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## NATIVE LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN UKRAINE AND THE UKRAINIAN DIASPORA: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

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**Abstract.** The trends of development of native language education of Ukrainians living in Ukraine, the USA and Canada have been analyzed. They are stipulated by globalization as well as integration processes on a global scale in the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> and at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. Their dependence on state language and language education policies in Ukraine have been grounded together with national consciousness of the Ukrainians whereas the western diaspora dependence on external (language policy in the country of residence, assimilation, assistance from Ukrainian part) and internal factors (national consciousness of Ukrainians in the diaspora, their integration into different society, functioning of native language education, public organizations) have also been reasoned.

The functioning of institutions in the USA and Canada have been studied (parents/family – kindergartens – Ukrainian Studies Schools and Courses at Universities). Where the subjects in Ukrainian Language and Systems of State Educational Institutions for young generations of the American and Canadian Ukrainians are being taught.

The following key trends of native language education have been distinguished: bilingualism (Russian-Ukrainian languages in Ukraine which, in general, has a negative impact on the status of national language. English-Ukrainian languages in the USA and Canada which is an essential part of the integration of national minorities representatives into the societies of these countries); reduction of Ukrainian language speakers in the USA and Canada as well as in Ukraine; state assistance in language teaching for ethnic communities/minorities in Ukraine and separate Canadian provinces; seeking for efficient means and methods of teaching native language in polytechnic / multilingual environments such as mountainous regions of the USA, Canada and Ukraine.

The conclusion is that despite of assimilation and migration processes in the diaspora and Ukraine, the need of Ukrainian language learning is growing. This is particularly connected with the fourth emigration wave of Ukrainians who are willing to study their own language and obtain appropriate education.

**Keywords:** native language education, state language, bilingualism.

Globalization and integration worldwide processes and fundamental political and socio-economic changes in Europe have intensified emigration and led to the emergence of so-called fourth wave of emigration in Ukraine (as an independent state). Unlike the previous three waves, it has become of a multi-vector nature and was focused on almost all continents of our planet. This is why nearly 20

million people of Ukrainian descent now live beyond Ukraine. The largest and most influential Ukrainian ethnic groups are located in the USA and Canada. Each of them now has over one million members of Ukrainian ethnicity. In the process of their formation / consolidation and life support for over a century, the important role was played by the national system of education. It was the factor that helped immigrants organize themselves, save the native language in multilingual environment as the most important sign of the ethnic group to ensure its assimilation of the younger generations. However, assimilation processes, aspirations of a significant part of Ukrainians, especially from the fourth wave of emigration, to integrate into American and Canadian society, led to new trends in native language education of representatives of Ukrainian diaspora groups. An active catalyst of which, apart from internal factors, have also been language policy and language education of independent Ukrainian state.

The study of documentary sources and scientific literature on the given topic, shows that this ethno-lingo and didactic phenomenon, despite its importance, has not attracted enough attention of local researchers. And despite the fact that the development of Ukrainian language in the diaspora is not just a part of the history of the national language but a significant ethno-cultural and sociolinguistic resource that certainly deserves a thorough study and use of native language education of the Ukrainians as a school of survival and self-awareness. However, in the context of the research interests the following scholars: B. Azhniuk, M. Vivcharyk, Yu. Zhluktenko, I. Lopushynskyy, I. Rusnak, M. Stepanenko, H. Filipchuk and others have addressed to the analysis of certain aspects of the problem.

The objective of this article is to analyze the features of native language development of education of Ukrainians in the USA, Canada and Ukraine at the turn of the century, in particular its functioning in the mountainous regions.

Historical experience shows that the development of linguistic education in any country depends on a number of factors. The leading among them are the language policy of the state in general and language policy of education in particular. Laws governing the use of languages in the United States appeared in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and were usually not prohibitive but permissive. However, with the massive influx of immigrants, increasing of their role in public life, and especially the revival of ethnic consciousness of linguistic and cultural minorities in the mid-60s of last century, has spread the ideology of "melting pot". Which declared that the culture of a new type, based on the best traditions brought into it by the various nations, including Ukrainians, who started settling on American territory from the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century is being formed in America. Today, Ukrainians and Ukrainian Americans (over 90%) are concentrated mainly in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Pittsburg, Detroit, Cleveland and other cities. They occupy the 21<sup>st</sup> place among ethnic groups of the multinational state. When residing in the U.S. the Ukrainian diaspora, despite the fact that many politicians of the country prefer monolingualism to bilingualism<sup>6</sup>, established a system of education which includes parents / family - kindergartens / - Ukrainian Studies Schools / Parish Schools - Ukrainian Studies in universities. A number of university centers (Harvard, Illinois, New York etc.) now offer an opportunity to get a specialist degree in Ukrainian language.

