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LINGUISTIC SITUATION IN REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA: LINGUISTIC PLANNING AND STANDARDIZATION

Situations of linguistic contact, bilingualism and multilingualism, diglossia and the others are the most frequently discussed topics from a socio-cultural perspective in bilingual or multilingual countries, or in those with well-marked regional linguistic peculiarities. Having established the state of things in the given sphere, studies of this type aim to work out some proper linguistic policies for achieving a social balance and tolerance among the representatives of different nations in order to ease their communication.

Communication establishes some social relations between the sender and the receiver. The social context is a strong determinant in verbal behaviour because to communicate does not mean only the capability of expressing, understanding or combining complex sentences in larger units of communication but also producing and using proper messages in some situations of communication. The sociolinguists (W. Labov and others) stated that the notion of linguistic competence is too narrow for comprising the functional knowledge of verbal communication. Instead of linguistic competence postulated by N. Chomsky, a larger concept of communicative competence was suggested that comprises both the grammatical competence and the ability of using language in concrete speech situations as this process is determined by social experience and social need for communication. In bilingual societies the speakers have different levels of competence. Some speakers master both languages well, the others know only one language very well and the other language is mastered superficially.

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Bilingualism (multilingualism) is the person's capacity of speaking fluently two (or more) languages. There are several types of bilingualism: *natural*, *voluntary* and *decreed* (Kloss).

Natural bilingualism is the result of a mixed marriage, living together in a multilingual region or near a frontier zone that divides two linguistic areas.

Voluntary bilingualism occurs as a result of some strict individual efforts, or because the desire to become bilingual is in accordance with law or another action on the behalf of the state.

Decreed bilingualism, although based on the state authority, is against the citizens' will. As any obligation, the obligation of learning a language, speaking and using it in everyday activities, business included, can engender resentments or even actions of protest. We will come back to this point of the problem.

Being examined under the level of mastering Romanian and Russian, bilingualism is regarded as a subordinate one in Republic of Moldova.

During decades the Romanian language did not manifest itself as a means of communication and expression of the relations between state, power and society. In this correlation Romanian was more than marginalized, the major role was played by Russian.

In the postwar period only Russian scientific and technical terminology was used in secondary and higher education. Apparently the Romanian terminology was not necessary as the professional communication was fulfilled in Russian. The official documents from public administration were also drafted only in Russian. Some state officials even considered that a technical and scientific terminology in Romanian (called Moldovan at that time) did not exist.

As a first step, in the 70's a terminological commission of the Academy of Sciences from Moldova was founded and which had the objective to introduce the technical and scientific terminology in textbooks elaborated for higher education.

In Republic of Moldova the decisive factor for initiating the process of developing specialized languages in Romanian was the endorsement of the Law about the Status of State Language of MSSR and of the Law of the Spoken Languages in the territory of MSSR from August 31st 1989.

In October 1989 the Republican Terminological Centre was founded, a fact stipulated in a state complex program for assuring the usage of spoken language in the territory of Republic of Moldova. The objective of the Centre was to contribute to the implementation of the above mentioned laws.

Nowadays the National Terminological Centre is a viable scientific – practical organization that aids the Romanian language, the official language, to be implemented in Moldova.

The National Terminological Centre beneficiaries are both the native speakers of Romanian and those of Russian, the activity of the centre contributes to the formation of their communicative competence. In about 18 years of the NCT activity thousands of examples of official documents and forms, hundreds of Romanian terminological standards have been worked out; guidebooks, ABC-es for Townhalls and Personal Service, bilingual specialized terminological dictionaries (Guide of a Civil Worker, Dictionary of a Builder and Locative Administration, Dictionary of Financial-Banking Terms, Dictionary of Profession and Occupation Names, Dictionary of Silviculturist, Dictionary of a Hairstylist, Dictionary of Car Terms, Dictionary of a Railway Worker, Guide of a Taxi-driver, Names of Industrial Goods, Dictionary of Physical Proportions and Measure Units, Terms and Syntagms have been published.

Nowadays the major objective of the NTC is setting up a Bank of Terminological Data accessible in Internet to all interested users.

The NTC cooperates closely with the scientific and higher institutions. The first standards of national scientific terminology were put into circulation in co-operation with the Department „Moldova-Standard”.

Several rounds of the contests of the Award for Scientific and Technical Terminology in Romanian were organized with the logistic support of the Latin Union, the first CD-Rom came out with the terminological resources of the Romanian Terminological Association „Termrom” and of the National Terminological Association „Termrom Moldova”. Due to a grant offered by the Latin Union, the National Terminological Centre organized a training seminar in translation and terminology in cooperation with the Technical University of Moldova. The objective of this seminar was to contribute to the training in the sphere of specialized communication of translators, interpreters, terminologists, experts in documentation and information, and teachers, holding lectures on specialized languages.

