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Orphoepic Norms and Principles of the French Language

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Abstract: This article studies scientific views on the orthoepic norms of the French language and gives a reaction to them. The concepts of plurisystem and grapheme are also given, as well as principles that allow us to describe the French spelling system.

Keywords: pronunciation norms, codification, phonetic system, semasiology, orthoepy, orthoepic norms, plurisystem, grapheme, logogram, morphogram, phonogram, principle, tendency, synchronous elements.

It is known that language is the most important means of communication in human society, created and served by society. "Language is a tool that forms a person who accepts mentality, traditions and customs and a unique way of understanding the world through language" [1].

The science of linguistics studies the social nature of language, its function, internal structure, classification, laws of use of certain languages, historical development, and this science belongs to philosophy, psychology, history and other social sciences.

In linguistics, phonetics, the phonetic system, is second only to the lexicon among the structural units of the language due to its variability. The reason for this is that the development of society and science and technology, the introduction of neologisms, and the laws of the internal development of the language quickly affect the phonetic construction of the language. In fact, as each language has its own characteristics, it can be said that the French language and its phonetics, various aspects of French orthographic norms are very different from other languages.

Linguistics has a number of branches and departments that study specific levels and units in each language, that is, semasiology - studies the meanings of language units, phonetics and phonology examine the sound construction of the language, lexicology and phraseology study the lexical material of the language researches, etc.

Language develops and changes in the process of speech activity, which, of course, leads to changes in literary norms and the emergence of new pronunciation options.

Orthopedics is a branch of linguistics that studies the norms of literary pronunciation, meaning a system of rules that ensure the same pronunciation in accordance with the pronunciation norms of a particular national language and their observance.

Orthoepic norms - studies the pronunciation norms of words, morphemes, sentences, as well as accents in them. The biggest problem with the French language is the "spelling and orthography mismatch".

Some scholars define orthography only as a science of pronunciation and emphasize accent standards in a separate discipline from accentology.

Speech norms regulate the use and implementation of linguistic tools in all types of communication. Lexical, grammatical and stylistic norms are part of the general norms

regulating written and oral speech. Special norms of written speech consist of spelling norms and punctuation marks.

Orthoepic norms of phonetics and phonology, which examine the sound structure of the language, including pronunciation, accent and intonation norms, are used only for oral speech. Compliance with spelling norms is an important part of speech culture, because their violation prevents the understanding of the content of the speech.

As for the orthoepic norm of the French language, it was created during the long development of the French language. It can be recognized that the national orthoepic norm of the French language has been systematized over several centuries and gradually improved to take the form of a complete, organized system of pronunciation recognized in France for its exemplary pronunciation.

Russian linguist V. Gak was one of the first to propose a systematic description of French spelling. The scientist identifies five principles that allow him to describe the French orthographic system:

- Phonetic-graphic principle: the basis of French spelling is that most of the signs used in phonetic writing belong to sounds;
- Morphological principle: any sign that indicates a morphological relationship between one word and another, so this principle also applies to lexical morphology, for example, the letter *p* in *tempo* and *temporal* is the same word which is explained by belonging to the series.
- Etymological principle: any letter that makes it possible to associate a word with another language in which it comes from. For example, in the word *tempo* - *time*, *e* (instead of *a*), *p* and *s* can be attributed to the etymological principle, among other things, because they are derived from the Latin *tempo*.
- Historical or traditional principle: any graphic character that can be explained by spelling delays in pronunciation. This principle underlies spellings that cannot be explained in the evolution of the French language, rather than in reference to another language. For example, the spelling "oi" is derived from the Old French diphthong, ending in [wa].
- Principle of Differentiation: Any graphic symbol that allows homophones to be differentiated. At this point, it is possible to say that this description of the French script can be based on several principles that can simultaneously explain the same graphic sign.

Inspired by the work of V. Gak, Nina Katach introduces the concept of "plurisystem". Katach shows that it is possible to describe French orthography in a systematic way while working with several systems at once. Nina Katach divides graphemes into four categories:

- morphograms: graphemes that allow recording endings, verbal inflections, prefixes, suffixes, etc. They correspond to the morphological principle defined by Gak.
- logograms or "numbers of words": very frequent words, often monosyllabic, which allow to distinguish homophones based on their graphic form and in writing.
- phonograms: graphemes that transcribe phonemes, most of them based on the phonetic-graphic principle defined by V. Gak in French.
- etymological and historical letters: graphemes cannot be explained by synchronic elements of the system, but nevertheless integrated into the language systems of the past. This would be the case with Greek or Latin letters found in common words such as theater or sculptor.

In every historical period, the norm is a complex phenomenon and is created under very difficult conditions. V. I. Chernyshev wrote about this: "In the language of any period, there is much that is incomprehensible to its contemporaries: it appeared, but the norm was not established, it was dying, but it did not disappear, it was coming back, it was not established" [4].

The complexity of French orthography is worth mentioning because it is important to emphasize that the difficulties in processing the written language faced by French writers are related to the need to adopt a metalinguistic perspective in order to find solutions to the morphosyntactic problems related to the morphology of the French language they emphasize.

The attitude of French speakers to the standard varies according to their attitude towards society as a whole.

Using Eric Landowski's model, sociolinguist Clara Morthamet identifies four positions in relation to the norm. Le snob, who overestimates the norm due to his desire to adhere to it, le dandy norm, who shows distance from the norm, le caméléon, who seeks to fit in without paying attention to the norm, and acceptance of his departure from the norm l'ours that does. The purist attitude is more consistent with the figure of the snob when he observes these different attitudes toward spelling among the students he focuses his work on. Unlike the chameleon, who aims to appear normal, the snob is the norm: he wants to acknowledge his possession of the norm, not like everyone else, but to protect his own social worth. This model, which makes sense in various spheres of social life, increases interest in French spelling because of the values associated with it.

Based on the above considerations, if we comment on the orthoepic norm of the French language, since the actual pronunciation is constantly changing, it is recognized in the linguistic community that it is necessary to reflect the actual pronunciation standard as closely as possible.

"The orthoepic norm of the French language does not stand still, it changes over time"[2]. However, "It is worth noting some trends in pronunciation standards that are relevant today, the most common ones being: 1) Double-toned vowels: back vowels become more open, resulting in the French *patte/pvte*, *tache/tvche*, *rat/* pronounces *ras*, *pale/pvle* almost the same; 2) In the system of consonants, there is a tendency to pronounce the words *million* [lj] et *milliard* [lj] as [mijx], [mijar], the consonant [g] is almost everywhere replaced by the group of consonants [nj]: *vignoble*, *montagnard*; 3) Voluntary connections and the tendency of *e cadus* to fall by themselves; 4) The rhythm is characterized by the equality of stressed syllables with a tendency to lengthen when approaching the last syllable"[3].

Analyzing the concept of linguistic, especially literary norms, we observed that L.V. Shcherba considered stability in it to be the cause of systemic and regulatory changes along with important variability. We agree with the scientist. Because, if we comment on the orthoepic norm of the French language, the orthoepic norm of the French language does not stand still, it is constantly changing over time. However, it is necessary to identify and take into account some trends of pronunciation standards that are relevant today.

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