A system of national education of Ukrainian Canadians also has similar traditional Western Ukrainian diaspora structure. In addition, they have the opportunity to learn the Ukrainian language in public schools, what, in fact, nearly 10 thousand students do. Ukrainistics also being taught at 12 universities in Canada. These achievements were made possible due to the support of ethnic community and officially proclaimed the policy of multiculturalism in 1981, and hence multilingualism. The community has been actively engaged in the problems of native language education of the younger generations since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century when the first bilingual schools were established there. However, the typical factor that negatively affects the mastery of Ukrainian language in the United States and Canada, is the lack of natural native language environment that enables the child to absorb Ukrainian language from an early childhood. The same factor is the large number of mixed families, where the vast majority does not speak Ukrainian. Eventually, this led to what is now only 20-25 % of Canadian Ukrainians speak Ukrainian, who are mostly older people from the first or second generation. The

third, fourth and fifth generations speak English, but remember their Ukrainian descent. Less than half of Ukrainian Canadians go to the Ukrainian churches. The conclusion might be the following that, eventually, Ukrainians will completely dissolve in anglo-franco speaking Canada. However, along with the assimilation process the revival of national life still goes on, which was given a significant boost by the independence of Ukraine. In particular, a powerful catalyst, in this process, was the adoption by Ukraine of a number of documents and actions taken which contributed to the expansion of relations with the diaspora and mainland Ukraine, particularly in the field of native language education. Finally, Ukraine as well as Canada and the United States is a country of multi-ethnic composition of the population. Its territory, according to the National Census of 2001, has 48.2 million people. Among them 37.5 million (77.8 %) are ethnic Ukrainians, which make the key entity of the state formation and constitute its national majority. The number of members of other ethnic communities is 10.7 million (22.2 %) among which are indigenous peoples, minorities and ethnic groups.

Indigenous people are those who originated in modern Ukraine and have no state formations abroad. They are the Crimean Tatars (248.2 thousand people), and the two ancient communities: Karaites (1196 people) and Krymchaks (406 people). Ukraine, for all of them, is a historical homeland. The share of indigenous people in the population of Ukraine is 0.5 %, while the population of the Crimea, where the majority of its representatives live, is 12.3%.

Among the minorities, Russians significantly stand out due to historical circumstances and number 8.3 million people (17.3% of the population and 77.9% of non-Ukrainians)<sup>5</sup> for the year of 2001.

Ukraine as a poly-ethnic country declared language policy as one of the top national priorities. Its strategic objective is to ensure strict observance of constitutional guarantees for the development and functioning of Ukrainian language as the state language in all spheres of public life and free development, and use and protection of minority languages in Ukraine.

The ability to meet the educational needs is an important factor that affects social well-being of citizens, ensures the preservation of their ethnic identity. Considering the specific ethnic composition of the state, polyethnicity in particular, a purposeful search of regional special features in the development and implementation of national language policy and the education system is being carried out. Note that Ukrainian citizen can pursue the linguistic degree in the public educational institutions, which include pre-schools (kindergartens, kindergartens-complexes), secondary school and higher education institutions of different levels of accreditation. The distinguishing feature of the national education system in Ukraine is the existence of an extensive network of public secondary schools (or classes) of minority languages (Russian, Hungarian, Romanian, Polish, Moldavian, Crimean Tatar). According to Article 10 of the Constitution of Ukraine the network is formed in accordance with the educational demands and national composition of the population. The legislative base of Ukraine creates more favorable conditions for the study of native languages of national minorities in schools, whereas in the U.S. and Canada the Ukrainians do not have the same opportunity. Nevertheless, ethnic Ukrainians in Ukraine face more difficulties than English-speaking Americans and Canadians. But their native Ukrainian language having received the status of the state language of a titular nation is still not consolidated in it. This is due to the fact that Ukraine, unlike the U.S. and Canada, "does not present a coherent conception of the language policy", the basis of which in sovereign states "at all times have been and remains today the idea of national unity"<sup>1</sup>.

