roots of national identity, resulted in appearance of new political leaders developing and exercising their own techniques of the authority-to-people political communication which is conditioned by ethnic peculiarities.

Scientific research in the field of the South Ossetian presidential and parliamentary discourses as a new language reality represented by communicative personalities of L.Kh. Tibilov and A.I. Bibilov, broadens the boundaries of political communication studies, and to a great extent influences efficiency of the country's political development.

South Ossetian political discourse represents the act of political communication (institutional type) realized in the conditions of the Ossetian-Russian bilingualism.

Methodology

Our research is based on the assumption that political discourse forms a combination of 1) all speech acts used in the political discussions; 2) time-honoured and testified by experience rules of public Politics [1: 6].

The modern anthropocentric scientific paradigm gives priority to a human dimension in language and is revealed in the exploration of the influence language has on behavior and consciousness of man, on the language-society relations (Y.D. Apresyan, N.D. Arutyunova, T.V. Buligina, V.Z. Dem'yankov, V.V. Kolesov, Y.S. Stepanov, A.D. Shmelev).

The present research is implemented within the framework of cognitive-discursive linguistic approach. Discourse analysis presupposes identification and description of specificity of speech influence, based on a context,

besides it takes into consideration the impact speech has on the choice of language means.

Cognitive approach makes it possible to identify connections of mental activity, speech production, cognitive bases, communicative intentions, pragmatic objectives, value guidance with verbal realization of the message conditioned by the language, ethno cultural and institutional competence of the addressee. Moreover cognitive Linguistics offers the prospects of building cognitive frames, schemes, scenarios and models framing the initial political communication of the political leaders as the representatives of political institutions.

Investigation of political discourse issues is based on the points of General Theory of Discourse developed both by foreign (T.A. van Dijk, G. Brown, G. Yule, J. Baudrillard, P. Sériot, M. Stubbs) and Russian linguists (V.N. Bazilev, E.V. Budayev, V.Z. Demyankov, O.S. Issers, V.I. Karasik, E.S. Kubryakova, A.P. Chudinov, E.I. Sheigal).

Political communication is the type of communication the subjects of which are politicians and political journalists; it is the type of communication dealing with the widely interpreted political issues and considered from the point of view of political subjects-the authors of political texts [2 and others].

Discussion

Our interest in the discourse of L.Kh. Tibilov and A.I. Bibilov representing two brunches of power - Executive and Legislative, can be explained by growing importance of the oral public communication of the political leaders, whose communicative personalities play an influential role in the formation of the South Ossetian political discourse.

The material used in the research (scripts representing different genres such as press-conferences, interviews, live footage of the politicians, TV programmes “Good Evening, Ossetia”, “Parliamentary TV Journal”) allowed to analyze genre diversity of the “authority-people” communication; to describe pragmatic peculiarities of the speeches given by the political leaders.

On-line and live dialogue unlike official rhetoric reveals dominant, system-forming strategies and tactics of the political discourse producers.

The whole number of researches deal with the description of strategies and tactics, which are considered to be instruments of communication (M.V. Gavrilova, O.S. Issers, V.I. Karasik, A.V. Olyanich, O.N. Parshina, A.P. Chudinov, E.I. Sheigal).

Traditionally community relations were the basis of social life of the Ossetians. Ossetic community represents rather complicated social mechanism, based on the territorial links, implying stability of relations both within the community and interpersonal and intergroup ones. Due to this relations status and social hierarchy systems are formed [3: 274].

The lowest layer of this multi-level system of the social system was formed by family communities united in their turn into larger familial associations of clans [4].

Rural communities *tsædis* were formed on the principle of territorial-familial association of the Ossetians. This kind of associations were based on the various forms of neighboring households unions, practicing mutual support and participating in joint farming and construction activities - *ziu*, as well as in celebrations of community festivals devoted to the Saint Patron of a certain locality - *kuvd* (Vaneev 1926, 1955; Magometov 1963; Gagloity 1974).

Reforms in 60-70s of the nineteenth century resulted in turning rural societies of Ossetia into state communities considered to be the lowest administrative units, which contributed to the rationality of governance. In the new communities all the important household and local legal order issues were solved at the village gatherings [Ibid.].

The system of self-organization of the Ossetians was based on the universal principles of collegiality and seniority. The principle of seniority was to be strictly observed on all the levels of the social system. Thus veneration of the seniors (age, status, economic position) constituted a cornerstone of self-organization of the Ossetians. Hence credibility (personal, traditional, positional) was the main condition of the implementation of power [3: 288].

