

Research Article

The problem of language education from the perspective of the Russian linguacultural tradition and Russian linguists of the late 19th–early 20th centuries

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Abstract

This paper aims to analyze views of Russian linguists of the late 19th–early 20th centuries on the issue of language education and find out whether they agree or disagree on the methods of teaching languages. We also aim to identify correlations that their views have with methodological theories of foreign scholars of different epochs. To fulfil the aim, the following methods were used: general scientific methods (analysis, synthesis, comparison), the descriptive-analytical method and the comparative-contrastive method. The scope of the findings includes such aspects as the connection between language and thinking in educational contexts; the role of textbooks in teaching young learners; the role of children in the evolution of language; positive and negative sides of learning foreign languages, ancient languages, the history of language, regional and local dialects; theoretical and practical, internal and external aspects of learning languages, the problems of bilingualism; national and individual languages; social and cognitive functions of language, and other issues. The results obtained lead to the conclusion that in the majority of cases the three Russian scholars (I. I. Sreznevsky, F. F. Fortunatov, I. A. Baudouin de Courtenay) share each other's points of view despite the fact that they belong to different research schools. The ideas they developed in the late 19th–early 20th centuries are further discussed and revised by other linguists and methodologists. All quotations analyzed in the paper show some mainstream ideas and convictions characteristic of the Russian linguistic tradition and fundamentals of Russian culture at the turn of the century.

Keywords

Native language, foreign language, thinking, school textbook, I. I. Sreznevsky, F. F. Fortunatov, I. A. Baudouin de Courtenay

Introduction

The scope of linguistic issues touched upon in the works of Russian scholars of the late 19th–early 20th centuries (I. I. Sreznevsky, F. F. Fortunatov, I. A. Baudouin de Courtenay) and its breadth is beyond doubt. Centuries after their linguistic discoveries and contemplations their value and relevance for Russian as well as for world-wide language studies remains. Their linguistic heritage is constantly revised and reconsidered in the modern research of Russian linguists: (Sheradzenidze, 1980), (Khukhuni, 1984), (Vekovisheva and Khukhuni, 2013), (Valujtseva and Khukhuni, 2015), (Maslova, 2015), (Chernyshev, 2017), (Alpatov, 2020), (Stekolschikova, 2019b), (Stekolschikova, 2020a), etc.

It proves that reference to the works of I. I. Sreznevsky, F.F. Fortunatov, and I.A. Baudouin de Courtenay is relevant nowadays.

Apart from outstanding linguistic research, the scholars under consideration had teaching practice that let them share some observations and contemplations about the value of this or that method in teaching languages. The academic originality of this paper is in its addressing the analysis of methodological recommendations on teaching languages suggested by these linguists. This aspect grants a new research perspective that helps familiarization with a previously overlooked aspect of scientific legacy left by I. I. Sreznevsky, F. F. Fortunatov, and I. A. Baudouin de Courtenay. It also allows for a new look at teaching and methodology – not from the perspective of instructors or methodologists, but from the point of view of professional linguists.

A contrastive analysis of the ideas developed by the aforementioned linguists will show the controversial nature of the results they obtained. It will help to find common and differential features of their theories, find correlations with the research of other scholars who also worked with similar problems. It will finally lead to general conclusions about the dominant theoretical views that existed in Russian practice of teaching linguistic disciplines in the late 19th–early 20th centuries.

Data and methods

The paper is based on the analysis of quotations from the published works of *I. I. Sreznevsky*, *F. F. Fortunatov*, and *I. A. Baudouin de Courtenay*. All the relevant quotations are presented in the Results and Discussion section. They are accompanied by our interpretations and commentary.

General scientific methods such as analysis, synthesis and comparison were used to work with definitions, classifications, different points of view on the phenomena under consideration and with the results obtained. The descriptive-analytical method was employed to outline theoretical issues of relevant linguistic theories and present text fragments that contain the scholarly ideas under analysis. The comparative-contrastive method was used to identify what common and differential views the scholars in question had on the issues of language education and language learning.

Study and Results

The Problem of Language Education in the Works of I. I. Sreznevsky

Izmail Ivanovich Sreznevsky (1812–1880), a Russian philologist, Slavist, ethnographer, paleographer, and Academician at the Petersburg Academy of Sciences is famous for his naturalistic views on language (Stekolschikova, 2016, pp. 22–29) and for his observations about teaching and learning a language.

I. I. Sreznevsky in his work “On Studying Native Language in Childhood” (1860) emphasizes that **language is a living organism and peoples’ treasure**:

“Всякий живой язык есть такое народное достояние, которым каждый член народа по закону природы должен пользоваться, воплощая его в себе, воплощая в нем все силы своего духа” (Sreznevsky, 2010a, p. 3).

