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## **SOCIOLINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN THE MULTINATIONAL STATE**

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In the context of globalization and increasing international cooperation in different spheres of life the issue of national security and economic prosperity of nations is becoming increasingly urgent.

**Purpose:** Consideration of sociolinguistic and cultural characteristics of the functioning of foreign languages in a multinational state, the example of the United States.

**Methodology:** We used general scientific methods: analysis and synthesis, comparison, generalization, systematic approach.

**Results:** It is concluded that foreign languages in a multinational state, such as the U.S., are studied through active actions of government, public and educational institutions, and the main purpose of language learning is to maintain national security and economic competitiveness in the international arena.

**Practical implications:** The results of the work may be used both in linguistic theory, and sociolinguistics.

**Keywords:** language policy, foreign languages, national security, competitiveness.

## **СОЦИОЛИНГВИСТИЧЕСКИЕ И КУЛЬТУРОЛОГИЧЕСКИЕ ХАРАКТЕРИСТИКИ ФУНКЦИОНИРОВАНИЯ ИНОСТРАННЫХ ЯЗЫКОВ В МНОГОНАЦИОНАЛЬНОМ ГОСУДАРСТВЕ**

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В условиях глобализации и увеличивающегося международного сотрудничества в разных сферах жизни в современном мире все более актуальной становится проблема национальной безопасности и экономического процветания государств.

**Цель:** Рассмотрение социолингвистических и культурологических характеристик функционирования иностранных языков в многонациональном государстве, на примере США.

**Метод и методология проведения работы:** Использовались общенаучные методы: анализа и синтеза, сравнения, обобщения, системного подхода.

**Результаты:** Делается вывод о том, что иностранные языки в многонациональном государстве, таком, как США, изучаются благодаря активным действиям правительственных, общественных и образовательных организаций, а основной целью изучения иностранных языков является сохранение национальной безопасности и экономической конкурентоспособности государства на международной арене.

**Область применения результатов:** Результаты работы применимы в теории языкознания и социолингвистике.

**Ключевые слова:** языковая политика, иностранные языки, национальная безопасность, конкурентоспособность.

The modern world is characterized by the expansion of international contacts, intensification of the globalization, strengthening of processes of internationalization,

mutual influence of global and local cultures, strengthening of integration processes in politics, science and economy. At the same time there is a threat of terrorist attacks in developed countries. So, on April 15, 2013 in the visual Boston Marathon there was a terrorist act, which killed three people and injured more than 280 people. Therefore, scientists are studying the language policy that is part of the national policy of the state, promotes the national security and economic competitiveness in the international arena [15]. This article will examine the place given to foreign languages in the language policy of the multinational state, sociolinguistic and cultural characteristics of foreign languages functioning in such a heterogeneous state in terms of language and culture.

Often the times and the context contribute to the creation of the language policy and determine how the policy is shaped [11]. For example, the launching of Sputnik in 1957 contributed to enacting National Defense Education Act, which emphasized the importance of foreign languages proficiency. It should be noted that the federal government had never considered the issues of education. All the issues related to education were decided at the state or local level. What is more foreign languages proficiency was considered important to national security and international economic competitiveness for the first time in U.S. history [9].

In 1979 Commission on Foreign Languages and International Studies was appointed by President Jimmy Carter. The results of the study were published in the report «Strength through Wisdom». The conclusion of the report was that the state of international studies was «scandalous» and the state of foreign languages was amounted to a threat to national security [14]. By decision of the Commission Joint National Committee for Languages was formed in 1980, and a year later - National Council for Languages and International Studies. These associations have been influential in national language policy discussion, legislation and implementation [14].

In the eighties of the last century numerous discussions of language policy at various conferences, publication of a series of articles and decision documents entitled «New Directions in Foreign Languages» resulted in the identification of a num-

ber of areas where the creation of national language policies would be valuable. All the researchers and politicians laid stress on foreign language proficiency and early foreign language study [11]. At that time National Foreign Language Resource Centers were created and references to achieving language competence were included throughout Higher Education Act. The term «language competence» was substituted for «language proficiency» because of numerous objections from some scientists [10]. The foregoing discussions and legislative changes contributed to the debate about what constitutes proficiency and how to measure it, when to begin the study of foreign languages and methods of teaching [4, p. 4]. As a result of these discussions Foreign Language Assistance Act was created and included as an amendment to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in 1988. The George W. Bush Administration requested the program's elimination each year until 2007, when it was incorporated into the President's National Security Initiative [4].

All the researchers point out that the major factor determining the national language policy since the nineties of the last century has been national security / national defense of the United States [8]. In 1991, after Operation Desert Storm the National Security Education Act was adopted, for implementation of which a variety of educational programs were created. With the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, these programs were expanded to include language flagship programs and the development of a national language service corps [2, p. 265].

