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LANGUAGE AND IDEOLOGY: POWER RELATIONS BETWEEN LANGUAGE AND IDEOLOGY

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Abstract. This article examines the relationship between language and ideology through the perspective of power relations, focusing on linguistic control and postcolonial transformations in Uzbekistan. The study explores how language norms, institutional policies, and discursive practices contribute to the reproduction of ideological influence. Using critical discourse analysis, historical-comparative methods, and postcolonial linguistic approaches, the research investigates the historical position of the Uzbek language during the Russian imperial and Soviet periods and its development after independence. The findings highlight the role of linguistic authority in shaping national identity and intellectual autonomy. The article also proposes the concept of linguistic ideological immunity as a framework for critically understanding ideological influences in language.
Keywords: language ideology, power relations, linguistic colonialism, postcolonial linguistics, Uzbek language, symbolic power, discourse analysis.

Аннотация. В статье рассматривается взаимосвязь языка и идеологии в контексте властных отношений, языкового контроля и постколониальных трансформаций в Узбекистане. Исследуются механизмы влияния языковых норм, институциональной политики и дискурсивных практик на воспроизводство идеологических представлений. Методологическую основу составляют критический дискурс-анализ, историко-сравнительный метод и постколониальный лингвистический подход. Особое внимание уделяется историческому положению узбекского языка в период Российской империи и советской власти, а также его развитию после обретения независимости. Обосновывается значение языковой самостоятельности в формировании национальной идентичности и интеллектуального суверенитета. Предлагается концепция лингвистического идеологического иммунитета как основы критического осмысления идеологического воздействия на язык.
Ключевые слова: языковая идеология, властные отношения, лингвистический колониализм, постколониальная лингвистика, узбекский язык, символическая власть, дискурс-анализ, языковая автономия.

INTRODUCTION

Language is more than a means of communication; it is a social phenomenon closely connected with the formation of collective identity, the distribution of power, and the reproduction of ideological values. Through language, individuals not only express their understanding of the world but also acquire particular ways of interpreting social reality. In this sense, linguistic practices are never entirely separated from the historical, political, and cultural conditions in which they develop. The relationship between language and ideology therefore deserves particular attention, especially in societies whose linguistic development has been shaped by colonial experiences and subsequent

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processes of national reconstruction. The connection between language and power has been examined by several influential scholars. Michel Foucault emphasized the role of discourse in establishing relations between knowledge and power, while Pierre Bourdieu demonstrated how linguistic practices acquire symbolic authority within social institutions.

The Uzbek linguistic experience offers a valuable context for examining these relationships. Russian imperial expansion, Soviet language policies, and post-independence transformations have influenced the institutional status, functional development, and ideological representation of the Uzbek language. Although independence created new opportunities for strengthening its national and cultural position, the historical legacy of linguistic hierarchies remains relevant to contemporary educational, scientific, and public discourse.

METHODOLOGY AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The methodological foundation of this research is based on the understanding that language should be examined not only as a structured system of linguistic units but also as a social phenomenon shaped by historical experience, cultural values, and institutional relations. In this regard, the study adopts an interdisciplinary approach that brings together theoretical linguistics, sociolinguistics, critical discourse analysis, postcolonial interpretation, and cognitive semantics. Such an approach makes it possible to investigate the relationship between linguistic structures and the ideological conditions under which they are produced and interpreted [1].

Particular attention is given to the methodological contributions of Uzbek linguists whose research has established important foundations for understanding the relationship between language, thought, meaning, and social communication. The works of Nizomiddin Mahmudov are especially relevant in this context. His research on the nature of language, speech culture, and linguistic expression provides an important theoretical basis for considering language as a phenomenon closely connected with human consciousness and cultural identity [2].

