

**ШОСТАК Оксана Григорівна,**  
доктор філологічних наук, доцент,  
професор кафедри іноземної  
філології та перекладу  
Східноукраїнського національного  
університету ім. В. Даля  
(м. Київ, Україна)  
*Chercheuse, LARCA / ECHELLES,*  
*Université Paris Cité (Paris, France)*

## **LANGUAGE AS A FACTOR IN THE CULTURAL IDENTITY FORMATION**

Increased attention to national identity, the need to consolidate ethnic societies, an attempt to create a national ideal and a national idea in new social conditions, as well as the desire to preserve and, so to speak, “separate” one’s national mythology, culture, history, customs, all these phenomena are components of a protective reaction that arises in response to the increasingly intensified unification of spiritual and material culture in the conditions of world globalization. The movement towards national identity at the beginning of the 21st century has acquired the character of a global trend that has affected the societies of many countries regardless of their level of development, whether traditional or post-industrial. The concept of identity originates from the Latin concept of “identifico” (I identify).

Despite the wide variety of interpretations of the concept of "national identity" and its specific properties that manifest themselves in the context of intercultural communication, most researchers agree that this concept is closely related to the interpretation of such scientific phenomena as "nation", "nationalism", "ethnos" and “identity”.

It is believed that the question of national identity first arose in Ancient Greece. It was there that the linguistic and cultural principle of self-identification was formed: the one who spoke Greek was a Hellene, the one who did not speak this language and communicated in another was a barbarian. European culture returned to the problem of self-identification only at the end of the 18th century, creating two concepts almost simultaneously. The first was proclaimed by J.-J. Rousseau, who emphasized the right of the people to be the main subject of politics. The other was formulated by a cohort of German and English theorists of nationalism, the most prominent among them were G. Hegel, F. Guizot, G. Bockle and A. de Tocqueville. They believed that the nature of nations is irrational in its essence, it should be defined based on the unity of language, blood and cultural traditions. “The Enlightenment laid a solid foundation for the theoretical interpretation of 'political individualism' and 'civilizational identity' as principles of politics, but it was Romanticism that invented 'cultural individualism' and 'ethnic/cultural identity' as cultural constructs.”

E. Hobsbawm discusses two distinct ways in which national identity is formed. The first is based on the so-called “right of blood”, when it is believed that members of one

nation have a common origin and a common culture. Such peoples are called ethnocultural nations. The second is based on the “right of territory”, when the population living there lacks common roots and, accordingly, a common culture, in this case their solidarity is formed regardless of linguistic, ethnic or cultural differences and is rather the result of economic or political calculation. In this case, a political nation is formed.

Classical nationalism of the 19th century set itself the goal of creating nation-states built on the right of the titular nation to exercise political power. The French sociologist G. Le Bon argued that the self-identification of a nation is not limited to the commonality of language, folklore tradition and blood relationship. He is convinced of the presence of a subconscious connection between an individual and an ethnic group, the basis of this connection cannot be either language, or the environment, or political affiliation, but exclusively psychological factors, because “beyond the institutions, art, beliefs, political upheavals of each people there are certain moral and intellectual characteristics, from which its evolution flows”.

Cultural identity explains national identity as a set of ethnocultural factors formed as a result of a long historical process, where the key factors are a single language, common traditions and religion. It is thanks to the common heritage that forms the unique culture of the nation that individuals who are considered part of it are able to learn about their own place in modern society. . Jonathan Sacks in his book “The Home We Build Together” explains that “Society is made out of the contributions of many individuals. What they give is unimportant; that they give is essential. ... A national identity can be made out of the contributions of many cultures, many faiths. What matters is that together we build something none of us could make alone”.

M. Battiste, speaking about the importance of understanding the linguistic system of indigenous peoples, emphasizes that “no one is truly able to penetrate the knowledge of another person. The only thing that works is when another person shares their thoughts in a speech act. The presumption of what is being said is the person’s experience” [Battiste, p. 80]. In connection with the colonial linguistic expansion, the understanding of linguistic structures is lost, which are “a road map to understanding cognitive categories and knowledge” [Inglsi, p. 393], which demonstrates the achievements of eons of Indian generations-bearers of specific cultures. As R. Wardlaugh emphasizes, people are accustomed to “using language to best convey [ethnic – O. Sh.] values and experience. Although it cannot be said that culture requires a particular linguistic structure, this influence is always noticeable in specific parts of the linguistic structure” [Wardlaugh, 212]. Analysis of these “parts” of linguistic structure allows us to better understand the meaning and semantic environment that are components of indigenous knowledge.