From November 2002 till present the Contest of Scientific and Technical Terminology for students have taken place annually, which aims at making sphere terminologies in Romanian known and improving the young specialists’ way of expression.

The linguistic and terminological consultation offered by the NTC to physical and legal persons contributes to the spreading of special terminologies and the literary Romanian language norms in the bilingual environment of our

country. For the same purpose conferences on „Terminology and Specialized Languages” are organized twice a year in co-operation with other scientific institutions.

On the NTC site (<http://cntdnt.md>) a service of linguistic consultation on-line „Româna Interactivă” is available for everyone who needs it.

From the adoption of linguistic law some results in the functionality of national scientific terminology in Republic of Moldova have been recorded. But the practice of elaborating some normative documents, standards in Russian and their translation into Romanian by incompetent persons results inevitably in mutilating special terminologies and in using inelegant expressions.

Under the circumstances in which the specialized dictionaries, mainly Russian-Romanian ones or terminological lexicons are insufficient, a translation is accompanied by the risk of inventing terms arbitrarily. In such a way terminological doublets can appear as in the case of the terms *value added fee* and *value added tax*, which referred to the same notion: a form of payment to the budget. After some interventions the unification of these terms was effected and today only the value added tax (VAT) is used.

Taking into consideration the present linguistic reality from Moldova it is insisted that specialists should know not only the national scientific and technical terminology but also the literary Romanian language. In order to make a high-quality translation of some technical-scientific texts, good knowledge of source language, of target language and of the sphere of terminology is necessary.

The problem of translators’ and terminologists’ training in Republic of Moldova is still a pressing problem. The Russians, being aware of that, often resort to the national Terminological Centre specialists for translating or drawing up some directions, regulations, tickets, names of goods, advertisements. There are cases of solving some disputes about the interpretation of some terms among commercial companies in which the National Terminological Centre appears in the capacity of an expert.

In accordance with the linguistic law and Law about Advertisement, names of enterprises, institutions, companies, restaurants and advertising texts posted in the capital should be authorized by the National Terminological Centre. We ascertain here an element of obligation on the behalf of the state for both native speakers of Romanian and Russian. The majority of economic agents conform to the mentioned laws, which stipulate that the names of companies should be created in the Romanian language and the advertising texts should also be presented in the official language and can be doubled in other languages, in case of necessity. Unfortunately, some people go beyond

these laws and it is enough to walk in the streets in Chisinau for illustrating this: names of companies, advertisements written in other languages Russian and / or English except Romanian. This fact is a consequence of the absence of a well-structured and motivated linguistic policy in our country and of insufficient information about the most important laws, decisions that regulate the economic agents' activity. Unfortunately, nowadays the mechanism of controlling the observance of linguistic legislation is absent in Republic of Moldova. Together with the new power establishment the Department of Languages was dissolved. The inspectors responsible for language problems within town halls were also dismissed. The National Terminological Centre is a scientific-practical institution that helps people and interested institutions, having neither obligations nor possibilities of supervising the observance process of linguistic legislation in the whole country.

From the point of view of norm an unsolved problem is the dual spelling in Romanian. Till 1993 the sound [î] was represented by the letter *î*. According to the norms changed by the Romanian Academy in 1993, the sound under discussion is represented by the letter *â* and only as an exception *î* in some cases (at the beginning and the end of the words, after prefixes). This change was not accepted officially in Moldova (the Academy of Sciences from Moldova did not take an attitude against that fact) that is why spelling variants are recorded in our country: some people write with *î* while the others with *â*: *cuvînt/cuvânt*, *tînr/tânăr*, *a rîde/a râde* etc., which is rather bad especially for education.

In conclusion, it is demanded that an adequate and harmonious linguistic policy should be made that would consist of means of explaining the legislative documents dealing with the correct and unhampered function of the official language in all spheres of social life.

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Summary

Till 1989 two languages (Russian and Romanian) were spoken in Republic of Moldova. In 1989 the Romanian language obtained the right to become the official language of the state. For the implementation of the new linguistic policy the National Center of Terminology and the National Association Termrom Moldova were founded. Since 1989

till present thousands of forms, official documents, instructions, standards have been elaborated, adapted and translated into Romanian. A lot of terminological dictionaries using two languages: Romanian and Russian have been compiled and published. The NCT specialists offer linguistic and terminological consultations to anyone. The NCT and Termrom Moldova collaborate with the Technical Committee 7. Terminology. Moldovan specialists do their best to inform the population with the present norms of the standard Romanian language but still there are a lot of problems that need solving.