Modern Russia: Communicative Situation under Postmodern Era

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Abstract

Actual communicative situation in Russia is characterized not only by known social realities specific to the Russian reality but also by a common informative, communicative or social and informative climate of postmodern societies.

One of the main features of the modern communicative situation is a new role of the Mass Media in forming norms for the standard language. Literature loses its standards forming functions and these functions are transferred to the Mass Media. Not only the volume of norms, but also the nature of the norms set by the media is rather specific. Mass Media support the norms of some specific information koiné. One of the characteristics of modern societies actively forming some attitude to the norm is the pluralism of elites. Multiplicity of elites, their principal non-hierarchical pattern, as well as the lack of that elite, which can be called the language elite, leads to the fact that the art of speaking and writing correctly is no longer perceived as something valuable.

An effectiveness (the ability to achieve an instant, though short communicative success) and creativity become a linguistic value. The ability to express or take the subtle nuances of intention ceases being a value.

The modern communicative situation sees the linguistic and rhetorical norms coming closer together. This is shown in both mixing the norms, substitution language norms with the rhetorical ones, and the identification of two fundamentally different types of norms.

The purpose of this article is to comprehend the modern communicative situation, starting from the mentioned features of modernity, to consider language and rhetorical norms in a single communicative system and perhaps offer some technologies, techniques and methods of civilizing linguistic space in modern Russia.

Keywords: cultural space, language norms, social and political situation, language ecology

1. Introduction

In the modern scientific discourse the norms problem becomes an important one for a number of humanities (Bartsch, 2000; Bauman, 2002). An increased attention to the standardization of the Russian language is also observed outside of scientific discourse - in journalism (Khazagerov, 2001, Kulikova, 2014). The current language situation is characterized by a common growth of language reflection and a keen interest to the norms, which is shown in intentional deviations from the norm (Brusenskaya, 2012, Kulikova, 2004), language game (Sannikov, 1999). Copying and mimicking the manners of speech, the use of language in mimesis functions are popular. Jokes related to speech errors (Kozhevnikov, 2001; Biryukov, 2005) and corresponding film citations are in fashion. Also bad expressions of some public persons are familiar to everyone (Dushenko, 2003; Mochenov, Nikulin, Niyasov, & Savvaitova, 2003).

Actuality of this article is in the fact that under the dominant concept of pluralistic norms and orientation to their non-rigid codification, there is an idea of aggravating the norms of the standard language, a difficult and even dangerous state experienced by the modern Russian language. We notice the literature lose its norms settling function and transfer of this function to the Mass Media, with the question about the real possibility to maintain the standards by these means remaining open.

2. Methods

Work methodology is based on a combination of panchronic (implying the use of speculative, logistic, scholastic methods) and diachronic (implying an appeal to empirical data with the wider use of extra-linguistic reality)

approaches to the language. Consequently, the leading method is an extrapolation of language theories emerged in certain historical conditions to the conditions of a new historical reality.

3. Results

The Russian language is suffering a period of crisis. Describing the cultural space of modern Russia we can mark out three important factors determining the communicative situation:

1) heterogeneity of the language community in terms of mastery of the standard language;

2) significance of developments occurred in the Russian language under new socio-political situation since 1985. The result of these changes was a gap between codified norms of the standard language and culture of the Russian speech, and their almost universal failure to practice in a real language.

3) impact of unfavorable factors which are adoption of the mass media language including online media as a pattern, lack of proofreaders in publishing industry or low level of their qualification, as well as unskilled broadcast journalists working in the television industry, publishing a variety of various and inexpert work books and learners of the Russian language.

4. Discussion

Let us try to identify key issues starting from these certainly actual features of modernity.

First, we must recognize the heterogeneity of the language community in respect to the mastery of the standard language and lack of structure in the language community, i.e. lack of socially conscious and institutionalized hierarchy in language mastery. In other words, in modern Russia to use or not to use the standard language is not strictly connected to the social structure of the society and the presence of a particularly dedicated cultural elite. We denote this phenomenon as a **problem of the multiplicity of elites** and consider it further in more details.

Second, the changes resulted in the language negligence concern not only changes in the language (for example, in the lexical system), but primarily changes in the prevailing speech strategies used by native speakers. In other words, the negligence is not a result of appearance of new words and realities, nor a result of a speed of innovation processes, but one of the postulates of modern communication strategy. In this strategy novelty and creativity are highly valued, while accuracy, correctness and clarity are little estimated. This causes a conflict not only with orthology, but also with the rhetoric taken in the Aristotelian sense. This phenomenon is related to the problem of native speakers' attitude to the norms. This, of course, is the central problem and analyzing it one needs to keep in mind the issue of coincidence of the common interpretation of native speakers' attitude to the norms (communicative flexibility of norms as a prove of high-level of language development) with a real attitude of speakers and writers to the correctness and purity of speech.