The matrix of the South Ossetian society is constituted by some special ethno cultural codes the basic element of which is communality - "multiple familial relations, long-term relations within the work communities, participation in informal groups etc.; harmonious relationships between different generations, a specific status of an individual which is not offset but on the contrary acquires a special position according to the community hierarchy" [5].

Results of the Discussion

Developing according to the laws of institutional discourse South Ossetian political communication tends to be semi-official, which implies authority-people dialogue, personal involvement into lives of the citizens.

Communality of the contemporary South Ossetian society is reflected in arranging the so called *Nykhas* (community gatherings) - referendum involving all the layers of the society into discussion of the politically significant issues.

Answering the question concerning the coming referendum on the integration of the RSO into the Russian Federation, L.Kh. Tibilov (representative of the Executive Branch, further - REB) notes:

Этот вопрос волнует всех нас, всех жителей нашей республики. Эта идея появилась не сейчас, она логична, она существовала еще в советские годы. Тогда я слышал и от старших, и от младших, и от ровесников, что как бы ни складывалась ситуация, Южная Осетия в

перспективе должна воссоединиться с Северной Осетией. Все-таки это один народ, он разделен.

Идея существует, мы ее получили от предков и будем передавать нашему младшему поколению [6]. This problem is of utmost importance to all of us, the citizens of the Republic. This idea appeared long ago. It existed even in the Soviet times and it is quite logical.

At that time I heard both from the elders and my peers, that whatever the situation is, South Ossetia must be re-united with North Ossetia. Anyway it is one people and it is separated. The idea exists, we got it from our ancestors and we will pass it to the younger generation [Ibid.].

In the given fragment REB Tibilov, representing himself as the member of the community, emphasizes his commitment to the ethnic dominant in the realization of the communicative strategy: the following chain “ancestors - seniors - peers - juniors” reflects stability of hierarchical system of relations in the national consciousness.

19 января 1992 года <...> народ высказался за независимость и перспективу воссоединения. Еще было несколько референдумов, когда наш народ выражал свое отношение к вопросам вхождения. <...> On January, 19, 1992 <...> our people voted for the independence and the perspective of reunion. Our people showed its attitude to the integration at several plebiscites 4]. Demonstrating the strategy of unity with the people, REB actualizes the idea of integrity of the South Ossetian Community united not only by its historical past, blood ties, but also by nation-wide idea, implementation of which has been delayed for more than three decades.

Я тщательно изучаю настроения нашего народа. Эта идея принадлежит каждому осетину; Мы ждем этого исторического момента, знаем настрой наших людей, народ скажет однозначно «да». I am scrutinizing the mood of the nation. This idea belongs to every Ossetian. We are waiting for this historic moment, we are aware of the tone of our people and the people will definitely say “Yes” [Ibid.]. REB monitors the values of his citizens and it gives him confidence in the correctness of the political platform of the country.

Interaction of the Legislative branch of power with the people is based on the idea of equality of statuses. *<...> те, кто у власти, они тоже вышли из народа. Тем более что в югоосетинском обществе нет таких политических элит, где власть передается только в рамках определенного круга лиц. Президент республики, Председатель парламента, большинство министров и депутатов – выходцы из рабочих семей и интеллигенции. У нас нет у власти детей олигархов, и олигархата как такового не существует. Поэтому власть в Южной Осетии гораздо ближе к народу, чем в той же Украине, и лучше знает чаяния народа, чем в той же Грузии. <...> those who are in power are also common people. There are no political elites in the South Ossetian community where the*

power circulates within a particular circle of people. The president of the country, the Speaker, majority of ministers and MPs are from working class families and from intelligentsia. There are no oligarchs and their children in power. That is why South Ossetia authorities are much closer to the people than in the Ukraine or in Georgia [7].

Both political leaders note significance of cooperation and interaction of Executive and Legislative branches.

<...> хочу отметить, что все <...> ветви власти республики <...> работают, каждая из них несет ответственность за то доверие, которое оказано народом всем ветвям власти. I would like to note that the branches of power of the Republic work. Each of them bears responsibility for being credited by the people [6].

In this regard the representative of legislative branch (further RLB) fully supports the President of the country demonstrating commitment to the consolidation of the two branches of power.

Народ должен видеть, что и исполнительная, и законодательная, и судебная власть делают все возможное, чтобы гражданам Южной Осетии жилось комфортно. The people should see that the three branches of power - Executive, Legislative and Judicial do their best to make the life in South Ossetia more comfortable [5].