The study also draws upon the linguistic approaches developed by Baxtiyor Mengliyev. His textbook “Hozirgi o‘zbek tili” examines the structural organization of contemporary Uzbek and the relationship between language and speech. These theoretical considerations are relevant to the present research because ideological meanings are not expressed independently of linguistic structure; they are realized through lexical, grammatical, semantic, and contextual resources [3]. Consequently, the analysis considers linguistic form and social meaning as interconnected dimensions of discourse.

Another important methodological direction is the examination of lexical and semantic transformations. In this respect, the research takes into account Shavkat Rahmatullayev's “O‘zbek tilining etimologik lug‘ati”, which provides material for investigating the historical origins and semantic development of Uzbek vocabulary. The historical dimensions of lexical meaning are particularly significant when examining how linguistic elements become associated with cultural identity, historical memory, and ideological interpretation [4].

E. Begmatov's research on the lexical composition of the Uzbek literary language also provides a relevant foundation for studying the historical development of vocabulary and the relationship between linguistic norms and cultural continuity. These local scholarly contributions are considered alongside the theoretical principles of Critical Discourse Analysis developed by Norman Fairclough and Teun A. van Dijk [5].

In Uzbek linguistics, Nizomiddin Mahmudov's scholarly contributions are particularly important for understanding the relationship between language, thought, culture, and human communication. His

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research emphasizes the intellectual and cultural dimensions of linguistic expression. The work “Til” and his subsequent studies provide a basis for examining language beyond its formal grammatical organization. From the perspective of the present research, these contributions are significant because ideological influence frequently operates through the meanings, associations, and cultural values attached to linguistic expressions [6].

A further dimension of the literature review concerns the historical and legal development of the Uzbek language as a state language. The Law of the Uzbek SSR on the State Language, adopted on 21 October 1989, represented an important historical development in the institutional recognition of Uzbek. Its revised version, adopted on 21 December 1995, established the legal foundations for the functioning of Uzbek as the state language of independent Uzbekistan. These legislative documents are essential primary sources for examining the relationship between language policy, national identity, and institutional authority.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the relationship between language and ideology reveals that linguistic power operates through several interconnected mechanisms, including the regulation of linguistic norms, the institutional recognition of particular language forms, and the construction of socially accepted meanings. Language does not simply reflect the existing structure of society; it also contributes to the reproduction of social relations and the legitimization of particular forms of authority.

An important theoretical explanation of this phenomenon can be found in Pierre Bourdieu's concept of symbolic power. According to this perspective, the social value of language depends not only on its communicative functions but also on the institutional conditions under which it is used. A language variety recognized by educational institutions, government bodies, and scientific organizations acquires a higher degree of symbolic legitimacy. Consequently, linguistic authority becomes closely connected with social status and access to institutional resources.

In the Uzbek context, this relationship can be observed in the historical development of literary language norms and the institutional distribution of linguistic functions [7]. The recognition of certain linguistic forms as standard, appropriate, or prestigious has influenced educational practices, official communication, and the production of scientific knowledge. This process demonstrates that language standardization should be examined not exclusively as a grammatical activity but also as a social process involving authority, legitimacy, and cultural representation.The findings suggest that ideological power in language is particularly visible when linguistic preferences become institutional requirements and are subsequently perceived as natural or universally accepted. In such circumstances, the social origins of linguistic authority may become less visible, while its influence continues through everyday communication.

The historical development of the Uzbek language provides an important example of the relationship between language policy and political authority. During the Russian imperial period, Russian gradually acquired administrative and institutional significance in the territories of Central Asia. Its position within governmental structures and official communication contributed to the development of an unequal linguistic environment [8].

The Soviet period introduced another stage in this historical process. Language policy became closely connected with the organization of education, administration, scientific institutions, and interethnic communication. Although Uzbek continued to develop as a literary language, Russian occupied an influential position in several important institutional and professional domains.