‘Any living language is such a national legacy that any individual representative of the nation should naturally use, embodying it in themselves, embodying the strength of their spirit in this language’¹.

Sreznevsky does not agree with the opinion, later developed by N. Chomsky in his universal grammar theory that the knowledge of language is inborn. Sreznevsky claims that **a person acquires this knowledge by learning a language**:

“Человеку не врожденно знание родного языка, и потому оно должно быть им приобретаемо посредством изучения...” (ibid.).

1. All the examples given in this paper were translated by E. Z., I. S.

‘The knowledge of a mother tongue is not inborn, that is why it should be acquired by learning’.

Though he believes that study skills are inborn:

“...но врожден закон, требующий этого знания – и он должен быть так или иначе исполняем” (ibid.).

‘The law that demands this knowledge is inborn – it should be practiced anyway’.

According to Sreznevsky, in the process of knowledge acquisition children move from the simple to the complex, from the specific to the general, but from synthesis to analysis:

“Во всяком дитяти совершается это <...> от синтеза к анализу, от простого звука, обозначающего многое, к сложным звукам с разными видоизменениями для оттенения отдельно каждым особого понятия или представления, от отдельных слов к связным выражениям, от отдельных выражений к цельным рассказам” (ibid.).

‘Any child moves from synthesis to analysis, from a simple sound that stands for a variety of things to complex sounds with different modifications used to specify some notions or ideas, from separate words to connected utterances, from separate utterances to complete stories’.

He compares a child’s intelligence and memory with people performing particular social roles:

“Память работает как послушный работник, ум – как полновластный, нередко и прихотливый господин” (ibid.).

‘Memory works as a diligent worker, while the mind works like a sole and often fastidious master’.

He also thinks that only the knowledge of a native language allows people to understand thoughts and emotions of other individuals:

“Только через посредство родного языка может он и воспринимать полно и свободно мысль и чувство другого” (Sreznevsky, 2010a, p. 5).

‘Only through a mother tongue one can fully and freely perceive thoughts and feelings of the other’.

We may see that this idea finds an opposite interpretation in J. W. Goethe’s “Maxims and Reflections”, where this German writer and philosopher states that:

“Wer fremde Sprachen nicht kennt, weiß nichts von seiner eigenen” (Goethe, 1833).

‘those who do not know foreign languages know nothing about their native language’.

They both tried to consider the notion of “otherness” but did it from different perspectives. Other people’s thoughts and feelings as well as other languages can be consciously perceived only when an individual has substantial life experience or at least some general knowledge of the world. As a result, it will be reasonable to partially disagree with both scholars.

Learning to speak a native language is a life-long process, it is conditioned by nature:

“Работа над родным языком в человеке не прекращается никогда никаким приговором природы»” (Sreznevsky, 2010a, p. 5).

‘No natural force can stop an individual from working on his native language’.

while learning several languages simultaneously is unnatural:

“Что неестественно человеку усваивать с детства несколько языков разом, сама

природа к этому не ведет, это видно на детях..." (ibid.).

It is unnatural for a human being to imbibe several languages at once, nature does not lead to it and we can see it in the example of children'.

It is impossible for a human to think in different languages:

"Можно думать только на одном языке. Говоря на нескольких равно бегло, не владея ни одним из них как орудием мыслительности" (ibid.).

'One can think in one language only. Speaking several languages fluently means that you know none of them as a means of cognition'.

Sreznevsky sees the connection between language and thinking. According to his words, the ability to speak more than one language fluently does not imply that one can think properly in either of these languages.

The interplay of language and thinking is illustrated by Sreznevsky by accepting their joint participation in human intellectual and cognitive activity:

"Язык – не только орудие познавательной и мыслительной силы человека, но сама эта сила, тело, в котором и которым она живет и без которого замирает" (Sreznevsky, 2010a, p. 40).

'Language is not only a means of cognitive and thinking power of an individual, but it is this very power, its habitat where and by which it lives and without which it subsides'.

He associates and equates language with cognition.

Returning to Sreznevsky's **view on learning foreign languages**, we may find another idea that points to a destructive effect of using several languages. He claims that it does not contribute to brain work and only impairs the very ability to think as thinking becomes superficial:

"Приучаясь думать на нескольких языках, отвыкаешь думать совсем, остаешься при одном внешнем образе думы..." (Sreznevsky, 2010a, p. 5).

'While getting used to thinking in two languages, one stops thinking at all and stays only with the surface structure of thoughts'.

This idea might be of particular interest today when both linguists and instructors are studying bilingualism as a phenomenon.

