

## A SURVEY OF LINGUISTIC RESEARCH ACTIVITIES IN THE MORDVIN A.S.S.R.

Linguistic research activities in the Mordvin A.S.S.R. in the past seven years may be said to have developed along two lines: dialectal research work and research in the field of the Mordvin literary languages. Alongside with the research workers of the older generation quite a number of young ones are engaged in solving different problems connected with Mordvin linguistics. As a result, a considerable number of candidate's theses have been defended and many new ones are being worked on. The past seven years have witnessed the appearance of numerous books and articles dealing with various problems and questions of the study of the Mordvin languages.

To begin with, the theses that have been defended should be mentioned. In 1959 V. D. Objedkin defended his thesis "Старо-турдаковский диалект эрзя-мордовского языка". The main points of this dissertation were made public in two of V. D. Objedkin's works: "Фонетика старо-турдаковского диалекта эрзя-мордовского языка" (— Записки МНИИ XVIII) and "Старо-турдаковский диалект эрзя-мордовского языка" (— Очерки I). The first work represents a short summary of the phonetical phenomena of the Erza-Mordvin dialect mentioned above. The author writes that this dialect belongs to the progressive assimilation type (according to D. V. Burchich's classification). The second work is a fairly detailed description of the same dialect. In addition to the phonetical study of the dialect the author adds a grammatical survey. Samples of oral dialect speech in transcription and provided with a Russian translation are appended to the work.

In 1959 D. V. Cygankin defended the following thesis: "Шугуровский диалект эрзя-мордовского языка" (— Очерки I). D. V. Cygankin pays a lot of attention to the description of the phonetical and morphological peculiarities of the Šugurovo dialect of the Erza-Mordvin language. The main task of the author is to describe the modern state of the Šugurovo dialect comparing it with the Erza-Mordvin liter-

ary language and, where necessary, with the Moksha-Mordvin language and other Erza dialects. He stresses the point that this dialect has quite a few peculiar features in common with the Moksha-Mordvin language. As far as morphology is concerned, the author points out the fact that divergencies in this field are much less numerous than in the field of phonetics.

In 1960 a thesis, "Дракинский диалект эрзя-мордовского языка" (— Очерки I), was defended by A. V. Jakuškin. The author provides a phonetical and morphological analysis of the Drakino dialect. This dialect is interesting first and foremost because of its history. It is the only dialect on the territory of the Mordvin A.S.S.R. which has preserved some of the phonetical peculiarities to be found in the past and which are no longer discernible in the Erza-Mordvin literary language. Secondly, it is of interest from the standpoint of the study and comprehension of the laws of dialectal interaction. It is a dialect which occupies an intermediate place between the Erza-Mordvin and the Moksha-Mordvin dialects.

F. P. Markov's thesis "Приалатырский диалект эрзя-мордовского языка" (— Очерки I) is a work conducted along the same lines. This is a systematic study of what is perhaps the most interesting of the Erza-Mordvin dialects. In addition to his main task of analyzing the most important phonetical and grammatical features of an Erza dialect — the author has found it of interest and importance to present the history of the Fenno-Ugric \* $\eta$  in this dialect as it appears in consequence of a comparison of language material from different Mordvin dialects, on the one hand, and other Fenno-Ugric languages, on the other. The work also deals with the phonemic distribution in the middle of a word that is characteristic of this dialect. The dialect reveals a very interesting feature in the formation of the definite noun declension. Wherever the formative  $n$  appears in the literary language, it is replaced by  $s$  before  $t$  — in the dialect

in question. There are a few peculiarities in the Objective Conjugation of the verb, as well as in the use of certain grammatical forms.

The thesis "Средне-вадский диалект мокша-мордовского языка" (— Очерки II) defended by S. Z. Devajev in 1965 contains a many-sided analysis of the dialect involved. This dialect of the Moksha-Mordvin language occupies the territory situated in the south-western part of the Mordvin A.S.S.R. It has many features in common with the south-eastern dialect. Unlike many Moksha dialects, it has no *ä* phoneme in its vocalic system, and unlike many Erza and Moksha dialects, it possesses the phonemes *š* and *ž*. In the middle of a word, the vowel and the consonant phonemes form a great variety of combinations. Thus, e.g., the consonants may sometimes form clusters of five or more components. The author pays much attention to the detailed analysis of the changes that consonant phonemes undergo in speech. Some attention has been paid to the stress relations in the dialect. The second part of the thesis deals with the morphological system of the dialect. All the nominal stems of the dialect are subdivided into three groups: (1) stems ending in a vowel which is preserved in all case-forms, (2) stems comprising nouns ending in a vowel which is lost in some of the case-forms, and (3) stems ending in a consonant. The work also contains a short vocabulary which includes words specific to this dialect only.