Unity of the political courses of the two political leaders, their synchronic interaction are revealed in the strategy of demonstration of unity of the political leaders representing two branches of power, which is prompted by necessity of maintenance and strengthening of a new state. Cognitive model "President + speaker + administrative body" is realized on the basis of the collective "we".

<...> мы ищем пути, которые не будут нас разводить в стороны, а будут сближать наши позиции. We are looking for the ways to unite our positions but not separate [6].

Distancing from opposability of the styles of governing bodies of a country as a factor of little importance, the representative of the executive branch of the government chooses to use a technique of reviewing the situation in the 3rd person:

Хотел бы отметить, что какой-либо напряженности между президентом республики и председателем парламента <...> не было и нет. Конечно, он, являясь председателем парламента, проявляет свой стиль работы. У меня свой стиль. Они в некоторой степени отличаются. Но мы регулярно встречаемся и каждый раз отмечаем, что и президент, и председатель парламента должны способствовать тому, чтобы сохранить мир в республике, сохранить стабильность. Ведь в конце 2011 – начале 2012 года республика находилась на грани внутренней войны. I would like to note that there is no tension between the executive and the legislative branches of our government and has never been. Of course, as a member of parliament, he manifests his own style of work. I have my own style too. The

two do differ to a certain extent. But we meet on a regular basis and we point out at every meeting the fact, that both branches of power must promote maintenance of peace and stability in the republic, taking into account the fact, that at the end of 2011, beginning of 2012 our republic was on the verge of internal war [7].

If the political discourse absorbing universal and specific national cultural values and deep cravings of the people, is undoubtedly the reflection of the social-political life of the society, the pragmatic peculiarities of language realization and substantiation of strategic and tactical moves serve as “alternating” parameters of the communication, indicating the individual preferences of the language personality. In the following extract the representative of legislative branch (RLB), identifying himself with the representative of the executive branch (REB), nevertheless, introduces tone of personal assessment to the characterization of the inner political climate in the republic:

Мы с президентом Республики смогли грамотно решить ситуацию, которая была еще месяц назад, сейчас этот градус напряженности сводится к личностным моментам, где одни пытаются уцелить других побольнее. Но, как вы сами понимаете, все это не серьезно и напоминает скорее игры в песочнице. As for the situation, that we were to face a month ago, we, both branches of power, managed it effectively. Now some tension might only be felt in personal issues, when people try to hurt each other. All this resembles games in the sandbox [8].

The metaphorical image of the relations like those of children on the playground disclaims the seriousness of the conflict.

The national specificity of the political technologies of the representatives of the two branches of the government is - close-contact social communication, which proves to be the most effective in the ethnic environment, explicated by means of the strategy of openness of power.

The RLB uses technological methods of suggestion in the way of establishing contact with the audience. The idea of cooperation is carried out by means of semantic repetitions “listen, discuss, take notice”.

И, тем не менее, осознавая все это, я не отвергаю даже их притязания. Еще раз подчеркиваю – мы готовы взаимодействовать даже с незарегистрированными организациями, даже с теми, кто изначально настроен на отрицание любого нашего действия. Ответственно заявляю, я готов выслушать, обсудить, прислушаться к любой критике. Nevertheless, even after perceiving all this, I am not going to reject their claims. I want to emphasize the fact that we are ready to cooperate even with unregistered organizations, even with those who are sure to oppose to any action we are going to take. I am informing you, that I am ready to listen, discuss and take notice of any kind of criticism [Ibid.].

During his session with people the REB established communicative register and form, which presupposed readiness for productive collaboration with the population of the republic.

The use of semantic repetitions serves as a tactical means, based on suggestion meant for an implicit inculcation in the minds of addressees of the basic principles of political activities of this politician to be - openness and honesty.

Нам необходимо работать в открытом и прозрачном режиме с населением республики, чтобы не возникало вопросов к тому, что происходит в политической жизни нашего государства. We must work openly and transparently with the population of the Republic to avoid questions concerning the political life of our country [9].

The REB when addressing the citizens of the country realizes a set of strategies "openness-feedback". The statement of this politician points out the inadmissibility of the fact that the expectations of any citizen of the republic may fail to be attended to. The politician has the domestic problems of the citizens under his personal control as well as the governmental matters.

<...> нам всем есть что сказать народу. Мы должны доходить до народа. Мы открыты для прессы, готовы вести диалог с населением, в том числе и посредством прямых эфиров, это важная разъяснительная работа. <...>. we all have something to say to our people. We must reach our people. We are open to mass media; we are ready to communicate with the population via live feed as well. This is an important explanatory task [Ibid.].

