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LANGUAGE ISSUES IN PUBLICISTS AND HANDICRAFT HERITAGE OF PUBLIC FIGURE PETRO STEBNYTSKYI (1862–1923)

Summary

The article continues the cycle of author publications about Petro Stebnytskyi (1862–1923) and his role in the formation of the so-called «Ukrainian National Creation Project» at the end of the 19th – early 20th centuries. The publication contains the results of research conducted under the grant of the President of Ukraine on a competitive project (Contract No. F75 / 226–2018) of the State Fund for Fundamental Research.

The purpose of the article is to analyze the linguistic studies of the public figure, which raised the relevant issues of the language connection with the genetic component, national character, spirit of the people; the subject of consideration was also the

integrational, consolidational characteristics of the language in the publicistic discourse and the manuscript inheritance of P. Stebnytskyi; media polemics on spelling, lexical composition etc.

Along with the problem-chronological, comparative-historical and descriptive methods of research content analysis and source-criticism were used in the article.

We believe that the media texts of P. Stebnytskyi fully fit into the general linguistic discourse of the 19th – early 20th centuries about the place and importance of the Ukrainian literary and oral language in the life of society. It was established that public figure consistently defended the rights of the Ukrainian language in tsarist Russia, publicly advocated its protection, and promoted the possibility of the existence of Ukrainian-language literature. P. Stebnytskyi defended the Ukrainian-language education, was engaged in editorial and lexicographic work, made efforts to streamline the Ukrainian spelling. The article analyzes the following journalistic and manuscript works of public figure dedicated to the linguistic question: «The fate of the Ukrainian word in Russia», «St. Petersburg «Prosvita», «On the purity of the language», «Lithuanian alphabet and Little Russian literature», «State language», «The case of the state language», «Ukrainian question», «Essay on the development of the current censorship regime in relation to the Little Russian writing», «On the question of Ukrainian spelling» etc.

It was found out that in the publicistics of the 19th – early 20th century language was interpreted as the first and main representative symbol of the nation; the assimilation language politics of the metropolitan governments and the cultural strategies of the Ukrainian elite opposing them were considered through the prism of the struggle for identity. So, as we can see, the opposition strategies of the nationally-minded intellectuals, including P. Stebnytskyi, were verbalized on the pages of publications in the form of imperative requirements, applications and appeals from the public concerning the affirmation of the rights of the mother tongue in all branches.

In particular, P. Stebnytskyi sharply condemned the censorship of the Russian government, which limited communication in the Ukrainian language, the areas of its functioning, the spread of the national narrative, preventing the publication of original

works and translations in Ukrainian, the publication of books for children, stage performances, recitation and even the printing of texts to musical notes . He pointed to the marginal position of the Ukrainian language, its declining in the conglomerate of other national-language issues; condemned the approaches to government circles, which in the «Little Russian dialect», which according to their logic could initially lead to cultural, and subsequently political separation, saw the origins of separatism. Not left out of the attention of the publicist was the question of the purity of the native language, spelling norms, lexical composition.

Keywords: *Petro Stebnytskyi, Ukrainian language, linguistic question, mediatexts, censorship, fiction (belles-lettres), lexicographical activity, Ukrainian spelling.*