Third, the **adoption of the media language as a pattern** is an independent and very important issue. Its profound statement, in our opinion, can not be reduced to the problem of lack of qualified proofreaders. We should talk about the fact that the norms given by the media are different in their nature from the norms supported by the literature weight. Besides, language of the Internet, written and oral Mass Media has in this respect (in the nature of defining norms) its own peculiarities.

Fourth, building a parallel with the situation in 1917, one should also note the limitations of these parallels, and in addition, separate factors specific to the Russian reality from transnational factors connected to common cultural and informational processes occurred in the modern world.

In the twenties of the XXth century the language of Russian classics had living speakers presented by the old clerisy. It was about the Sovietization of the language and, consequently, the assimilation of its speakers. Another challenge was to overcome illiteracy. Teaching norms of the standard language was, therefore, teaching the old standard language actively used by native speakers taking into account the Sovietization of this language. Thus, the problem was solved under cooperation of the old culture representatives and the ideologists of the new culture. In post-revolutionary years similar cooperation was carried out both in production, and the military spheres.

In the nineties the classic Russian language was already significantly distanced from native speakers facing the realities completely different and far from the reality of pre-revolutionary Russia. On the other hand, carriers of Soviet culture formed the majority (rather than a thin layer of the society) of the language community. By the beginning of the perestroika period processes the society was significantly more homogeneous than it was in the twenties. The problem was in the duality of the Soviet language of seventies - eighties (opposition according to the line "officious - oppositional", the latter not being confined to a subculture or vernacular) and the disaccord between the new realities and the Soviet language.

Next, we deal with the issue of separation of factors related to the specifics of Russian reality from the factors connected to the overall climate of the post modernity era (Giddens, 1991). These and those factors undoubtedly influence the situation of the literary norms, but they require a separate consideration. It should be noted that it is the attitude to the norms in post modernity societies that can explain much of what is happening today and create a clear picture of what we are dealing with; that is a particular cultural paradigm rather than technical problems like training a qualified personnel. This allocates the problem of attitude to the norms in post modernity societies from the general problem of attitude to the norms.

Let us consider all of these problems in the order convenient for their presentation.

Authors observing shifts in the regulatory process most often associate them with the changes occurred in the Russian society as a result of perestroika processes, i.e. abolition of external censorship, emergence of new realities and other social factors specific to the Russian reality. We think that these factors stimulated the speed of linguistic innovations, which had some danger for the "language standard".

There is also a special role of the media language in forming the norms and its presentation, which is also associated with specific social processes (Zayats & Posukhova, 2013) not only in Russia, but also through all Eastern Europe as the "post-communist" space.

At the same time the processes occurring in the language are spoken about not only as anxious, but primarily as objective, and perhaps even positive. Accelerating development of our language and strengthening of personal origin result in a change of the linguistic norm concept. The norm becomes a description of acceptable language means and possibilities of their choice. Exemption of the language from totalitarian and administrative rules of the preceding stage means a return to a natural development and free demonstration of new trends in language (Goodman, 1996).

Radical evolution of speech norms occurs most often in the critical periods of societies life accompanied by a sudden change in public principles. At present it is more typical for Eastern Europe. This time is not homogeneous in terms of political systems and ideology. Reduced speech standard in the modern public communication is observed not only in the Russian language: a similar trend can be found in most languages of the world.

From our point of view frequent parallels with the history of Russia after 1917 are only partly true, and the specificity of the cultural situation in Russia today is just one of the factors determined the shift in regulatory thinking of speakers. This also applies to Eastern Europe. The second factor is the common context of cultural epoch called post modernity. Another problem is the application of this context on the specifics of our cultural situation, which, in fact, gives rise to a serious strain in the system of language functioning.

Let us try to separate one from another.

In the societies of postmodern era not only linguistic norms, but also norms of ethics, relations between the state and the individual, etc. undergo deformation. Contemporary reality, as Ulrich Beck revealed in his researches, is characterized by "subjectification and individualization of risks and contradictions generated by both individual institutions and society as a whole» (Beck, 1992, p. 135). In such circumstances "the history is compressed to the present, and everything revolves around its own "self", and personal life of an individual" (ibid.). British sociologist Zygmunt Bauman characterizes modernity as the time to "escape from the agora. "We are talking about the fall of civic activity and loss of faith in the meaningfulness of collective efforts" (Bauman, 2002, pp. 9-13).