M. M. Davydov's thesis "Больше-игнатовский диалект эрзя-мордовского языка" (— Очерки II, defended in 1965) is a monographic study of the phonetical, morphological and lexical structure of the dialect. It consists of an introduction, a section of phonetics, morphology and an appendix (vocabulary and texts in transcription). In the introduction the author defines the territory where the dialect is spoken, i. e. the north-eastern part of the Mordvin A.S.S.R. Besides the phonemic composition of the dialect, he gives a detailed analysis of the use of individual phonemes in different positions. In the sphere of morphology he points out an interesting feature: agreement of an adjec-

ive with its headword in number. There are interesting points in the system of the personal possessive suffixes. In the literary language there are eight such suffixes, while in the dialect under discussion there are ten. Other interesting features may be found in the formation of the conditional and the subjunctive moods.

In 1964 a post-graduate student, M. T. Bibin, published a work bearing the title "Говоры наскафтымской мордвы" (— Ученые записки Морд. ГУ XLIII). This work was defended as a candidate's thesis in 1966. In the introduction the author points out the fact that as a result of close connections with and the influence of the Erza population the greater part of the Moksha inhabitants of the area studied (Naskaftym, Arapino, Armijevo, Staryj Mačim, Novyj Mačim, Novaja Jaksarka) were assimilated by the Erza population. As a result, there arose a variant of the Erza language which contains a great number of elements of the Moksha language in its phonetical and grammatical systems.

Both in the phonetical and the grammatical parts of the work the author tries to sort out the Erza and the Moksha linguistic elements comparing the data of different dialects and those of both literary languages.

In 1963 V. D. Objedkin published a study of "Говор села Мордовское Давыдово бывшего Кочкуровского района Мордовской АССР" (— Очерки II). The author points out the fact that this dialect (unlike many other Erza-Mordvin dialects and the Erza-Mordvin literary language) has *ä* in its phonetical system. He pays special attention to the characteristics and the use of the phonemes in the dialect. The author also shows that although its morphological system coincides, on the whole, with that of the literary language, the dialect has a series of peculiarities which can be found only here and nowhere else. The essay is also provided with a short appendix containing samples of oral speech in transcription.

In the volume mentioned above V. D. Objedkin published a study of "Говоры, имеющие общность со старо-гурдаковским диалектом эрзя-мордовского языка". This is a phonetical and morphological study of the Ičalki, Kendja and Lobaski dialects

that have more-or-less distinct features in common with the Saryje Turdaki dialect which may be considered as belonging to the progressive assimilation type. This work is intended to be the beginning of the regular study of the boundaries of the Saryje Turdaki dialect not only on the territory of the Mordvin A.S.S.R., but also beyond this territory.

D. V. Cygankin has published an article entitled "Об особенностях говора села Мокшалай" (— Очерки II). This is a short survey of the phonetical and morphological features of the Mokšalei dialect.

In "Очерки II" we find D. V. Cygankin's article "Об одной фонетической особенности в некоторых говорах Присурья". The author writes that in a number of these dialects there exists an interesting phonetical peculiarity: the appearance of a labialized vowel instead of the old vowel *u* before the labial *v*, *f* and *m* if the preceding syllable of the same word contains a front vowel.

In the same volume D. V. Cygankin published one more article "Об одном говоре Присурья бывшего Больше-Березниковского района Мордовской АССР". This is a historical, phonetical and morphological sketch of a dialect that possesses many interesting features.

In Volume II of "Очерки" there is an article written by A. P. Feoktistov "Мордовские языки и диалекты в историко-этнографической литературе XVII—XVIII вв.". This article contains very interesting language material and data on the Mordvinians.

