

## THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE IN FORMING NATIONAL IDENTITY IN THE XXI CENTURY

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**Abstract:** The article examines the importance of language as one of the key factors in shaping national identity in the context of globalization in the 21st century. Language is understood not only as a means of communication but also as an essential element of a nation's cultural and spiritual heritage. The article analyzes the influence of global processes on the preservation of national languages, the role of the state and society in their support, and the significance of the digital environment for the development and promotion of the native language. It emphasizes that language is the foundation of national self-awareness and an important tool for preserving the cultural diversity of the world.

**Key words:** language, national identity, culture, globalization, uniqueness, national unity, digital age.

In the modern world, language plays a key role not only as a means of communication but also as an essential element of national consciousness. Language reflects the history, culture, traditions, customs, worldview, and spiritual values of every people. Through language, a person feels a sense of belonging to a particular community and, consequently, becomes aware of their own national identity. In the 21st century, as globalization erases cultural boundaries, the issue of preserving national languages becomes especially important. The purpose of this article is to demonstrate how language influences the formation of national identity and how modern societies can preserve linguistic and cultural diversity.

Language is more than just a means of communication. It is the home of the spirit, the repository of traditions, and a map of the world that each person carries within. It grows and evolves with society, yet it always remains the force that prevents us from dissolving into anonymity - it gives each nation a voice, a face, and a memory. Language mirrors the soul of a people and safeguards cultural memory. Proverbs, folklore, and literature reflect a nation's ideas of good and evil, the world and humanity. Every language represents a unique mode of thinking. For example, the Russian language's rich system of diminutive and affectionate forms expresses emotional warmth and intimacy, while Eastern languages emphasize respect and hierarchy. Thus, language directly influences a nation's worldview and value system.

Globalization has opened up vast opportunities for communication, knowledge exchange, and cultural achievements. However, it also has a reverse side - the growing dominance of global languages, especially English, over national cultures. Young people increasingly prefer to use English in education, business, and social media; loanwords and filler words are also becoming widespread in everyday speech, gradually diminishing interest in and purity of the native language. Small languages are at risk of extinction, and with them, unique traditions, customs, and worldviews disappear. Preserving linguistic diversity has become a crucial task for the modern world, as the loss of a language means the loss of part of human civilization.

Preserving a language requires the joint efforts of both the state and society. Language is part of cultural heritage, and its preservation is essential for maintaining ethnic identity and passing down traditions. Many countries are developing programs to promote national languages: creating textbooks, translating digital resources, and supporting national media and literature. For example, Kazakhstan actively strengthens the role of the Kazakh language, while Uzbekistan modernizes and promotes it in the scientific sphere. Such measures not only preserve the language but also enhance the prestige of national culture and strengthen pride in one's country.

Modern technologies play a dual role: on the one hand, they can threaten language preservation; on the other, they can contribute to its development. The Internet and digital technologies have become a new space for identity formation. Whereas language once existed mainly in spoken and written forms, today it actively evolves within the media environment - in social networks, blogs, and video content. New words and expressions emerge, reflecting social and technological changes and making language more flexible and contemporary. Abbreviations and acronyms have become common, as the speed of communication has become a priority. The presence of a national language in the digital space promotes its preservation and popularity among young people. The creation of online dictionaries, educational platforms, and native-language content helps make language part of daily digital life. At the same time, such convenience can make some people lazy, less inclined to self-development.

A common language unites people within one country and fosters a sense of community. It plays a particularly important role in multinational states, serving as a means of interaction among representatives of different cultures. Language connects people through shared ideas, images, and values. Through language, a nation presents itself to the world, expressing its history, culture, character, and worldview. For people living abroad, the native language is an important tool for maintaining ties with their historical homeland. It sustains national self-awareness and helps transmit cultural heritage to future generations. Language serves as a fundamental factor of national unity and cultural integrity. It enables individuals to feel part of a single people and inheritors of common traditions. When people speak the same language, they understand each other more easily, share a sense of belonging, and feel responsible for the fate of their culture. Language is a symbol of unity, forming a shared historical and cultural space, transmitting traditions and spiritual values, strengthening intergenerational bonds, and fostering solidarity. Thus, language becomes not only a means of communication but also a unifying force that sustains a nation's cohesion and vitality.

In today's world, where information flows know no borders and cultures actively interact and influence each other, the role of language in shaping national identity remains exceptional. The preservation and development of national languages are vital for state stability, cultural continuity, and spiritual unity. In the era of digitalization and global mobility, the support of linguistic culture, the development of educational programs, and the promotion of native-language media and online environments are of particular importance. Only a careful and conscious attitude toward language, recognizing its value and actively using it in daily life, can preserve national identity and ensure a people's full participation in the global cultural space while remaining true to their roots and historical memory.

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