The scholar states that reaching the level of an educated nation is impossible without the knowledge of a native language. We might assume that Sreznevsky addresses here the social function of language:

"Из этого одного понятно, что невозможна для народа образованность без языка, так же как и для языка без народа" (Sreznevsky, 2010a, p. 6).

'It is clear that education for people is impossible without language, as well as for a language without people'.

He comes to the conclusion that our native language determines our existence as humans. Native language is an integral part of our inner and outer life, by the outer life we should probably understand our social life and communication as such:

"Цель изучения родного языка – не счастливые ответы на каком-нибудь экзамене, а овладение им в должной мере для жизни, для жизни внутренней и вместе с тем внешней, без которой и сама внутренняя жизнь – вообще говоря – невозможна" (Sreznevsky, 2010a, p. 40).

'The aim of learning a native language is not limited to answers at exams but includes mastering it for the life both inner and outer. Without the latter no inner life is possible'.

Sreznevsky singles out some stages of teaching a native language using naturalist metaphors (seeds of knowledge, roots of knowledge):

“Первые семена знания родного языка сеются в дитяти в первые годы его жизни; корни его укрепляются в годы отрочества и юности” (Sreznevsky, 2010a, p. 19).

‘The first seeds of knowledge of a native language are planted during the first years of children’s life, it takes roots during adolescence and youth’.

This opinion implies that language acquisition is gradual and takes time.

In the work on the elementary course of Russian “Замечания о первоначальном курсе русского языка” (“Notes on the basic course of Russian”), Sreznevsky writes that the aim of general education in terms of teaching a native language is to teach it to use this language as a means of communicating thoughts, feelings, and knowledge:

“Цель, достигаемая в общем образовании изучением отечественного языка, есть развитие умения пользоваться отечественным языком как необходимым орудием мысли, чувства, знания и общительности” (Sreznevsky, 2010b, p. 62).

‘The goal achieved in general education by learning a native language is the development of native language skills as a means of thinking, feeling, knowledge and social behavior’.

Within the sphere of linguistic knowledge, Sreznevsky identifies inner and outer aspects. The inner aspect includes knowledge that an individual uses to satisfy personal needs, the outer aspect includes knowledge used to satisfy the needs and expectations of others:

“В знании языка можно отделить две стороны: а) знание внутреннее, знание про себя, для удовлетворения внутренних требований ума познающего, и б) знание внешнее, знание для других, для удовлетворения требований ожиданий их ума” (Sreznevsky, 2010a, p. 7).

‘There are two aspects in the knowledge of a native language: a) the inner knowledge that is used to satisfy an individual’s needs of the mind in the cognition process and b) the outer knowledge that is meant to satisfy the expectations of other people’.

He adds that inner knowledge includes information about words and their combinability. Outer knowledge includes the ability to use words in order to clearly convey the necessary meanings and concepts. It also involves the ability to build sentences, to articulate words and sentences correctly, clearly, and beautifully. Outer knowledge includes writing skills applied according to the existing rules and the individual’s intentions (Sreznevsky, 2010a, p. 8).

Sreznevsky finds it important to study ancient languages, regional and local dialects as the “spirit of a nation” contained in the language is far stronger in dialects and weaker in the literary language:

“Как дополнение к главному должны быть изучаемы оттенки языка древнего и местные наречия” (Sreznevsky, 2010a, p. 14).

‘Aspects of old language forms and local dialects should be studied in addition to the standard one’.

He also talks about theoretical and practical aspects of language education emphasizing the latter:

“Одна доля этого курса, теоретическая <...> стоит выкинуть все, что не ведет прямо к цели и не прилагается к другой части курса – практической” (Sreznevsky, 2010, p. 62).

‘One part of this course is theoretical <...> everything that does not lead directly to the main aim and has no connection with the practical part should be left out’.

The theoretical part includes an overview of language features, forms of word building and word changing. The practical part of the Russian language course includes mastering, speaking, and writing skills (Sreznevsky, 2010b, p. 63).

The scholar’s attitude to school textbooks is of particular relevance as he claims that they are not necessary at the initial stage of learning a native language:

“Вначале же учебник будет более вреден, чем полезен, приучая детей к заучиванию наизусть того, что должно быть не заучено, а просто усвоено – не для экзамена, а для жизни” (Sreznevsky, 2010b, p. 64).

‘At the beginning a textbook will stand in the way, teaching children to learn by heart everything that should be understood and comprehended not for exams but for life’.

This statement implies that children should first learn to use Russian for the purpose of everyday communication. Language here is an equivalent to an indispensable tool or instrument of social interaction that at the next stages will be studied deeper and for more specific purposes. A similar approach to the role of a textbook was adopted by F. F. Fortunatov.

