

## **ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE INDO-EUROPEAN LANGUAGE FAMILY**

Within modern conditions of the global transformation the research of the historical genesis of languages provides the storage and protection of the cultural heritage of each nation. Thus, issue of analysis of the ancient of the languages' development obtains the relevant valuable role for the further generations of the world. Scientists state that nowadays there are 7,159 languages in the world (including 250 dead languages). According to the conducted research works, all these languages are grouped into language families (Indo-European, Finno-Ugric Semitic-Hamitic, Ural-Altaic, Basque, Malayo-Polynesian, etc.). The **goal** of our research work is to reveal the Indo-European language family as one of the largest in the world. Some linguists name is as "Aryan", "Indo-Germanic", but due to the geographical aspect the term "Indo-European family" has become more common.

**Presentation of the main material.** The common ancestor of all languages belonging to this family is the Proto-Indo-European (common Indo-European) language, which was spoken nearly 5-6 thousand years BC. The disintegration of linguistic unity, which resulted in the emergence of the Indo-European family of related languages, occurred approximately a thousand years BC. The common language from which related languages arose was called the "root language" or "primary language". Most often, this is a hypothetically reconstructed language model, a system of scientific facts obtained using the comparative-historical method. The question of the "ancestral homeland of the Indo-Europeans" is quite debatable. Some suggest that these are the steppes of Western Asia, others call the Balkans, central Europe, the Black Sea and Caspian steppes (O. Schrader, O. Bremer), northern Europe, the region between the middle Volga and the Southern Urals (M. Gimbutas), Asia Minor. The vast

majority of scientists recognize that the Indo-European community of tribes and nationalities developed in conditions of numerous migrations across a significant territory of the Eurasian continent, from the Hindustan Peninsula to Britain. According to geographical location, Indo-European languages are divided into groups, the main ones of which are: Indian or Indo-Aryan, Iranian, Hittolivial or Anatolian, Italian, Romance, Celtic, Germanic, Baltic, Slavic, Tocharian, as well as Armenian, Greek, Albanian. In addition, fragmentary monuments of a number of Indo-European languages, widespread in ancient times, which later disappeared, have been preserved: Phrygian, Thracian, Illyrian, Venetian, etc. The oldest written monuments of Indo-European languages that have come down to us (IV century) indicate that the Indo-European proto-language had a fairly distinct dialectal division. The dialects of the common Indo-European language differed from each other at the phonetic, grammatical and lexical levels. The two main groups of dialects are classified as the centum and satem groups, according to the development in a particular Indo-European language of the velar explosive (breakthrough) consonant \*[k]. In prehistoric times, for the Centum languages (Hittite, Celtic, Germanic, Italian, Greek and Tocharian) \*[k] was preserved in the initial position of certain words, such as Latin centum "one hundred". For the Satem languages (Albanian, Armenian, Baltic, Slavic, Indian, Iranian) \*[k] became sibilant (palatal or alveolar) as in Avestan satem "one hundred". The dividing line, extending from Scandinavia to Greece, separates the Satem or eastern group from the Kentum or western group, with the exception of Tocharian, which is the language of the Kentum on the territory of the Satem. The Germanic languages belong to the Kentum languages, but certain morphological features bring them closer to the Slavic and Baltic (Satem) languages. Having conducted a statistical analysis, V. V. Levitsky determined that the Germanic languages show similarities in their lexical composition with Greek, Latin and Indo-Iranian languages. The greatest similarity in lexical composition is characteristic of the Germanic, Baltic and Slavic languages. Having compared the frequency of use of words in

the Bible, V. Manchak came to the conclusion that the Germanic languages are related first of all to the Slavic, then to the Italian and Baltic, and only after that to other Indo-European languages. These data are consistent with the conclusions made by many prominent linguists of the 19th–20th centuries.

We should underline that the term Indo-European languages (English Indo-European languages) was first mentioned by the English scientist Thomas Jung in 1813. But in the context of the German-language philological studies we can meet the term Indo-Germanic languages (German indogermanische Sprachen). The linguists make stress on the fact that in the historical retrospective the family of Indo-European languages was called “Aryan”. Nowadays the term “Aryan” is applied to the subfamily of Indo-European languages, which comprises the Nuristan branch and Indo-Iranian languages. The scientists mention that Indo-European languages conduct the role of the largest language families in the world. The Indo-European family is divided into language branches. There are: Indian, Iranian, Baltic, Slavic, Celtic, Germanic, and Italian groups. In addition, the Indo-European languages include Albanian, Armenian, Greek, as well as a number of dead languages or even language groups: Anatolian (Hittite, etc.), Tocharian (so-called Tocharian A and B), Thracian (Thraco-Dacian), Venetian, etc. Thus, the group of Germanic languages is one of the groups of the Indo-European language family. The group of Germanic languages includes living languages: English – the second (after Chinese) in prevalence in the world, Dutch, Frisian, German, Luxembourgish, Swedish, Danish, Afrikaans, Yiddish, Norwegian, Burgundian, Icelandic, Faroese and dead Gothic, Vandal, Gepid, Herulian.

The scientists divide Germanic languages into three subgroups: Western, Northern and Eastern. The West Germanic languages include English, German, Dutch (Dutch) together with Flemish (the latter is widespread in Belgium), Frisian, Yiddish, Afrikaans (Boer). Some linguists consider Luxembourgish (Letzeburgish), which was formed on the basis of one of the dialects of German, as a separate literary language. The northern subgroup, also called Scandinavian,

consists of: Danish, Swedish (East Scandinavian languages); Norwegian, Icelandic, Faroese (West Scandinavian languages). As for the East Germanic languages, all of them (which included Gothic, Vandalic, Burgundian, Gepid, etc.) are extinct.

The Gothic language occupies a special place among the Germanic and other ancient Indo-European languages, as its written monuments date back to the 4th century AD; it has preserved a significant number of archaic forms characteristic of the Proto-Germanic language. The Gothic texts are excerpts from the New Testament (as well as some other, smaller monuments), the translation of which was brilliantly made by the Gothic bishop Wulfila (Ulfila), when the Goths lived in Moesia – on the Balkan Peninsula (approximately where Bulgaria is now) and maintained ties with Byzantium, from which, like the Slavs, they adopted Christianity, and with it – writing. Unlike other ancient Germanic languages, the language of the Wulfilian New Testament is well developed and does not have any special dialectal differences, which are characteristic, for example, of Old High German or Old English.

Other ancient Germanic languages, in addition to Gothic, include:

1) Old English (Anglo-Saxon), attested by written monuments from the 7th century AD. The most important dialect of Old English is the Wessex (West Saxon) influence, the spread of which was strengthened by the political dominance of Wessex;

2) Old High German, which is conventionally used to denote the set of ancient South Germanic dialects (written from the 8th century AD);

3) Old Saxon (or Old Low German; written from the 9th century); on its basis the Low German dialects were formed;

4) Old Frisian (written from the 14th century);

5) Old Icelandic – the language of the original written monuments of the 12th–14th centuries, which arose in Iceland, colonized by immigrants from Norway in the 9th–10th centuries. Old Icelandic, like Gothic, plays a particularly important role in comparative studies, because it clearly presents

Old Germanic vocabulary, and the monuments of Old Icelandic poetry most fully reflect Germanic mythology.

Texts in these languages serve as the main source of evidence about the phonetic, grammatical and lexical system of the ancient Germanic languages which will be the prospect for our further research.

#### REFERENCES

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