Concluding his live feed with the citizens of the Republic of South Ossetia, the REB reaffirms the effectiveness of his communicative strategic reference points in his intercourse with the people.

Я получил такое удовлетворение от этой встречи, что мне захотелось еще больше сделать для них, активнее поработать во имя того, чтобы будущее у Южной Осетии было прекрасным. И оно будет прекрасным <...>. I am so gratified with this session that I would like to do even more for these people, to work more effectively for the beautiful future for South Ossetia [Ibid.].

At the same time the RLB when manifesting the strategy of openness still approbates his communicative strategic "set", considering the potential modality of establishing feedback.

И если кому-то не нравится, что для меня жизненным кредо, которое я взял с собой в политику, является искренность и прямота, то, пожалуй, это их личные проблемы. И я очень ценю в людях, когда они могут также открыто выразить свою позицию, с такими людьми я всегда готов вести диалог, даже если мы на разных полюсах. Я всегда могу выслушать любого человека, я никогда не относился предвзято к той или иной личности. And if somebody dislikes the credo of frankness and straightforwardness, which I brought to politics with me, it is his or her problem. And I appreciate it when other people also express their position openly. I am always ready to communicate with such people

even if we don't share political views. I can listen to anybody at any time and I have never been prejudiced towards any person at all [8].

Communicative-role aspect of personal political discourse explicates the specificity of self-identification of its characters.

Communicative strategy of self-presentation of RLB is oriented towards creation of image of a politician who positions himself as a spokesman of the majority of the deputies, and accomplishes coordination with government bodies and public organizations minding the interests of the party he represents. That's why his "speech mask" is realized by collective "we".

Да, вы верно отметили, и партия «Единая Осетия» пока единственная политическая сила в Республике, которая использует механизм реальных проектов для решения социальных проблем, а не пустословие и красноречие. Мы создаем условия для занятий спортом и интеллектуальным развитием для детей и подростков, для развития новых форм творческой деятельности <...>. Мы оказываем материальную помощь социальным учреждениям – детским домам, интернату, дому престарелых. Мы также помогаем продвигать инициативы граждан, к нам поступило очень много предложений от наших избирателей, с которыми мы не перестаем поддерживать диалог. Мы не превозносимся над другими политическими партиями, мы ходим по земле и общаемся с нашими согражданами, и призываем своих коллег к этому же – к созиданию и неустанному труду во имя интересов Отечества. Мы выпускаем газету, в которой публикуются самые актуальные комментарии и темы, стоящие в эпицентре общественного внимания. Yes, you were right to note that "United Ossetia" is still the only political body in the republic which uses a mechanism of real projects for dealing with social problems and not just eloquence or verbiage. We create conditions for sports and intellectual development of children and adolescents, for development of new forms of artistic activities <...> we maintain social institutions - orphanages, boarding schools, the nursing home. We also help the citizens to promote their initiatives, we received a great number of proposals from our electorate, with which we are in constant contact. We do not exalt ourselves above other political parties, we walk on the earth, we talk to our citizens, and we request to our colleagues to do the same - to create and work incessantly for the sake of our Fatherland. We edit a newspaper, where we cover the most urgent commentaries and topics, concentrated in the epicenter of public attention [Ibid.].

Conclusion

Let's sum up the basic results of our investigation: political linguistics pays great attention to the language aspect of political sphere as a specific field of human activity, having a major effect not only on the society in a whole, but on an individual as well.

The ethnic specificity of development of the South Ossetian political communication is characterized by inadmissibility of manipulating the con-

scious mind and volition of an addressee and by establishment of mechanisms of dialogical interaction, based on the rejection of opposition of the branches of power. The peculiar discursive features are the principles of openness and feedback, established due to the ethnic traditions of communality and collegiality. These principles prove to be the most efficient dominant strategies.

Absence of distance between the government and the people provides for confidential modality and determines the efficacy of the South Ossetian politicians.

Political activities are based upon the traditions and forms of the national political speech. Personal speech masks of the political leaders of the Republic of South Ossetia reflect the principles of communality and social status hierarchy: the supreme power is objectivized by individual “I” and collegiality is manifested by “we”. At the same time speech behavior of the South Ossetian political leaders demonstrates coincidence with the structure of the Russian political discourse, as the South Ossetian political discourse is developing in association with the Russian political discourse.

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