In general, I. I. Sreznevsky reflects on the problems of language education from the point of view that language is a natural phenomenon. He gives priority to learning a native language, comments on the theoretical and practical aspects of language education, emphasizing the practical side. Among his ideas there are some that can shed light on contemporary problems in the area of teaching languages, or give more food for thought to linguists who are concerned with the problem of language and thought relations and with modern cognitive studies.

The Problem of Language Education in the Works of F. F. Fortunatov

Filipp Fedorovich Fortunatov (1848–1914), an outstanding Russian linguist and Academician at the Russian Academy of Sciences, was a founder of the Moscow School of Linguistics. F. F. Fortunatov worked within the sphere of comparative and historical language studies (Fortunatov, 2015) and made a substantial contribution to this area (Stekolschikova, 2019a, pp. 144-152), along with other scholars who studied the problems of comparative, historical and typological linguistics (Birukova and Popova, 2015, p. 41). He also had enormous teaching experience. This section will focus on **Fortunatov’s ideas about teaching linguistic disciplines**.

In the book on comparative linguistics *“Сравнительное языковедение”* ‘Comparative Linguistics’ (1891–1892). F. Fortunatov distinguishes between studying languages for scientific and practical purposes:

“...языковедение, как науку, задача которой познать язык в его истории, нельзя смешивать, понятно, с изучением какого-либо языка для практической цели, то есть с целью владеть этим языком, как средством для достижения других целей, например для обмена мыслей” (Fortunatov, 2010, p. 7).

‘Linguistics as a science aimed at studying languages in their development should not be compared with studying languages for practical purposes of achieving other aims such as ideas exchange’.

This idea seems relevant for the later distinction between language and speech (F. de Saussure) as knowledge of language as a system and actual usage of a language.

Unlike Sreznevsky, Fortunatov does not give priority to the practical aim of studying a native language at school. In his work on teaching Russian grammar in secondary

school "О преподавании грамматики русского языка в средней школе" 'On teaching Russian Grammar in Secondary Schools' (1904) he on the contrary claims that the practical aim is the main one in learning a foreign language:

"Понятно, что в применении к родному языку учащихся цель преподавания грамматики не может быть тою, практической, которая представляется прежде всего, хотя бы и не в качестве единственной цели, по отношению к иностранному языку, изучаемому в школе..."

'It is obvious that the aim of teaching the grammar of a native language cannot be the same practical aim used for teaching a foreign language in school'.

The theoretical aim of studying grammar of both native and foreign languages is seen in the students' acquisition of a skill to think properly *навыка правильно думать* 'the skill of correct thinking' (Fortunatov, 1957, p. 433). Thus, knowing the phenomena of native language grammar should foster the students' thinking abilities.

F. Fortunatov separates teaching grammar from teaching orthography:

"Ошибочно также было бы думать, будто преподавание грамматики родного языка в школе необходимо для усвоения учащимися требований правописания".

It would be a misconception to think that teaching grammar of a native language in school is essential for mastering orthography rules'.

He thinks that only some areas of grammar can provide an explanation for the rules of Russian spelling. In general, he says that grammar has nothing to do with orthography as it is an independent discipline: *грамматика сама по себе* (ibid.) 'grammar is independent'.

Fortunatov shares the same **opinion on a textbook** being unnecessary at the start of learning a native language that was expressed by Sreznevsky:

"При изучении грамматики русского языка в низших классах, я думаю, нет надобности в каком бы то ни было учебнике" (Fortunatov, 1957, p. 437).

'No textbook is needed at an early stage of studying Russian grammar'.

According to Fortunatov, the course of Russian for beginners is all about students together with a teacher discovering and identifying different features of their native language but not about cramming theory and terms. This idea reminds us of an inductive approach to teaching grammar.

The scholar sees the main aim of teaching grammar in directing students to developing a conscious approach to the features of the language in which they speak and think:

"...вызывать в учащихся сознательное отношение к явлениям, существующим в том языке, на котором они думают и говорят..." (Fortunatov, 1957, p. 436).

'...to foster a conscious attitude of language learners to the phenomena that exist in the language they use to speak and to think in'.

Fortunatov also raises an issue of comparing the spoken language and literary language as means of conscious observation of the language that students speak:

"...сопоставление живого, разговорного языка с русским книжным языком помогает учащимся наблюдать факты того языка, на котором они говорят..." (Fortunatov, 1957, p. 438).

'...Comparison of a living spoken Russian language with bookish Russian helps students observe facts of the language they speak'.

He is convinced that even in primary school it is necessary to study the history of language (he is talking about Russian) in order to see the difference between the way letters sound and the way they are written as well as to identify the word stem and affixal morphemes:

“Указания на историю языка необходимо делать и в низших классах при преподавании русской грамматики...” (Fortunatov, 1957, p. 439).