It is quite clear that in such a situation this, on the one hand, leads to an individual linguistic experimentation, and on the other hand, reduces the sense of collective responsibility for the preservation of the language as a whole, "verbal hygiene" (Cameron, 2000), in our terminology, for the language homeostat. It is easy to see in both forms the most characteristic features of the situation created around the linguistic norm. Individual experimentation is the phenomenon that is actively exploring now and is positively estimated in a number of studies, and is related to - what we disagree - some degree of maturity of the standard language. The absence of collective responsibility for the language is rather reprehended journalistically than comprehended scientifically. It is customary to notice some private moments, like the fall of culture in editorial and proofreading work and to connect it with the speed of Russian "perestroika" processes. Thus, first of all national and temporal specificities of language development are mixed, and secondly, the underlying cultural processes are ignored. Thus, a global linguistic and philosophic aspect appears to be missed in the modern description of standards.

However, the processes to be discussed are serious enough to pose a number of problems, including even ones extending beyond the language. Deterioration of grammar - non additive and little typified experiments under

indifference to the whole is the grammar deterioration - leads to deterioration of logic. Recall that Carl Buhler, referring to Edmund Husserl (Husserl, 1901) and arguing with Heymann Steinthal (Steinthal, 1855), wrote that "grammatical correctness precedes logic correctness and the grammar in general serves the basis for logic" (Buhler, 2000, pp. 62-63). Destruction of language homeostat and "escape from the agora" are likely to pose a threat not only to language, but also thinking.

The problem of elite pluralism is connected to global processes occurred in the modern societies, and directly relates to changes in the regulatory process.

Multiplicity of elites (political, economic, intellectual, sportive, artistic, etc.) creates a situation principally different from the life of class societies in the depths of which standard languages were formed.

Language of the educated and at the same time ruling, and often the most prosperous segments of the population was the language of the elite, for example, in the XIXth century in Russia. Aristocratic elite set the tone in the literature of the first third of that century, was gradually transforming into a wider class of educated people. However, V. V. Vinogradov said that "in the 30 - 40 years the "soviet styles" of the Russian standard language, reformed by Karamzin and his successors, lose their dominant position" (Vinogradov, 1982, p. 329). It is characteristically, however, that "monopoly" to norms setting belonged for a long time to the nobility. Compare criticism of the "bourgeois" style of N.G. Chernyshevskiy in "The Gift" by Vladimir Nabokov, even modern readers having the sympathy. As for good manners, i.e. primarily paralinguistic norm, this class remained an unquestioned authority for a long time after having left the scene. Only in the twenties and thirties of the twentieth century, these norms were pushed back by an attempt to create an image of a new Soviet man. However, this image was quite heterogeneous in regard to both language, and paralanguage due to the recognition of the Russian classics' high status under simultaneous orientation to "newspeak", inventing new rituals, braving "simplicity" and attempt to create political norms of communicative behavior.

Today it is quite difficult to specify the elite, whose language could be recognized as a model. In this respect political elite was not authoritative since the Soviet era. Speech manners of the "leaders", i.e. party and state leaders who spoke in the press, on the radio and then television, were stealthily laughed at. This speech was a constant subject of jokes, it was depicted in memoirs published in the post-Soviet era. Credibility of the financial elite recently emerged is also problematic due to many jokes about the "new Russians", where everything from speech manners to gestures are mocked. Education remains the only base criterion for formulating the concept of "standard language".

Even in Soviet times authoritative publicists such as D. S. Likhachev and A. I. Solzhenitsyn stressed the distinction between the concepts "intelligent" and "educated". In our time it becomes clearer that the level of education got (especially without regard to its quality) is the only formal criterion which does not guarantee the correctness of using literary standards, nor affiliation of an individual to the number of its carriers. Number growth of real standard language speakers currently remains short of the number of persons using this phenomenon, especially in public communication. Reduced or unstable knowledge of the literary norm results in a clash of language skills of very different social groups that, on the one hand, makes the literary norm labile, and on the other, encourages linguists to lower the rate of normative prohibitions. One has to deal with texts that differ significantly from the current literary codification. The effect of "deceived expectations" in relation to a correct text can be considered as a global process, i.e. at the macro level. A huge number of intentional violations of norms, mass games with words, harping on grammar forms generate an illusion that a kind of "cultural text" is created where a mature language flourishing its perfection demonstrates its enormous possibilities and reveals its potency. However, "the text of contemporary culture" does not impose such an impression upon most contemporaries. In contrast, complaints on the drop of speech culture have become an omen of our time.

An absence of language elite whose role is still really pretended only by TV presenters, results in the fact already mentioned above that "speaking correctly ceased to be prestigious." This is no less true for writing and spelling, despite the efforts of schools to keep these boundaries. It is typically that big businesses keenly interested in their reputation and spending huge amounts of money on advertising and maintaining their image, show a complete carelessness in spelling. In expensive booklets one can find even spelling of *Russia* with one "s" - "*Rosia*". And it is not a conscious bravado like a manner common in online advertising to abuse double consonants, but a tacitly institutionalized negligence.