In March 1994 the U.S. passed the Educate America Act and set goals for standards-based education reform necessary to achieve by 2000. The fact that competency in foreign languages was included in Goal 3 of Goals 2000 is relevant for this paper [7].

In early 2000, the President of the United States ordered all federal agencies to determine and take steps to address their needs for foreign languages and global competence. It should be noted that foreign languages proficiency was promoted by President Bill Clinton, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and Secretary of Education Richard Riley [4].

In autumn 2000 General Accounting Office (GAO) undertook a thorough study of the federal government's language needs and capabilities the results of which were published in the report «Foreign Languages: Human Capital Approach Needed to Correct Staffing and Proficiency». The report concluded that the agencies studied by GAO all had major language «shortfalls» [4, p. 6]. Officials from defense institutions, intelligence service, the FBI and other government agencies spoke about a similar problem. With the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 in the course of numerous discussions concerning national security experts and politicians repeatedly talked about the needs for language proficiency and international understanding [5]. The term «critical languages» became a catch phrase to encompass a limited list of languages deemed critical to national security at the time. The researchers say that languages become a major issue in the 21st century [6]. Since then, language proficiency is considered important for the competitiveness of the state, so the study of foreign languages has been given much attention in numerous legislative initiatives. As an example, the National Flagship Initiative that came under the auspices of national security established Flagship K-12 designed to provide an articulated path of language instruction for students from elementary school through college [12]. It should be noted that the legislative and policy initiatives passed after the tragedy of 9 / 11 had provisions promoting foreign languages learning, such as the Department of Education's FY 2004 Plan, the International Studies in Higher Education Act of 2003, the National Security Language Act, and the International and Foreign Language Studies Act of 2004, among others [4]. In 2004 the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Act was established to increase and diversify the group of American students who have the opportunity to study abroad.

In January of 2005 National Policy Summit entitled «An American Plan for Action», was held at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill. The researchers say that one of the major victories of this summit was the creation and implementation of the NSEP Chinese K-16 Pipeline Flagship, a model for sequenced, articulated Chinese study beginning in elementary school and continuing through undergraduate

study [4, p.8]. Later, the model was used for the Arabic language study. Immediately after the summit, Congress approved resolution making 2005 the «Year of Foreign Language Study». In the spring of that year, Senator Daniel Akaka announced the introduction of a bill that called for a «National Coordination Council» for foreign languages to consider present and future national language policies and to allow the numerous pertinent government agencies to share information about language capabilities, resources, and needs with one another. Despite the controversial nature of the bill the idea of establishing a position of federal representative who would be responsible for the government's foreign language and international education programs appeared in the United States. In 2008 the office of Deputy Assistant Secretary for International and Foreign Language Education accountable to the Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education was established [4].

In January 2006, U.S. President George W. Bush and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice announced the National Security Language Initiative which was to create and expand the nation's critical language and study abroad programs. The purpose of this initiative was developing more proficient speakers of languages important to national security. Soon after the National Security Language Initiative announcement the Committee for Economic Development released a report entitled «Education for Global Leadership: The Importance of International Studies and Foreign Language Education for U.S. Economic and National Security», which emphasized beginning language study early and using international content across the school curriculum in the U.S. to maintain and strengthen economic competitiveness [1].

Currently in the U.S. there is the Critical Language Scholarship Program, which is cultural and educational exchange program and offers students from the United States the opportunity to participate in an intensive language study abroad. This nationally competitive program funds students who study one of the 13 critical need foreign languages, and is part of the National Security Language Initiative. The 13 critical languages include Arabic, Azerbaijani, Bengali, Chinese, Hindi, Indone-

sian, Japanese, Korean, Persian, Punjabi, Russian, Turkish and Urdu. In 2011 only 575 applicants received this scholarship and 631 – in 2012 [3].

Of course, the United States has not always been loyal to foreign languages. As it was mentioned above, for the first time foreign languages proficiency was considered important in 1957. After each legislative act promoting foreign languages learning both citizens and politicians lost interest in foreign languages. Specified at the outset Joint National Committee for Languages and National Council for Languages and International Studies made every effort to promote foreign languages and to implement legislative acts. But after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 the country has sustained commitment to training specialists, proficient in critical languages and having global competence. Many researchers criticize these actions, noting that Americans are teaching foreign languages so that they can defend themselves or invade other nations and they are emphasizing practical skill and missing out on the cultural values that come from a humanities approach that would open American students to other rich literatures and knowledge. Some scientists also say that Americans are continuing to treat foreignness as inimical and foreign languages as enemy territory [13]. But the main thing is that in such a multinational country as the U.S., foreign languages are studied through active actions of government, public and educational institutions and the main purpose of language learning is maintaining national security and economic competitiveness in the international arena.

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