‘References to the history of the language are important even at early stages of teaching Russian grammar’.

Moreover, the notion of the root of the word will be more comprehensive and scientific if there is reference to the history of language:

“Преподаватель, указывая на изменение языка во времени, на историю языка, может дать им понятие и о корнях слов <...> для самих учащихся должно быть вполне ясно, что из слов современного русского языка, без знания истории этих слов, нельзя извлекать какие-то корни” (ibid.).

‘By pointing at historical changes in the language a teacher can help students discover the roots of words <...> it should be clear for the students that it is impossible to analyze the roots of modern Russian words without the knowledge of their history’.

Here Fortunatov’s idea correlates with Sreznevsky’s opinion that old Slavonic and old Russian should be obligatorily studied in schools (Sreznevsky, 2010, p. 37).

Fortunatov considers the necessity of explaining the nature of sounds, their properties, characteristics, and combinability to young language learners (Fortunatov, 1957, p. 442).

In accordance with linguists representing the naturalistic school, Fortunatov discusses the connection between language and thinking in his work on comparative linguistics *“Сравнительное языковедение”* ‘Comparative Linguistics’ (1891–1892):

“Язык состоит из слов, а словами являются звуки речи, как знаки для нашего мышления и для выражения наших мыслей и чувствований” (Fortunatov, 2010, p. 3).

‘Language consists of words, speech sounds are words as signs for our thinking and for the expression of our thoughts and feelings’.

In other words, he means that people think in a particular language and communicate feelings and emotions through language. Human thoughts and feelings are expressed with the help of signs (sound clusters, words). Sound clusters that form words create certain images in the human mind:

“Язык представляет поэтому совокупность знаков главным образом для мысли и для выражений мысли в речи, а кроме того, в языке существуют также и знаки для выражения чувствований слова” (Fortunatov, 2010, p. 91).

‘Language is a combination of signs used mainly for expressing thoughts in speech; moreover, there are signs that are used to express feelings’.

This idea finds further development in the theory of phonosemantics in the middle of the 20th century.

According to Fortunatov, in the development of language and thinking abilities people establish associations between certain sound clusters that can further bring about new associations with unrelated notions (Fortunatov, 2010, p. 96). The connection between language and thinking is considered by Fortunatov from the semiotic perspective, which is characteristic of F. de Saussure.

The phonetic content of the word is, according to Fortunatov, an integral component of the speech – thinking process:

“Значения звуковой стороны слов для мышления состоят, следовательно, в способности представлений звуковой стороны слов сочетаться между собой в процессе мышления...” (Fortunatov, 2010, p. 97).

‘The meanings of the sound form of words are observed in the ability of the planes

of sound in words to combine with each other in the process of thinking...’.

He suggests that speech sounds used in words can be signs of something that cannot find expression in thoughts, for example, abstract notions, sensory perception, etc. (Fortunatov, 2010, p. 98).

In his treatment of the language and thinking connection, Fortunatov shares Sreznevsky’s opinion and considers them to be mutually dependent:

“Из данных мною примеров, я думаю, не трудно уяснить себе, что не только язык зависит от мышления, но что и мышление, в свою очередь, зависит от языка...” (Fortunatov, 2010, p. 100).

‘From the given examples it is possible to conclude that not only language depends on thinking, but that thinking in its turn depends on language...’.

With the help of words an individual can think in a way that would be impossible without these signs, especially in the expression of abstract and general notions (ibid.). Signs of language become signs of thought, the author states.

Fortunatov considers interjections to be words used to express feelings, he seems to oppose them to notional words:

“Знаки языка в процессе речи являются главным образом знаками для выражения мысли или ее части, но вместе с такими знаками существуют в речи также и знаки языка для выражения чувствований; к этим знакам принадлежат слова-междометия” (Fortunatov, 2010, p. 101).

‘Language signs in speech are mainly the signs used to express thoughts or their parts, but along with these signs there are others that are used to express feelings; these signs are represented by interjections’.

He explains that until interjections are used merely as results of involuntary movements of articulatory organs, they do not belong to language signs and cannot express feelings. They acquire this status only when these movements are motivated by the speaker’s will under the influence of mental associations. This idea seems relevant for the problem of parts of speech classification, and the status of interjections in particular.

Fortunatov also analyzes the language of facial expressions and gestures, which, according to the scholar, coexists with verbal language:

“Язык, как совокупность знаков для мышления и для выражения мысли и чувствований, может быть не только языком слов, то есть языком, материалом для которого служат звуки речи, но он может быть также и языком жестов и мимики, и такой язык существует в человечестве рядом с языком слов” (Fortunatov, 2010, p. 105).