The situation around the proposed reform of spelling and orthology showed, among other things, the level of public authority of linguists themselves in respect to language standardization.

The problem of the attitude to the norms can be considered in two aspects.

The first aspect is rhetorization of norms, treating language norm as rhetorical. This aspect comprises modern ideas of changing the norms codification principles, norms liberalization, intentional norms violations, in short, everything that can be defined as the "dominant scientific concepts about the attitude to the norms."

The second aspect relates to the language negligence as a new speech strategy and must be separated from the first one. Today the negligence is considered a side effect of the speed of linguistic innovations, while it presents the second side of the attitude to the norms though it has not yet received a proper understanding.

We consider these two aspects separately.

In the modern communicative situation we see linguistic and rhetorical norms getting closer together following two lines at the same time. They are mixing the norms and identification of two fundamentally different types of norms, i.e. there is something that can be described as a "norm rhetorization".

Modern researchers of various opinions reproduce the known argument that a violation of the norms is at the same time creating a new norm. This approach corresponds fully to the rhetorical one, with the only difference being in the fact that the latter meant a violation of grammar norms and, that is very important for us, had its own, adequate to its tasks mechanism of setting "other" standards - codification of rhetorical norms.

From time immemorial rhetoric was engaged in adopting grammatical anomalies to their targets. Along with a diffusive concept of rhetorical and linguistic norms this approach has two converging phenomena diverse from the point of view of rhetoric. The first phenomenon is the literature, i.e. a public written word. This is an origin model carrier for rhetoric, a source of rhetorical norms. In Greece and Rome teaching rhetoric was based on "school" authors. The second phenomenon is a "marginal discourse", that is something non-public, non-model and belonging to the subculture. Using the expression of A.S. Pushkin, we can say that the rhetoric has never listened to the "language of communion bread." In this sense it was traditionally exacter then grammar as it originally dealt with a live, non-cultivated material. It had never felt such reverence to "life" as fiction literature of realistic sense, because it did not have the task of depicting life (mimesis), but conversion of life (impact). We note that the modern jargon is unlikely to give rhetoric something it has not known so far, i.e. to open a new figure or trope for it.

It is curious that in the sixties V. G. Kostomarov told the idea that "the norm should not be considered as something isolated, but as a system of norms that vary from case to case", and in 1998 he wrote: "All natural immanent laws of the Russian language development are now stretched to their limit, renovation rate is over the top, clearly exceeds the acceptable limit. The boundaries of the standard language are diffuse: peripheral phenomenon gain the center, norms are weakened and increasingly variable, stylistic gradations and stylistic patterns are dramatically changing" (Kostomarov, 1998, p. 10).

The norm that "varies from case to case" is a language norm, which drifts toward rhetorical norms first by understanding stylistic differentiation, and then by situational differentiation. Orthologic correctness criterion is replaced by a rhetorical effectiveness criterion. "Renovation rate" is not just the speed of innovations, but from our point of view, it is a kind of "triumphal procession" of rhetorical standards at language levels (from lexis to grammar). Norms varying situationally have been weakened and "more variable " that, from our point of view, does not just change stylistic graduation, but destroys the very stylistic differentiation.

It is curious that history of standard languages knew a reverse process - grammaticalization of rhetorical norms. In Russia it is the most evident in the scientific work of M.V. Lomonosov. The relevance category ("decency") was then a meeting point for linguistic and rhetorical norms. The task of an oratorical speech is to be effective and suffered some pressure from regulatory stylistics: first, one should speak "decently" and then convince. In today's situation the task of literary norms is to maintain the ability of language to take subtle differences in meaning and style; it suffers some pressure from the efficiency: if convinced, one was right.

Grammaticalization of rhetorical norms, being brought up to a certain limit, contradicts the literature practices and turns rhetoric into an unpopular discipline. This is what happened in the first third of the nineteenth century in Russia. The language reform of Karamzin and Pushkin was aimed to overcome the theory of three styles, i.e. to overcome the kind of normativity that is not organic for the artistic oeuvre. So little it was limited for rhetoric as success of Karamzin and Pushkin proved it outside of belles-lettres, but in journalism, in fact, rhetoric. It is known that Pushkin had a low estimation of Lyceum professor of rhetoric N. F. Koshanskiy, and Belinskiy gave a negative review of the N. F. Koshanskiy's rhetoric. At the same time both A. S. Pushkin, and V. G. Belinskiy were great rhetoricians. Besides, poetics of A. S. Pushkin was also characterized by specific features of rhetorical thinking: logical distinctions, focus on the mental field exhaustion and a rational element strongly expressed in art.

