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LANGUAGE POLICY IN RUSSIA

Abstract: The article examines the main directions of Russian language policy. The article deals with the main legal documents that determine the language policy of Russia. The article also attempts to formulate current problems in the field of Russian language policy.

Keywords: language policy, multinational state, multilingualism, globalization.

ЯЗЫКОВАЯ ПОЛИТИКА В РОССИИ

Аннотация: Статья посвящена описанию основных направлений языковой политики России. В статье рассмотрены главные нормативно-правовые документы, определяющие языковую политику России. Также в статье предпринята попытка сформулировать актуальные проблемы в сфере Российской языковой политики.

Ключевые слова: языковая политика, многонациональное государство, многоязычие, глобализация.

Language policy can be defined as a set of ideological principles and practical measures aimed at solving language problems in society and state [8].
Speaking about the language policy in the Russian Federation, first of all, it should be noted that Russia is a multinational state. Such a state requires unity and consistency in communication and generally recognized ways of communicating between people in society and government.

In this regard, according to the law of the RSFSR of October 25, 1991 No. 1807-I «On languages of the peoples of the Russian Federation»[5], the following issues of state regulation in the field of language policy are highlighted:

* Establishing General principles of Russian legislation on the languages of the peoples of the Russian Federation;
* Ensuring the functioning of the Russian language as the state language of the Russian Federation;
* Promoting the development of the state languages of the republics;
* Creating conditions for the preservation and development of languages of small-numbered peoples and ethnic groups that do not have their own national-state and national-territorial entities and live outside their borders;
* Promoting the study of languages of the peoples of the Russian Federation outside the Russian Federation.

The provisions of this law reflect the principles and priorities of the Russian state's activities in the field of language policy.

The Russian language, being the state language, has a certain «pre-property» over other languages existing in the territory of the Russian Federation. «The status of the Russian language as an official language means its mandatory use and application by all state and local authorities within the country, during referendums and elections, in the official publication of laws and other regulations, in court proceedings, record keeping, etc. This fact imposes certain obligations on the state, especially on state educational institutions, in relation to the teaching, development and dissemination of the Russian language»[7]. However, the provisions of article 68, part 3 of the Constitution [6] of the Russian Federation prove that the establishment of the Russian language as the state language does not mean denying the importance of other national
languages. Thus, maintaining and developing multilingualism is one of the leading areas of language policy in the Russian Federation.

The promotion of multilingualism is important for modern Russia not only for the preservation and development of languages as the basis of the cultural heritage of different peoples in Russia. This also remains essential from the point of view of solving political, economic, social and other cultural problems, primarily issues of inter-ethnic communication in a multi-ethnic environment. Therefore, the language policy in the Russian Federation is aimed at guaranteeing all its peoples the right to support their native languages and create conditions for their study and development, which fully complies with generally recognized international standards.

Concerning the role of the English language in Russia’s language policy, two aspects should be mentioned. First of all, the spread of the English language on the territory of the Russian Federation is encouraged as part of the language policy, since this language is the language of international communication. In the context of globalization, it is necessary for our country not to lag behind other countries in terms of English proficiency. However, only a small percent of population in Russia has fluency in the English language. On the other hand, the penetration of the English language has its consequences. Russian language is changing because of the spread of English. For example, some Russian words are displaced by Americanisms or Anglicisms and this tendency leads to a change in the Russian mentality and culture. Thus, the policy regarding the English language is not clearly defined in the Russian language policy.

Besides, there are some problems in the area of language policy. First of all, according to A. N. Shepelev, «the current legal acts determine the state language policy indirectly, since they are devoted to the language or policy at their core» [9]. In other words, within the framework of Russian legislation, there is no single legal act that defines the state's language policy. Therefore, language policy as a whole is defined based on the general meaning, which leads to the problem of incorrect perception of language policy.
Moreover, there is no clear definition of the goals and objectives of the state language policy in Russia. Regulations governing the use of language are scattered and are not integrated into a common system. Many provisions are declarative in nature, completely devoid of any legal meaning.

Thus, we can conclude that nowadays it is extremely necessary to develop a unified concept of state language policy in Russia. Language policy, as a separate branch of national policy, is an instrument of political, social and cultural influence. Language policy in a multi-ethnic society is relevant to issues such as individual rights and freedoms, the rights of ethnic minorities, etc. That is why in order to avoid problems of interethnic communication and communication between different social groups, much more attention should be paid to issues of language policy as one of the leading branches of domestic policy of the Russian state.

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