‘Language as a combination of signs used for thinking and expressing thoughts and feelings may not only be the language of words (the language where the building blocks are sounds of speech), but also the language of gestures and mimetic signs; such language does exist in humanity along with the language of words’.

He then admits that verbal language is studied by linguists, but nonverbal language should be also considered in order to understand physical and spiritual conditions that could precede the appearance of verbal language (ibid.). The role of facial expressions and gestures at the first stage of human language development was also discussed by A. Hovelacque:

“Les gestes, les mouvements de la physionomie précèdent le langage proprement dit, le langage articulé...” (Hovelacque, 1885, p. 3).

‘Gestures and facial expressions precede the spoken articulated language’.

Fortunatov addresses the idea of inner speech that is also called mental speech,

and is opposed to verbal speech as well as the idea of involuntary speech, which is called thinking out loud (Fortunatov, 2010, p. 110).

In the work on teaching Russian grammar in secondary school “О преподавании грамматики русского языка в средней школе” ‘On teaching Russian Grammar in Secondary Schools’ (1904) Fortunatov comes back to the problem of the connection between language and thinking, and concludes that words are signs of language that stand for our thoughts:

“Язык в процессе нашей устной речи, когда мы говорим, выражая наши мысли, существует потому, что он существует в нашем мышлении; слова в нашей речи непосредственно выражают, обнаруживают такие мысли, в состав которых входят представления тех же слов как знаков для мышления...” (Fortunatov, 1957, p. 435).

‘The language we use in spoken speech, when we express our thoughts exists because it is in our thinking; words in speech directly express and disclose such thoughts that contain conceptions of these words as signs of thinking’.

We can also find some of his thoughts on the means of expressing propositions in sentences:

“Мысль, выражающаяся в предложении <...> называют иногда психологическим суждением” (Fortunatov, 1957, p. 448).

‘Thoughts expressed in sentences <...> are sometimes called psychological assertions’.

Though Fortunatov claims that propositions are studied by logic and thus there should be no confusion between grammar and logic as grammar is not concerned with correct and incorrect thinking:

“Понятно поэтому, что грамматика по предмету, изучаемому в ней, не может находиться ни в какой зависимости от логики, так как различие между правильным и неправильным мышлением не входит в область исследования грамматики” (ibid.).

‘It is clear that grammar by its subject matter cannot be in any dependence on logic as differences between correct and incorrect thinking are outside the domain of grammar’.

The scholar defines a psychological proposition:

“В словесном психологическом суждении известное слово или словосочетание как знак, существующий в языке, или объединяется с другим словом или словосочетанием как с другим знаком того же, или отделяется от другого слова или словосочетания, как не объединяющееся с ним по значению...” (ibid.).

‘In a spoken psychological assertion, a known word or word group taken as a language sign either combines with another word or word group or disconnects from another word or word group as different from it in meaning’.

This definition shows that words or word groups as signs join together on the basis of meaning. Thus, the notion of the sign finds its representation in logic as well as in grammar:

“...слова в нашей речи непосредственно выражают, обнаруживают такие мысли, в состав которых входят представления тех же слов как знаков для мышления, то есть как знаков или того, о чем мы думаем, или того, что образуется в процессе мышления о тех или иных предметах мысли” (Fortunatov, 1957, p. 435).

Words in our speech directly express and disclose such thoughts that include concepts of the same words as signs of thinking or as signs of something we think about, or something that is formed in the process of thinking about these or those subjects’.

In the attitude to language education F. Fortunatov follows the principle of compulsory study of a native language in its spoken, written, and dialectal variety. He also highlights the role of old Slavonic and old Russian languages, as well as nonverbal language in the educational process.

Language as an Object of Study and Problems of Language Education in the Works of I.A. Baudouin de Courtenay

Ivan Aleksandrovich Baudouin de Courtenay (1845–1929), a prominent Russian and Polish linguist, was a founder of the Kazan School of Linguistics. Even though he incorporated psychology and sociology into linguistic studies and considered language to be a *mental-social phenomenon* ‘психически-социальное явление’, I. A. Baudouin de Courtenay did not deny the naturalistic essence of language, especially in his early works (Stekolschikova, 2020b, pp. 458-482). He also raised the issues of teaching techniques, which we are going to address and analyze here.

