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Kirghiz-Turkish linguistic contacts

The cultural and economic ties between Kirghizstan and a number of foreign countries have now been expanded. Among them are not only countries bordering on Kirghizstan (such as Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tadzhikistan and China), but other important partners as well (such as India, Turkey, Japan and others).

Not long ago during the restructuring (perestroika) period several attempts were made to dwell upon the role of languages in the ethnic destinies of native speakers. These included such priorities as national independence, preservation and development of traditions and cultural values.

This process in the states of the former USSR played a positive role in expanding social functions and in increasing the role of native languages in the ethnic revival process of those peoples connected with newly formed independent states such as Kirghizstan, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan.

But it cannot be said that everyone has understood the value of their language.

An analysis of the first and second points of view enables us to confirm that linguistic ties during the whole period of human interaction had both positive and negative features, namely: excessive lexical and stylistic innovation and saturating the vocabulary by innovating with new terms.

The frequent changes in the alphabet influenced the language in some ways (e.g. the Arab, then Latin and later Cyrillic alphabets have had their influence on Kirghiz).

This fact prevented us from becoming acquainted with the writing of the Middle East.

The transition (in the mid-1940s) from the Latin to Cyrillic alphabets created a number of serious and inevitable problems in orthography; now standardising the writing system has created some problems for teaching at primary schools. (For example in Kirghiz the absence of several letters for certain sounds (q, or ğ) and sound combinations (ӏа, ӏе, ӏу) led to the "creation" of an artificial rule for explaining the ways they are reproduced. In fact it was not a rule, but just a sort of puzzle.

Аюу – instead of айуу

кой – коюу (here the vowel й has been completely omitted) and other examples abound.

There have been a lot of dissimilarities and different pronunciations in the writing of onomastic vocabulary (i.e. phonemes, ethnonyms, anthroponyms). There were also some dissimilarities in the pronunciation of Kirghiz words in Russian. For example:

Alma-Ata instead of Alma-Aty

Kenes-Anarkhai instead of Kenes-Angrakhai

Tashkent instead of Tashken

Ust-Kamenogorsk instead of Uskemen

Tokmak instead of Tokmok etc.

All this led to a great many problems in this field and to forming a number of rules and exceptions. As a result of this some languages had no writing system and their native speakers were simply illiterate. In all the newly formed states, national languages have the status of state languages on the legislative level. What does this mean?

a) They can be used in all spheres of life: in officework, in teaching in primary, secondary and even postsecondary education (not only as separate subjects, but as a means of teaching)

b) They can be used in legal and inquest proceedings

c) They are used in regulating onomastic terms

d) They are widely used in the mass media

e) Taking traditions and certain other factors into consideration

The Russian language was considered to be a means of international communication.

However, in changing societies language problems have become the object of various national conflicts or are being submitted as the thing without which the rights of a person will be infringed upon by the main nation.

Despite this, life is changing international links and various political, economic, scientific and cultural contacts. Moreover, the processes of restructuring occurring at present in all spheres of the country's life have done much to foster a keen interest in Kirghizstan. Inter-linguistic ties are being broadened. The problem of Kirghiz-Turkish ties begins with basic tasks, i.e. compiling dictionaries, textbooks and conversation books, and includes comparative investigations of the two languages in different areas such as terminology, grammar, history of the languages, dialects, etc.

I do not know to what degree Turkish linguists are interested in Kirghiz language studies and in its history, but I cannot say that the same problem has been completely solved in Kirghizstan. Kirghiz linguists, in joint efforts with their Turkish counterparts have published articles in journals in Turkey and in Kirghizstan.

Linguists take a great interest in creating a terminology and in encouraging its use in life. In this field the two countries have a great deal of experience and have come out with a number of publications.

1) This experience would be of great importance for undergraduate and post graduate research.

2) The unification problem in the terminology is of great scholarly and practical importance. But here both our traditions and new objectives should be taken into consideration.

The basis for creating a Kirghiz linguistic terminology began in the early 20s, when Kirghiz writing was in Arabic based on the work of the first scientist-linguist, the founder of Kirghiz, Tynystanov.

According to these principles native language words were used to denote certain terms:

1) УНГУ, МУЧО, ТАМГА, ТЫБЫШ, ТИЛ, СӨЗ;

2) The use of all the word-formation principles: affixation (СУЙЛОМ, БАЙЛАМГА, УНДУУ, УНСУС) word-combinations: and word-formatting.

3) The use of borrowing (loanwords): dialects, lexicology, morphology, syntax, and phonemes.

4) Trying to avoid Iranian loanwords in the terminology in different branches. The Kirghiz linguistic terminology based on these principles have been constantly used for 70 years. But this cannot be said of other branches of technical, medical and biological sciences where there has been a break between writing and oral speech.

Conclusions:

1) Contrastive analysis has revealed differences in the Turkish and Kirghiz linguistic terminologies: crucial to the work of compiling bilingual dictionaries.

2) There are some terms in both languages which will be borrowed during the unification period.