In Volume III of "Очерки" we find: D. V. Cygankin's "Слово в присурских говорах эрзя-мордовского языка". In this article the author points out the fact that the vocabulary of the Moksha and Erza dialects has not been sufficiently thoroughly investigated, and he intends his article to be a contribution to the study of the vocabulary of the area mentioned. D. V. Cygankin's "Тексты, собранные и записанные в присурских говорах эрзя-мордовского языка" contains transcribed texts provided with translations into Russian. V. D. Objedkin's "Сабаевско-качелаевский говор эрзя-мордовского языка" is a short sketch revealing the most important features of the dialect. There is a short

appendix of samples of oral speech in transcription. In the same volume V. D. Objedkin published a few "Старинные мордовские сказки, собранные в с. Старые Турдаки Рузаевского района Мордовской АССР". These texts are also in transcription and provided with translations into Russian. O. I. Čudajeva's "Старошпеневский говор мокша-мордовского языка" is a short sketch singling out the most salient features of the dialect. It is provided with a few texts in transcription and Russian translations. In his "Границы распространения дракинского диалекта эрзя-мордовского языка в пределах Мордовской АССР" A. V. Jakuškin enumerates the villages in which the dialect is spoken. He gives a short phonetical analysis of the Drakino and the Sokša variants of the dialect, and a few samples of oral speech in transcription provided with a translation into Russian. Finally, in the same volume, F. P. Markov gives many specimens in different Erza-Mordvin dialects: "Образцы связной речи и тексты на приалатырском диалекте эрзя-мордовского диалекта", "Образцы речи на говоре с. Хлыстовки (теперь Отрадное) Чамзинского района Мордовской АССР", and "Образцы речи говора села Большое Маресево Чамзинского района Мордовской АССР". They are in transcription and supplied with Russian translations.

M. N. Koljadenkov has published a book "Структура простого предложения в мордовских языках" (Saransk 1959), which is the result of many years of research in the field of Mordvin syntax (the structure of the sentence, its subject-object relations, etc.). In this vast monographic study, for the first time in the history of the syntactical study of the Mordvin languages, M. N. Koljadenkov has elaborated the problem of word-combinations, that of the main parts of the sentence, etc. All this has been done from the point of view of the specific features of the structure of the Mordvin sentence. M. N. Koljadenkov's monograph consists of an introduction, in which he states his views on the problems under discussion. This is followed by a definition of Mordvin word-combinations, a discussion of their structure, meanings and forms. The author regards it as self-evident that we cannot

do any research work in the field of Mordvin syntax unless we have first studied the structural peculiarities, forms and meanings of word-combinations in the Mordvin sentence. M. N. Koljadenkov also gives a definition of the sentence from the purely Mordvin point of view. Chapter I of the book is devoted to the study of the sentence. It is subdivided into several parts, each of which deals with points pertaining to particular questions. Chapter II of the book deals with the ways of expressing the predicate, the subject and the direct object. Quite new and original light is thrown on various questions of Mordvin syntax in the book. The author has tried to treat different aspects of Mordvin syntax without being influenced by non-Fenno-Ugric grammar.

One should also mention the work of A. P. Feoktistov devoted to the study of the possessive category in the Mordvin languages: "Категория притяжательности в мордовских языках" (Saransk 1963). This work is the first attempt to give a monographical study of the possessive category of the two closely related languages — Moksha and Erza. The writer of the book has pursued the following aims in his work: (1) to analyze the system of the personal possessive suffixes of the noun; (2) to determine their meanings and the laws of the use of the personal possessive forms; (3) to determine the ways of expressing possessive relationship. The author's work is based on the works of Mordvin Soviet writers, folklore texts recorded by A. Šachmatov, H. Paasonen, E. Levy and A. Klemm, folklore studies published by the Mordvin Research Institute, as well as the works of Russian and foreign writers translated into the Mordvin languages. The book also contains dialectological material collected by the writer himself at different periods on the territory where the Mordvin languages are spoken.

The Mordvin Language, Literature, History and Economics Research Institute published "Грамматика мордовских (мокшанского и эрзянского) языков I. Фонетика и морфология" (Saransk 1962). Although this book has some drawbacks and shortcomings it may be considered quite an event in

Mordvin philology. After M. J. Jevsevjev's "Основы мордовской грамматики" (Moscow 1929) this is the most complete Mordvin grammar that has ever appeared. It was mainly written by a team of Mordvin research-workers (R. A. Zavodova, A. K. Imjarekov, M. N. Koljadenkov, F. P. Markov, N. F. Cyganov, O. I. Cudajeva and D. V. Bubrich). For the first time in the course of many decades of research work in the field of the Mordvin languages a more or less complete Mordvin grammar has appeared treating Mordvin phenomena from a Mordvin standpoint.