In the book “Language and Languages” ‘Язык и языки’ Baudouin de Courtenay raises the issue of the origins of human language. He distinguishes the birth of an individual language and phylogenetic beginning in the development of human languages: *начало языка во всем человеческом роде* (Baudouin de Courtenay, 2018c, p. 170) ‘the initial stage of language in humanity’. The conditions underlying the development of these two types of languages are different. Thus, individual language is inherited from ancestors in the form of “linguistic predisposition” and language skills that are activated under the influence of a lingual environment. This process demonstrates the connection between language and thinking, according to the scholar:

“Индивидуальный язык рождается и возникает вместе с мозгом, вместе с психикой каждого отдельного человека; хотя человек говорит не сразу, но он приносит с собой способность говорить, а затем, под влиянием окружающих происходит постепенное развитие и рост данного индивидуального языка” (ibid.). ‘Individual language is born together with the brain, together with an individual’s psyche; though a human being does not start speaking at once, but he brings with him an ability to speak, and then under the influence of the people around him the development of this individual language takes place’.

Individual language develops along with the development of the mental activity of its speaker under the influence of social surroundings. These ideas contradict the opinion on the adherent nature of human language developed by Sreznevsky, but overlap with N. Chomsky’s theory that appeared half a century later.

Prehistoric language did not have such conditions for development that individual languages had. Baudouin de Courtenay claims that the emergence of human speech implies the emergence of a human being:

“...русский язык в своей непрерывной преемственности восходит к той отдаленной эпохе, когда лингвистические предки нынешних русских только начинали говорить, то есть с этой точки зрения становятся людьми” (ibid.). ‘The Russian language in its eternal continuity goes back to the distant epoch when the linguistic ancestors of contemporary Russians only started to speak or just became humans’.

In his work on language as an object of studies “Значение языка как предмета изучения” ‘The Role of Language as a Subject of Study’ (1906), Baudouin de Courtenay repeats, though with some changes, the thoughts of M. Muller, who belongs to the naturalistic school. He claims that individual language exists only as a part of a human being and dies with every uttered word:

“Индивидуальный язык прекращает свое существование только со смертью индивида <...> Нет вовсе ни русского, ни немецкого, ни какого бы ни было национального или племенного языка. Существуют только индивидуальные языки...” (Baudouin de Courtenay, 2018a, p. 217).

Individual language ceases to exist only with the death of the individual <...> There are no national or tribal languages like Russian, German. There are only individual languages’.

This idea implies that there are no national languages as language is the property of an individual.

Baudouin de Courtenay studies only living languages. He also criticizes the system of education based on studying books, monuments, letters, symbols as elements of the temporary, instead of human thoughts, language, sounds as elements of the permanent:

“...мы изучаем преходящее вместо постоянного, бывшее вместо настоящего” (Baudouin de Courtenay, 2018a, p. 218).

‘...we study the temporary instead of the permanent and the past instead of the present’.

This educational principle is called *annihilating* by the scholar, as instead of the current state of things they study grammar rules and somebody else’s utterances that *litter the students’ minds, inflicting stupidity and confusion* ‘загрязняющими головы учеников, оглуляющими их и водворяющими в их умах невероятную путаницу понятий...’ (ibid.).

While working on some general issues of language studies “Некоторые из общих положений, к которым довели Бодуэна его наблюдения и исследования явлений языка” ‘On basic points Baudouin made during his observations and studies of language phenomena’ (1897) Baudouin de Courtenay claims that only the linguist who has thoroughly studied a living language can analyze a dead language. Thus, the study of living languages should precede the study of dead languages:

“Изучение языков живых должно предшествовать исследованию языков исчезнувших” (Baudouin de Courtenay, 2018b, p. 103).

‘The study of living languages should precede the study of dead languages’.

The educational role of classical languages, according to the linguist, is nothing but of an inherited relic:

“...не что иное, как унаследованный из прошлого пережиток...” (Baudouin de Courtenay, 2018b, p. 221).

‘...nothing but a leftover inherited from the past...’,

while F. Fortunatov insists on the importance of studying ancient languages.

Moreover, Baudouin de Courtenay states that only one [native] language should be studied as it is spoken by students as well as teachers. There should not be another obligatory language studied in school:

“По-моему, с точки зрения здоровой педагогики, в каждой школе должно быть признано обязательным как средство развития ума изучение одного только языка, то есть того языка, который ученики приносят с собой в школу и который вместе с тем должен быть преподавательским языком. Ни один другой язык не должен быть обязательным” (ibid.).

‘In my opinion, from the point of view of sound pedagogy all schools should accept the study of only one language as a means of intellectual development, it should be the language that students bring with them to school, and it should be the language used by teachers. No other languages should be considered to be

obligatory’.

In the aforementioned work on general conclusions in the area of language studies. Baudouin de Courtenay articulates twenty-two statutes which he will refer to in his later works. Some of these statutes are stated in brief without any comments. For example, the first statement reads that *‘there are no phonetic laws’* Нет никаких фонетических законов (Baudouin de Courtenay, 2018b, p. 102). Other ideas are more developed. We will mention those that deal with language education.