Apparently, something similar happens with rhetorization of language norms. Orthologic thinking in its most extreme demonstration harms literature when transferred to a foreign soil. Similarly, rhetorical thinking actively intruding into some other area brings more harm than good. Expansion of rhetorical norms, in particular, makes it difficult to teach the native language.

A plus of the modern language situation is the diversity of speech masks, genres, and styles. But, on the other hand, we notice the lack of using different styles, genres and registers of communication, which makes doubt about the category of "diversity" and suggests chaos. The variety is structured and the use of masks and styles reminds a stochastic process.

The change in the codification of orienting points should be noted: from correctness to relevancy. Under modern speech conditions the issue of normativity increasingly leaves the field of codification: the concept of *right*/*wrong* is replaced by the concept of *relevance*/*irrelevance*. And it is not given by normative dictionaries with all sorts of litters such as "spoken", "jargon", "old use", "poetic", "taboo", etc.

Shift of standards along the "correctness - relevancy" line is often perceived today as a positive phenomenon: the more the language is developed, the greater the variety of options is, i.e. the level of differentiation is higher. In today's society the norms are not considered as strict rules that allow or prohibit any use, but as acceptable, possible, right and rational realizations of the language system, with the criterion of "right / wrong" being replaced by " relevance/irrelevance ", "actual / irrelevant", "justified / unjustified" in a particular communicative situation.

It should be recognized that such a shift does certainly exist, but one should not estimate this phenomenon as a positive. The ability to differentiate options exists most virtually, only in the minds of those literary language speakers, who can absolutely speak it. Under conditions of mentioned heterogeneity in the language community we do not deal with the subtle differences, but the unclaimed differences emerged spontaneously and not leading to differentiation and flexibility in the use of language resources.

We believe that in the current situation we should talk about the language heterogeneity explained by the peculiarities of the culture with a multiplicity of elites and their characteristic slang.

Contrary to the opinion of many scientists who believe that the needs of contextual norms require liberalization of rules by expanding the field of "acceptable", we believe that a set of situational contexts in which the violation of norms is justified can not be typed, and is essentially open and continuant. This radically distinguishes the situation from functional and stylistic differentiation (based on relevance). At the same time, the number of functional styles with their substyles does not constitute a dozen of units. Consequently, the approach to individual communicative situations with the same measure of relevance as for the functional style, in our view, needs some very serious justification.

The very notion of occasional dictates the need to define a special use, unlike functional, i.e. the one whose functions can not be typed.

The rhetorization of norm is a global process, of course, having a reverse side. Interpretation of situational norms as the development of stylistic norms obscures, in our view, the understanding of this process.

Conscious violations of norms, actualizing this norm in the minds of those who possesses it (!), are combined with the massive demonstrations of language negligence that ultimately make non-functional the conscious deviations from the norms. What we are speaking about the negligence is indirectly confirmed by the very nature of errors. They are easily recognized by features of the dialect that V.V. Vinogradov designated as "vernacular of democratic masses of the city" (Vinogradov, 1982, pp. 478-482), i.e. the language of urbanized peasants with typical errors in the word stress of foreign words, replacement of reflexive forms with non-reflexive forms and other features that neither were completely overcome in the urban population language, nor entered the radio and newspapers. Another proof of the negligence is elementary literal error (like *Rosia*). The third confirmation is an inaccurate reproduction of phraseological units and contamination in phraseology, that is a non-conscious phraseologism deformation. Mass negligence, apparently, can not be regarded as accidental, related to the speed of social and language changes. After all, language changes do not affect any old errors in word stress, and inadvertent letters skipping.

We can conclude about the speech negligence as some strategy that a broad public consciousness accepted the idea, that was absolutely impossible in the period before "perestroika", that misspeaking is not shameful, because many active members of the society, the "best people" of the country, innovative ideas men, fighters for justice and democracy do this way. It seems that the society has developed some communication strategy

(TalkWorks, 1997; Principles, 1999) which can be formulated as "the primacy of novelty and creativity combined with the stylistic negligence." This strategy is actively supported by the mass media.

We can also try to formulate postulates of this fashion communication strategy, which will enable to show its autonomy not only from orthology, but the rhetoric as well.

The first postulate. *If you speak and write stridently and originally, you must not speak and write correctly.*

The second and the last postulate. It is better to speak pretentiously than transparently.

The first postulate is a concentrated expression of the attitude to orthology. This seems to be shared by a vast majority of journalists and students including humanists. It is known that the journalism has its own ideas about the professionalism for this or that title (Fairclough, 1989; 1992; 1995). But these ideas are not associated with the literacy of issues. For example, in one of the most prestigious newspapers up to two spelling errors can be found in one band. A striking fact is how little PR-firms care about spelling and punctuation correctness. Spelling errors can also be found in important documents to be published, such as the federal state educational standards of 3 generation with the description of some common cultural (!) competencies that university graduates must obtain.