Besides monographical works of considerable volume, many a new article has appeared lately. They deal with different questions of the Mordvin literary languages.

Much work is being done at present both by members of the staff of the Mordvin Language, Literature, History and Economics Research Institute, the Mordvin State University and the Mordvin Teachers' Training College and post-graduate students working at these institutions. For the sake of convenience we shall take each establishment separately.

The members of the Language Sector of the Mordvin Language, Literature, History and Economics Research Institute T. M. Tichonova is working at a thesis on the case-forms of the direct object in the Mordvin languages; V. M. Tjurkina is working on a thesis about substantive government in the Mordvin languages; R. V. Babuškina has just finished her thesis on the Temjaševo dialect of the Moksha language which is going to be published in "Очерки IV" (now in print); R. S. Sirmankina is about to finish her thesis on Mordvin phraseology with a phraseological dictionary appended to it.

The post-graduate students of the Institute have also been working hard at their candidate theses. I. S. Buzakov is finishing his thesis on conjunctions and conjunctive words in the Mordvin languages; T. M. Sejanova is completing a thesis devoted to the development of the vocabulary in the Modern Erza language; M. A. Kelin is about to finish a thesis on the problem of the compound word in the Mordvin language; M. P. Troščeva is also finishing her thesis on adverbs in the

Mordvin languages; D. T. Nadjkin is collecting material for his thesis on the Sergač dialect of Mordvinian; and finally, M. Z. Ilkinova, is collecting material for a thesis on detachment as a means of expressing syntactical relations.

The members of the Mordvin Languages Chair of the Mordvin State University are carrying on research work in the following fields. N. F. Cyganov is preparing to write a doctor's dissertation on the classification of Mordvin dialects; V. D. Objedkin is collecting material for his doctor's dissertation on Mordvin dialects in the Uljanovsk Region; P. G. Matjuškin is working at his candidate's thesis on the objective system of the Mordvin verb; P. S. Kudajev is about to finish his thesis on postpositions in the Mordvin languages; and F. P. Markov is working on a monograph devoted to the study of the Mordvin infinitives.

N. S. Aduškina, a post-graduate student of the university, is working on a thesis entitled "The Language of the Works of the Erza Writers of the 1920's". Another post-graduate, M. D. Imajkina, is writing a thesis on adverbial onomatopoeic words in the Mordvin languages.

At the Mordvin Teachers' Training College D. V. Cygankin is working on a monograph devoted to the development of the Mordvin literary languages in the Soviet period. At the same time he is working at an essay on the Mordvin dialects of the

Sura area. Not long ago he finished his Mordvin dialect vocabulary notes, which is now in print (Очерки IV). S. Z. Devajev has completed his phonetics of the Moksha-Mordvin literary language. The manuscript is ready for print. The same author wrote an article on the phonological aspect of the Moksha dialects, which is going to be printed in "Очерки IV". T. I. Lomakina is about to publish an article entitled "Phonetics of the Gorodišče Dialect of the Moksha-Mordvin Language" (— Очерки IV), which will be part of her thesis bearing the same title. V. F. Nazvanova is working at a thesis on attributive word-combinations in the Mordvin languages.

The Language Sector of the Mordvin Language, Literature, History and Economics Research Institute has also started work on a large general dictionary of the Mordvin languages. This dictionary will eventually consist of five volumes and is intended for linguists in general and Fenno-Ugric research workers, Mordvin writers, school-teachers and a broader circle of readers who wish to deepen their knowledge of the Mordvin vocabulary. This great work will likewise serve as a monument of the lexical wealth of Mordvin speech. The aim of this dictionary is to display all the lexical wealth of both Moksha and Erza Mordvin. It will include words from different dialects which are not to be found in the literary languages as well as archaic words no matter what source they come from.

#### ABBREVIATIONS

**Очерки I, II, III** — Очерки мордовских диалектов I, Саранск 1961; II, Саранск 1963; III, Саранск 1963; **Записки МНИИ XVIII** — Записки Мордовского научно-исследовательского института языка, ли-

тературы, истории и экономики XVIII, Саранск 1958; **Ученые записки Морд. ГУ XLIII** — Ученые записки Мордовского государственного университета XLIII, Саранск 1964.

F. P. MARKOV (Saransk)