The sixth statement discloses the reason of language changes that make the process of teaching easier:

“Причиною, двигателем всех изменений языка является стремление к удобству, стремление к облегчению в трех областях языковой деятельности: в области произношения (фонации), в области слушания и восприятия (аудиции) и, наконец, в области языкового мышления (церебрации)” (ibid.).

‘Languages move in their development towards simplification in pronunciation (fonation), acoustic perception (listening skills), and in cerebration (using language for thinking processes)’.

We may see that Baudouin de Courtenay compares a linguist with a biologist (a distinctive feature of naturalism) in his eighteenth statement that once again highlights that living organisms [languages] should be given priority over the relics:

“Только биолог (зоолог и ботаник), изучивший всесторонне живой язык, может приступить к исследованию палеонтологических остатков. Только лингвист, изучивший всесторонне живой язык, может позволять себе сделать предположения об особенностях языков умерших” (Baudouin de Courtenay, 2018b, p. 103).

Only a biologist (zoologist and botanist) who has fully studied a living language can get down to studying the paleontological remains. Only a linguist who has fully studied a living language can let himself make assumptions about the peculiarities of dead languages’.

Thereby, the comparison used by A. Schleicher in which he compares a linguist (who is interested in the way language is built) with a botanist (Schleicher, 1869, p. 33) is accorded more attention in the work of Russian linguists.

An interesting idea is expressed in the nineteenth statement where Baudouin de Courtenay mentions Darwinian biologists, and associates the language development of a child with regressive development. If a human embryo linearly goes through all the changes undergone by the human species, then in language development we see the opposite phenomenon:

“Ребенок не повторяет вовсе в сокращении языкового развития целого племени, но, напротив того, ребенок захватывает в будущее, предсказывая особенностями своей речи будущее состояние племенного языка, и только впоследствии пятится, так сказать, назад, все более и более принаравливаясь к нормальному языку окружающих” (Baudouin de Courtenay, 2018b, p. 103).

‘A child does not reproduce the language experience of the whole tribe but, on the contrary, takes this language into the future predicting its development. Only afterwards he moves back by becoming more and more accustomed with the normal language used by people around’.

Language norms and standards are built over the primitive patterns of children’s speech.

In his twentieth statement Baudouin de Courtenay assigns the leading role in the evolution of language to children:

“Толчки к существенным изменениям племенного языка даются главным

образом в языке детей. Дети проявляют стремление к известным значительным изменениям произношения и морфологического строя языка" (Baudouin de Courtenay, 2018b, p. 104).

'The impulse towards significant language changes is mostly present in children's language. They strive to particular pronunciational and morphological changes'.

According to his words, children tend to change the language they speak, especially its pronunciation and morphology. M. Muller thinks that women are responsible for language changes:

"Но влияние женщин на язык в каждом поколении гораздо значительнее, чем влияние мужчин" (Muller, 1868, pp. 36–37).

'Women's influence on language in each generation is far stronger than men's influence'.

He demonstrates this with the example of India, where women's speech and the speech of house servants tends to displace Sanskrit (initially used only by monarchs, noblemen and clerics) at first by entering the domain of literary language and then replacing it completely (Muller, 1868, p. 37).

As a result, language as an object of study in the works of Baudouin de Courtenay is a complex and ambiguous phenomenon. The scholar proves the idea that there are no *national or tribal* languages, there are only *individual languages*. He also speaks against the study of ancient languages as well as foreign languages.

Conclusion

To conclude all the outlined ideas, we may say that even though problems of language education were not given priority in the studies of Russian linguists of the late 19th–early 20th centuries, however, they were substantially discussed in their works on linguistics. The ideas of learning foreign languages suggested by Sreznevsky, Fortunatov and Baudouin de Courtenay differ from the opinions that exist today (Ivanova and Tivyaeva, 2015). Now no one considers learning foreign languages to be useless for mental and cognitive development. But the opposite opinions shared by the linguists under discussion clearly demonstrate some established ideas characterizing Russian linguistic and educational traditions at the turn of the century. We find Sreznevsky's approach to dividing knowledge of language into internal (for oneself) and external (for others) to be extraordinary and original. The attitude towards textbooks in schools being unnecessary, that is found in works by Sreznevsky and Fortunatov, is debatable, as well as their view on the necessity of studying regional and local dialects, the history of the native language and ancient languages for young learners. The *evil nature of school grammar* pointed out by Baudouin de Courtenay is also open for discussion. At the same time, we should admit that their reasoning is rather convincing, and correlates with those data from related sciences that existed and were available back then. In this way, the views of Russian linguists of the late 19th–early 20th centuries on language education are characterized by consistency, and their research contributes to the Russian practice of teaching languages.

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