The second postulate expresses the attitude to the rhetoric. Its very characteristic example is the materials of pre election campaigns. Compare the propaganda poetry, it is hard to believe in their operation force. We do not face a rhetoric, but a game with the language, where the main thing is to find a fresh rhyme, speak more originally, but not convince. Commercial (!) advertising often suffers the same faults. Consequently, the second postulate of a "casually creative" language person acts negatively in rhetorical terms.

The source of the analyzed strategy is, of course, the mass media language whose clarity (orienting point of the classical rhetoric since Aristotle's times), and relevance (the main sign of a style, especially of a functional one), and correctness (a sign of orthology) cede to originality, showiness, sensationalism.

We have earlier mentioned the expression recognized by many researchers of the modern language situation that the norms setting function passed from the literature to the mass media. This very circumstance is estimated by researchers both positively, and negatively. However, the claims made against the media for the fact that in respect to the literary language and its norms it must perform the same functions that literature did are prevailing.

A positive assessment of the media's role is associated to a so-called formation of some common information koiné separated, however, from the very standard language. Let us dwell on the case of polyfunctionality of the mass media language.

The idea of the standard language polyfunctionality is known to run back to the Prague citizens. This polyfunctionality presents one of essential characteristics of the standard language. Dialects, for example, do not have this feature. But the language of the media is polyfunctional in a slightly different sense, namely in that how D.S. Likhachev spoke about polyfunctionality of the medieval literature. That is the ability of one object to perform syncretically several functions at a time. The same work of the medieval literature could be referred to the fiction (using modern terminology), and to the historical and religious literature.

Thus, the very term "polyfunctionality" is lightly enantiosemantic. A syncretic, undifferentiated entity having many functions can be called so, and on the contrary, the possibility of differentiation and stratification of some functional phenomena could be so defined. The media language is unlikely to have the last property, as it shows the mixture of styles and the collapse of genres and genre expectations.

For example, in a newspaper article devoted to a serious subject it is extremely difficult to predict the presence or absence of jargon and even it is often impossible to predict the level of spelling and punctuation literacy. Diffusion of such an understandable and natural opposition as "official - familiar" in the language of media speaks for itself. We think that with a vague representation of the officialism it would be wrong to speak about polyfunctionality of the media language in the same context as representatives of the Prague Linguistic Circle spoke about the literary language polyfunctionality. We can speak only about the functional syncretism.

The modern stylistic situation in the media is in the purpose of a newspaper, magazine or television program to become a kind of gateway opening or closing the path for the "alien" stylistic flow. If this path is open, a journalist is often relieved of his duties to find any justification for the "other" stylistic means. Thus, we can note an independence of "thematic diversity" of media from stylistic differentiation and stylistic restructuring of the newspapers language. At the same time one can observe mixing literary and non-literary forms in the language of the mass media.

Public ethnic communication belongs to the field of regulated speech behavior according to the text structuring. This means that the selection of language means used is made (anyway it should have been so!) unintentionally and is corrected by actions of relevant regulators. The latter includes both external language censorship performed by editors, stylists, etc., and auto-censorship presenting a certain communication strategy of an individual, his self-control over the speech behavior. The reality is that the media language referring to the area of the regulated speech behavior regulates it in its own way, not the way it was done in the literature.

Radio and television gave intentionally samples of correct speech. Literature and journalism had an important role in promoting correct writing and speaking. The situation at the turn of the centuries is fundamentally different. The result of development processes of perestroika, glasnost intensification, democratization of the whole society was an unruled stream of spontaneous, unscripted speech of meetings participants, deputies, active members of various social groups that flowed from the pages of newspapers and journals, radio and television broadcasts. As a result radio, television and other traditional authorities of the language codification of speech for the first time became the means of introducing colloquial speech into the society language use. The "introduction (!) of colloquial speech" as well as "fashion for all reduced" suppose some conscious processes, and therefore can not be considered as a simple dysfunction of the media language. We can only speak about how much the norms given by this language comply with (not only in volume but also typologically) the norms of the standard language.

The unitized mass media of Soviet times, when the ideological norms entailed certain verbal formulas, in those days euphemistically called as newspaper stamps (thereby authorship of the stamps were attributed to reporters and this did not always correspond to reality!), were rather an exception than the rule. The Mass media in the information society function differently, and the fact that the norm is under control of these means, with their inherent sensationalism, creates an objectively other picture, different from the time when the norm was presented by an exemplary speech of writers, "masterminds", and artists in word, and from the time when the language policy was a part of the ideological policy.

The oral media (television and radio) have a number of features, which nature continues and reinforces the trends observed in the written media. In this sense, oral media are the "squared media".