Z. Bauman called identity a prism through which the most important issues of modernity are studied. Globalization forces us to rethink the idea of cultural identity by generating new forms of interconnection and interaction between peoples and societies. Cultural globalization affects identity, opening paths to collective identities. Under the influence of the globalization process, identification markers also change. National self-identification is based on a coherent system of ideas and feelings and on a sense of

connection between generations. A person acts as an heir to the physical and spiritual traits of his ancestors, which are passed down from generation to generation practically unchanged. Thus, innate subconscious stereotypes of worldview inherent in members of a particular ethnic unity come to the fore.

From an academic point of view, ethnic identity is important nowadays, which serves as a system-forming basis for the integrity of many peoples and social groups. This type of identity is based on a cultural foundation and determines the socially significant diversity of group members. R. Parker notes that “one should not look for something only artistic in cultural identity, but the act of self-expression in cultural identity has an aesthetic form” [Parker, с. 3]. S. Hall argues that the sense of identity is usually associated with the question of using the resources of history, language, culture in the process of becoming, as opposed to existing. Cultural identity affects the “form of self-consciousness as a condition for preserving the (identity) authenticity of a person who is aware of the world and himself. Without belonging to any culture, ultimately – to the ethno-national culture of a particular community, the act of conscious self-enrollment (affection of oneself) – the act of self-consciousness – is not possible. The question is not “Who are we?” or “Where are we from?”, but rather “Where are we going?”, “How are we represented?”, “How will this affect how we will be able to represent ourselves?”. The researcher notes that identity is constructed from the inside, not from the outside [Hall, p. 4], language in this case serves as the internal foundation that cements a national identity.

Cultural identity explains national identity as a set of ethnocultural factors formed as a result of a long historical process, where the key factors are a single language, common traditions and religion. The common heritage constitutes the unique national culture of the nation, and individuals who consider themselves part of it are able to learn about their place in modernity. According to K. E. Appiah, a person creates himself from a set of options offered to him by culture and society. “We do indeed make a choice, but we are not free to outline the options among which we have to choose” [Appiah, p. 155]. Representatives of many indigenous peoples are convinced that the use of language physically affects a person and his environment, therefore, for example, the desire to “adjust” the language and culture of the inhabitants of North America to the needs of English-speaking colonialists should be interpreted as violence. The spoken word was equated with action, and the effect of ceremonies was based on this. L. Irving wrote that “sacred utterance is extremely powerful and dangerous, so careful attitude to it was mandatory in order to avoid negative consequences” [Irwin, p. 239]. Thus, it can be argued that each identity has a mandatory connection with a certain culture, the values of which are revealed in the process of socialization and acculturation. The culture of each individual community serves as a source of sociocultural identity of this community. The formation of individual and collective identities of members of the indigenous community occurs on the basis of autochthonous cultural and semantic codes.

### *References*

1. Appiah, Kwame Anthony. Identity, Authenticity, Survival : Multicultural
-

Societies and Social Reproduction. *Multiculturalism: Examining "The Politics of Recognition"* / Ed. by Amy Gutmann. Princeton University Press, 1994. P.149-164.

2. Battiste, Marie. *Reclaiming Indigenous Voice and Vision*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2000. 314 p.

3. Hall Stuart. Introduction. Who Needs 'Identity'. *Questions of Cultural Identity*/ Ed. by S. Hall and P. du Gay. London, 1996. P.1–17.

4. Inglis, Stephanie. 400 Years of Linguistic Contact between the Mi'kmaq and the English and the Interchange of Two Worlds Views. *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies*. 2004. Vol. XXIV. No.2. P. 389–402.

5. Irving, Lee. Cherokee Healing: Myth, Dreams, and Medicine. *American Indian Quarterly*. 1992. Vol. 16. No. 2. P.237–257.

6. Parker, Robert Dale. *The Invention of Native American Literature*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003. 290 p.

7. Sacks J. *The Home We Build Together: Recreating Society*. London: Continuum; 2007. P. 140.

8. Wardlaugh, Ronald. *An Introduction to Sicio-Linguistics*. New York: Basil Blackwell, 1986. 388 p.