Because of this, according to the index of preserving the nationality by the language, the Ukrainians occupy the 5<sup>th</sup> place in their country (after the Russians, Hungarians, Crimean Tatars, Romanians). At the same time, the language factor can not be overestimated in terms of the formation of national identity. A person who does not belong to a specific socio-ethnic community according to national basis, but is in its cultural sphere, inevitably acquires psychological and behavioral traits that gradually converge him or her to social and ethnic community, and still distinguish from their origin.

Since language is the most significant and most obvious form of representation of culture, it should be seen as a powerful factor both in Ukraine and in the diaspora, in the terms of national identity and consolidation. In this context searching for effective forms, methods and means to ensure national language education for Ukrainians wherever they live, becomes of a crucial importance.

If we analyze current approaches to linguistic education in Ukraine and the Ukrainian diaspora, one can clearly notice the following key trends. First. As a leading educational practice a focus is laid on bilingualism - Russian-Ukrainian in Ukraine and English-Ukrainian in Canada and the United States. Attitude of researches of linguodidactics to this phenomenon is ambiguous. But if the living conditions of Ukrainians in English-speaking society in the U.S. and Canada, with English as an official / state language where mastering of it is the key to the success and integration into the environment of the country of residence by the native speakers, then these conditions in Ukraine, have very different character. They reduce the social status of the state language, giving it a secondary role, negatively affecting the formation of national consciousness and identity of the Ukrainian people. Finally, these data can be confirmed by the last census in Ukraine (2001).

The Ukrainian language is a mother tongue for 67.5% of the population, including 85% of ethnic Ukrainians, 4% of Russians and 11% of other ethnic communities. However, for 29.6% of the population, including 15% of the Ukrainians, 96% of the Russians and 31% of other communities their native is Russian language. Only 57% of non-Ukrainians (except Russians) consider their native language to be the one spoken by the nation.

But for the urban population, which plays a leading role in the political and cultural processes, this ratio is somewhat different. The Ukrainian is native only for 58.5 % of urban residents, among them 78% of the Ukrainians, 3.5% the Russians and 12.5 % of other ethnic communities, the Russian as native is for 39.5 % among them nearly 22% of the Ukrainians, 96.5 % of the Russians and 44 % of other ethnic communities. Only 43.5 % of non-Ukrainians residents, (except Russians) consider the native language to be the one spoken by their own people.

It is worth mentioning that almost all citizens of Ukraine are fluent in Russian and at least understand the Ukrainian.

The idea that bilingualism is harmful for learning Ukrainian language as native has been spread among the modern Ukrainian linguists and lingo didactic researchers both in Ukraine and in the diaspora. Because it reduces the number of its speakers and discards its position in the public life of the country and in the diaspora - in the life of the ethnic community.

How do the researchers of lingo didactic in diaspora see the way out of this situation? We believe that a systematic approach to solve this problem, offers V. Holubnychy. Considering ethnocultural processes among Ukrainian communities, the scientist has come to a convincing conclusion that "the following process of formation and education of an individual, in terms of emigration, should be considered ideal:

1. Speaking Ukrainian language in childhood and a family; teaching English alphabet and written language for school preparation in the Ukrainian.

2. Along with English primary school, bringing up in Plast, teaching reading and writing in Parish Sunday School.

3. At the same time Secondary English-speaking school together with enrollment for Ukrainian studies courses or schools and participation in sports and youth organizations.

4. College, University, Higher Education. This process of education can be considered as a possible and reasonable prerequisite and almost complete guarantee against assimilation"<sup>3</sup>.

Modern scholars, have taken into account the experience of development of the Ukrainian language in multi-ethnic countries and stated that (and we share that opinion), bilingualism of Ukrainians outside Ukraine is not only desirable but even obligatory. They have to know the language of their new home so that to be a citizens enjoying full rights. However, they need to know their own language in order not to lose ties with their nation. Ukrainian group living in any country as a national minority, usually has to be bilingual: on the one hand, it must learn the language of the state in which they live, on the other hand, this language group is to preserve their native language as the greatest evidence of nationality. For example, representatives from national groups in the U.S. and Canada, such as Ukrainians, Poles, Czechs, Germans and others all are bilingual, while the English-speaking population of these countries only speaks their own language, except, perhaps, for another foreign language (Spanish, French, occasionally Russian etc)<sup>4</sup>. It should be noted that in modern native

language education of Canadian Ukrainians bilingual public schools that operate in the provinces of Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and others play important role. However, the learning of Ukrainian language in public schools of each province, according to the present legislation in the system of education, has certain organizational as well as methodical features.