At the same time the radio and television media have three special features:

1) impossibility to return to the thing heard or seen;
2) focus on maintaining an illusion of easy communication;
3) "small format".

Consider each of these features.

1. As for the first feature a technical remark should be made. Indeed, having the modern means of audio and video recording it is quite possible, of course, to return to the heard thing. But if we do not deal with a feature film or a concert, this possibility can be used only by the professionals for installation, editing and archiving programs. Thus, a return to the reported information is only made in the interests of the speaker. As for the listeners, the speech of the oral media is purely linear and irreversible for them.

A specific feature of the oral media means is in the possibility to establish a momentary, simultaneous communicative contact with the mass, common ethnic audience. Unlike a written text, recall of an oral text by an addressee is usually difficult, so its verbal form should be as close to the usage of the assumed addressee and his language competence, as he could immediately perceive information without any losses or distortions. This originally supposes the need to reduce the language "rate" of the text and reproach it to the mass language usage, which can not affect the standard speech.

A mass common ethnic audience is a heterogeneous phenomenon. Language competences of addressers of the spectrum lower part can not be arranged hierarchically from bigger competence to the less one. Consequently the reduction of the "rate" can not be focused on any one of these levels. The lowest level simply does not exist.

Not coincidentally, the researchers noted many times the heterogeneous nature of vernacular, and the question of "vernacular" label becomes even debatable. In this context, the level to which the "rate" can be lowered to let a diverse audience understand well the text is quite a problematic thing. In practice, journalists go an other way, making from youth their reference group and focusing on youth slang. Attempts of the media to make the speech understandable for older speakers of a dialect are not observed even in the form of one of the trends. The "rate" drifts between the language competence of Russian middle-aged uneducated native speakers with a limited vocabulary and the language of a teenager with his "westernized" slang and social life of active computer users ethnographism.

2. Focusing on maintaining an illusion of oral communication results in an extremely interesting phenomenon, which has not yet been paid enough attention.

Speaking of standards defined by the oral media, especially television, one should make a remark. In contrast to the fiction literature of the XIXth century simulating, albeit conditionally, a dialogic speech in typical situations of communication, the oral media offer their own types of speech situations that do not decide those problems that casual communication does, despite the efforts of television journalists to get closer to the naturalness. This means that the literature selected the phenomena of life and returned them as models or anti-models when a phenomenon was mocked at or the author somehow distanced himself from it. Literary diaries imitated authentic diaries, literature letters - original letters, declarations of love were true declarations of love.

When offering some game, talk-show or advertising, television creates standards of those primary genres (Goodman, 1996; Gay, 1996; Czerniawska, 1998) to which an ordinary spectator does not apply in his behavior. Thus speech patterns are proposed to be borrowed from another genre situation (we mean the primary genre, as for the secondary genres - short stories and novels - the situation was always like that).

There was nothing funny in the fact that whole generations were taught speech on text examples of the Russian literature. This was possible due to the structure of a realistic novel or short story, which was based on the reproduction of primary speech genres.

Television speech comprises only a very small number of primary speech genres, but creates its own primary genres which imitation in the ordinary speech results in the inadequacy. Thus it is not only weak in regard to the establishment of speech samples, but also can contribute in learning inadequate patterns.

3. "Small Format", i.e. shortness of telespots acts the same way as the inability to return to the said thing, namely it reduces the "rate". This reveals such a speech feature as its contextuality. There are three types of such contextuality: objective (speech depends on realities visible for interlocutors), situational, it is related to the character of the speech (monologue or dialogue form, formal or informal communication), and situational as presupposition (this supposes some prior knowledge of interlocutors about reported information). Obviously, the smaller the TV format is, the greater general information about the speech subject must both partners of conversation have. Here we do not deal with the language competence, but the real competence of television and radio audience. A large and heterogeneous audience needs a common denominator, it is the minimum of general information on life. In fact this limits a message semantics and makes semantic frames narrower. Also note that, in contrast to the written text, and even hypertext, a public oral text has no mechanism of references.

It is easy to see that all three mentioned factors - inability to return to heard thing, illusion of a live communication and small format – have an unfavorably impact; they prevent semantic and stylistic complexity and complicate the ability to nuances. It is this ability ("smoothness") that is considered the most essential feature of the standard language. This raises the question about features of the standard language and koiné in the language of the oral media and the media in general.

Traditional consideration of koiné as the basis of the standard language reflects history, but can not be used for future projections. It is typically, however, that the term "koiné" in the modern sociolinguistics gets an expanded interpretation. We see this as the fundamental ability and willingness to consider the phenomenon of koiné as a stage preceding the standard language and perhaps inheriting.

The problem of differences between the standard language and koiné is in the fact that not every supradialectal form is at the same time "polished" variant of the language, i.e. the variant capable of transmitting the maximum number of differences.