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A significant historical development occurred on 21 October 1989, when the Law on the State Language was adopted in the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic. This decision represented an important assertion of the cultural and political significance of the Uzbek language. As William Fierman explains, the adoption of the law symbolized a changing relationship between Uzbekistan and Russia and reflected the growing importance of Uzbek cultural identity. However, the practical implementation of the legislation encountered administrative and organizational difficulties [9].

This historical experience demonstrates an important distinction between the legal recognition of a language and its actual institutional authority. A language may receive official status while continuing to face limitations in scientific communication, administration, and specialized professional environments. Therefore, linguistic sovereignty cannot be evaluated solely through legislative provisions; it must also be considered in relation to the everyday functioning of language within social institutions.

The revised Law on the State Language, adopted on 21 December 1995, established a new legal framework for the functioning of Uzbek as the state language. The legislation also recognized the rights of other nationalities and ethnic groups to use their native languages [10]. This development illustrates the complex relationship between national language consolidation and multilingual social realities. From a postcolonial perspective, the historical significance of these developments lies in the transformation of linguistic authority. The transition from a language hierarchy shaped by imperial and Soviet institutions towards a national language policy involved not only changes in official status but also broader questions of cultural recognition, collective identity, and institutional independence.

Another important result concerns the relationship between linguistic standardization and ideological influence. Linguistic norms are essential for ensuring consistency in education, public communication, scientific terminology, and literary production. Nevertheless, the institutional establishment of particular norms may also reflect broader cultural and political priorities. In this respect, the distinction between linguistic regulation and ideological control is particularly important. Not every language reform represents an ideological intervention. However, when particular linguistic forms are systematically privileged while alternative forms are marginalized without sufficient linguistic justification, standardization may become a mechanism of symbolic exclusion [11].

The Uzbek language provides several examples of this complex relationship. Changes in writing systems, terminology, lexical preferences, and official language practices have been closely connected with historical and political transformations. The transition from Cyrillic to the Latin-based alphabet, for instance, was not simply a technical modification of writing. It also became associated with the broader objectives of national identity formation and the reorientation of cultural and educational practices.

Narmatova and Abdurakhmanova emphasize the importance of the adoption of Uzbek as the state language and the transition to the Latin alphabet within the country's language policy. Their research demonstrates that language planning involves both the institutional status of a language and the development of its linguistic resources. The findings therefore indicate that linguistic reform should be assessed through two complementary dimensions: its structural and communicative effectiveness, and its broader sociocultural implications. This approach helps avoid the simplistic interpretation of every linguistic change as either complete decolonization or continued ideological domination [12].

Contemporary media environments provide additional opportunities for examining the relationship between language and ideological influence. Political speeches, news publications,

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advertisements, and digital communication frequently employ linguistic strategies that shape public interpretations of social events. The use of evaluative vocabulary, metaphors, semantic oppositions, and repeated expressions can influence how individuals perceive political institutions, cultural values, and social groups. For example, the opposition between concepts such as 'traditional' and 'modern', 'national' and 'foreign', or 'progressive' and 'backward' may establish particular interpretative frameworks. Depending on the context, these expressions can contribute to the legitimization of certain positions while reducing the perceived legitimacy of others [13].

CONCLUSION

The study has demonstrated that the relationship between language and ideology is fundamentally connected with the structures of social power, institutional authority, and cultural identity. Language functions not only as a means of communication but also as a mechanism through which particular interpretations of reality are established, legitimized, and transmitted. The analysis has shown that ideological influence can be expressed through linguistic norms, institutional language policies, lexical choices, and discursive representations.

The historical experience of the Uzbek language provides important evidence of the complex relationship between linguistic development and political authority [14]. The Russian imperial and Soviet periods influenced the institutional position and functional distribution of languages in the region. The subsequent recognition of Uzbek as the state language created new opportunities for strengthening national linguistic identity. Nevertheless, the achievement of genuine linguistic autonomy requires more than formal legal recognition; it also depends on the development of scientific terminology, educational resources, and independent intellectual production in the national language.

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