Thus, pursuing the multiculturalism policy of 1971, the Government of Alberta introduced a Ukrainian bilingual school program that envisaged "partially extended language teaching" (teaching Ukrainian language as a specific discipline and other subjects: social studies, music, art etc) and learning the Ukrainian as a second language. Extended learning program in Alberta has three types, which differ from each other by the amount of hours spent on learning a second language, and the grade which is being taught. The full day program of second language classes take up 80% to 100% of the school day. The equal number of half-day program classes are taught in a second language as well as in English. The program in Pre School or first grade, is a program of early language teaching. If it is introduced in grades 4-5 or 6, it is called the mid level learning program. Late language teaching program begins in Secondary School (grades 7-12).

Let us emphasize that the Ukrainian Bilingual Program in Alberta is a part of the early language teaching program. This helps the students of Ukrainian-English language classes to formally (in Ukrainian language subjects), and incidentally master the language. Since the following subjects of Social Studies, Art, Physical Education, Health, Drama are taught in the Ukrainian. Preparation of relevant training and educational materials for Ukrainian Bilingual Program are provided by Language Programs Department of Alberta Ministry of Education together with the Ukrainian Language Education Centre (MKUM), which was founded in 1987 at the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, University of Alberta.

This experience of native language education for minority is used in Ukraine, where their educational institutions are supported by the state budget. We believe that this experience is not common and therefore is worth of being followed.

Another typical tendency for native language education of Ukrainians (and not only) is searching for effective ways of implementing the program requirements of language learning. As it is known, the core of the initial stage of language learning is appropriate mastering of reading and writing programs, which is the basis for further language development of a child. Underestimating of this aspect causes chronic immaturity of appropriate skills. That can become an obvious obstacle in the way of the full development of an individual. However, the requirements in communicative language acquisition dictates the suitability and optimality of contextual and situational approach to the formation of educational content, in which the ability of the four types of communicative act - listening, speaking, reading and writing - are formed by thematically related materials. This approach to language acquisition will give the teacher an opportunity to create a reliable communicatively oriented motivation and semantic basis for the development of communicative act of students.

Analysis of native language education of Ukrainians in the diaspora and Ukraine gives reason to believe that today the most appropriate approach is that where native language has the most honorable and most prestigious position in education and linguistic fields. Along with their Ukrainian native language other languages should also be taught. At first it's necessary to go to a model that says "native language is far cognate or non-cognate foreign language". And at the advanced stage of the linguistic formation students can learn any language. The guarantee to authentic language training of students is about a focus on the communicative approach and the implementation of its cultural and problem searching crucial principles.

Native language education of Ukrainians has another kind of feature. If the Ukrainian school for children is the first step to future education and profession, then the Ukrainian school abroad is more of a religious school that helps students maintain their ethnicity, the main indicator of which is the language. The uniqueness of Ukrainian schools is their flexibility to adapt to environmental changes. School always meet the needs of students and understand the circumstances of each. At the same time it promotes the dissemination of information about Ukraine not only among the people of Ukrainian origin, but also among other nationalities.

Native language education organization in the mountainous regions of the United States, Canada and Ukraine deserves special attention. Distance from the cultural and educational centers and complex climatic conditions, and the dispersion of student contingent encourages teachers to use modern methods of linguistic education that help shape them as modern Ukrainian individual. For this purpose distance learning is widely used. Multimedia, interactive learning methods (group learning, frontal teaching, game based learning, discussion based learning etc.) are used during lessons at school.

Charter schools, that become more popular in the United States, can be an effective form of mastering Ukrainian language. So far as they meet the requirements of the society and provide quality education, especially since the Ukrainian government which has already established institutions that can help with Ukrainian Education Abroad<sup>6</sup>.

The analysis of native language education of Ukrainians in western diaspora and Ukraine shows that there are common and different processes due to the state language policy and language policy in education as well as in the terms of functioning of educational institutions. Despite of the decline in birthrate among the Ukrainian diaspora, assimilation and migration, reducing of students' number in schools as well as Ukrainian studies schools, the need for them does not decrease. It is evidenced by the creation of new Ukrainian schools in the U.S. and Canada. The proof of this are thousands of Ukrainian Americans and Canadians who take a long way to give their children the opportunity to learn Ukrainian language and receive Ukrainian education.

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