Anyway, the language of the mass media with all its advantages and disadvantages becomes a model, norms forming factor affecting the standard formation of the modern literary language, as well as the level of ethnic language culture in general regardless of our desire. In other words, today the mass media written and oral set the linguistic norms. However there is a question about the nature of this norm. And the question is: is the norm set by media the very standard of the literary language? Analysis of written and especially oral media show that an affirmative answer to this question would be premature.

Norms set by media are closer to the rhetorical norm. If they are viewed from the perspective of linguistic rules, we can speak about the updated norms of the national language (or information koiné overcoming dialectal differences), rather than about the norms of the standard language. Even less reasons we have to speak about the constructive contribution of the media in formation of stylistic norms.

Apparently, a television koiné is now in the stage of formation, as the high level of citations coming from television speech proves this.

It is curious that even the names of television genres, such as "talk show" are the common heritage of Russian speakers. Compare designation of newspaper genres, say "analytical report", that is known only by newsmen. Commercial advertising is a powerful (in quantitative terms) koyné forming factor.

Advertising is not only the engine of commerce, it is also a kind of motor and inciter of the speech activity. It led to the emergence of new communicative functions of the Russian standard language and new manners of speech laying out; they are increased emotional, energetic, suggestive and also fruitful "hybridization" as a result of which modern types of advertising texts based on the newspapers language and involving many industrial and technical, popular science, business and even popular genres have been developed.

Thus advertising imposes its speech strategies to other forms of speech, along with another idea of melting languages of different functional styles in an advertising text. The latter meets our ideas of television koyné. The first thought confirms the predominance of new speech strategy that estimates highly expression and underestimates correctness and relevancy.

Note that the imposition of advertising speech strategies to other speech genres can not be regarded as a constructive phenomenon. However, it is also impossible to deny the existence of this phenomenon. Apparently, it stands as one of the factors of language norm "rhetorization", orientation to a minute success at any cost.

As for the participation of advertising in the formation of television koyné (compare the phenomenon of paraphrasing and citing advertising texts by the oral media themselves), this phenomenon should be considered a constructive, keeping in mind the difference between koyné and standard language.

The norm of the standard language is experiencing a pressure of rhetorical norms. It is possible to formulate this case as following: the standard language is under pressure of the mass language (koyné), which unity is ensured by a single information space existing mainly due to the television. Norms of this language can be apparently defined as post literary, as they are maintained through the efforts of schools and heritage of classical literature, but they are not supported by a live literary process.

The most suffered function of the standard language was the ability to stylistic differentiation, flexible changes in response to a communicative task. In short, it is the ability to "flexible stability" for which the norm "rhetorization" is performed. The "situational norm" of the modern language is a logical continuation and specialization of stylistic norms (from areas of communication to the situation of communication). But in fact under conditions of style system destruction it becomes a fiction, an indication of a stochastic process, proving the growing chaos in the system of norms.

"Live", i.e. saved norms are today the rhetorical norm and the norm of mass, "national" language based on the norms system of the Russian language and the strongly eroded literary norm.

5. Conclusions

1. Modern communicative situation is caused not only by known social realities specific to the Russian reality (the downfall of the old ideology, emergence of new social realities in a relatively short period, removal of censorship restrictions, etc.), but also general information, communicative or social and information climate of postmodern societies. Such societies are characterized by weakening of "vertical" hierarchically constructed norms, pluralism of patterns and greater freedom in their choice dictated by the principle of *here and now* under rather indifferent respect to the whole. One of the characteristics of modern societies actively forming an attitude to the norm is the pluralism of elites. Multiplicity of elites, their non-hierarchical principle, and the lack of that elite which can be called the language elite results in the fact that the art of speaking and writing correctly is no longer perceived as something valuable. A success (the ability to achieve an instant albeit short communicative success) and creativity become language values. The ability to transmit or take the subtle nuances of meaning ceases to be a value.

2. There appears a new media's role in setting norms of the standard language. Fiction literature loses its standard setting function, and these functions are transferred to the media. In this case, however, not only the volume of norms, but also their nature set by the media is rather specific. We can say with some straightening that the media maintain standards of specific information koyné. In the modern communicative situation linguistic and rhetorical norms are getting closer that is shown in mixing the norms and replacement of the language norm with the rhetorical one, and the identification of two fundamentally different types of norms. Changes of public information and context where the norms forming process takes place requires an expanded context of researching the norm category.

3. It is necessary to realize the contemporary language situation and systematic development of the Russian communicative space. Any popularizing work is useful. The speech culture should become a social project. Here

philologists' role is extremely high. It is absurd to think that the language is similar to a device like an alarm clock pre-programmed to certain changes that can occur around. The language has to survive, and survival has its limits, this is proved by the phenomenon of dead languages.

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