

## Artículo de investigación

**Socio-demographic parameters and speech behavior of russian germans in foreign-language environment (as exemplified by the ethnic german minority in the Kirov region)**

Социально-демографические параметры и речевое поведение российских немцев в иноязычной среде (на примере немецкого этнического меньшинства Кировской области)

Parámetros sociodemográficos y comportamiento del habla de los alemanes rusos en un entorno de idioma extranjero (por ejemplo, la minoría étnica alemana de la región de Kirov)

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**Abstract**

Over the past 20 years, academic interest in the relationship between language and environment has significantly increased due to mounting concern about national minorities living in the territory of Russia and the CIS. As a result, numerous studies have been conducted on their history, culture and language. Linguistic diversity and extinction of some languages became the research subject of numerous scientific works at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries. The fate of languages, their current state and future is top priority for humankind since language is a system of knowledge about the world that embodies the global philosophy in its linguistic structure and grammatical rules. In this sense, language is the world itself and its extinction will cause irreparable damage to people and their surrounding environment. The article aims to present the results of studying the speech behavior of the German ethnic minority living in the Kirov Region. The conducted research reflects the specific features manifested in foreign-language environment under the influence of social and demographic factors. The authors of the article use the following methods: field methods for collecting linguistic materials;

**Аннотация**

За последние 20 лет, произошел всплеск академического интереса к проблеме взаимосвязи языка и окружающей среды, вызванный большой озабоченностью ученых судьбой национальных меньшинств в России и СНГ. Это вызвало рост количества исследований их истории, культуры, языка. Изучение взаимоотношений между лингвистическим многообразием, отмиранием и исчезновением языков становится темой многочисленных работ на рубеже XX–XXI вв. Судьба языков, их сегодняшнее бытование и будущее – вот первоочередная задача для человечества, так как язык – это философия мира, это запечатленная в его лингвистической структуре, в его правилах система знаний о мире. В этом смысле язык – это и есть сам мир, гибель которого будет невосполнимой утратой как для самого человека, так и для окружающего его мира. Целью данной статьи является представление результатов исследования речевого поведения немецкого этнического меньшинства Кировской области, в котором отражаются особенности, проявляющиеся под влиянием социально-

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the method of continuous recording of dialect materials with the subsequent transcription of texts; the method of sociolinguistic questionnaire and interviewing, etc. While using these methods for analyzing the above-mentioned materials, the authors ensured a high degree of objectivity and reliability. According to their studies, the distribution of German and Russian among ethnic Germans living in the Kirov Region, as well as the choice of their native language, is determined by various extralinguistic factors, in particular, social and demographic: age, education, marital status and gender. The authors believe that this article will be of interest to scholars studying island German dialects.

**Keywords:** Bilingual Germans, speech behavior, age, education, marital status, gender differences.

демографических факторов в условиях иноязычного окружения. В работе используются следующие методы: полевые методы при сборе лингвистического материала; метод сплошной фиксации диалектологического материала с последующим транскрибированием текстов; метод социолингвистического анкетирования и интервьюирования анкетированных и др. Привлечение данных методов к анализу материала позволяет рассмотреть обнаруженные явления с большой степенью объективности и достоверности. Как показывают наши исследования, распределение сфер употребления немецкого и русского языков среди этнических немцев Кировской области, а также выбор языка в качестве родного определяется различными экстралингвистическими факторами, в частности, социально-демографическими: возрастом, образованием, семейным положением, гендерной принадлежностью информантов. Считаем, что данная статья будет интересна ученым, занимающимся проблемами немецкой островной диалектологии.

**Ключевые слова:** немцы-билингвы, речевое поведение, возраст, образование, семейное положение, гендерные различия.

## Resumen

En los últimos 20 años, el interés académico en la relación entre el idioma y el medio ambiente ha aumentado significativamente debido a la creciente preocupación por las minorías nacionales que viven en el territorio de Rusia y la CEI. Como resultado, se han realizado numerosos estudios sobre su historia, cultura e idioma. La diversidad lingüística y la extinción de algunos idiomas se convirtieron en el tema de investigación de numerosos trabajos científicos a finales de los siglos XX y XXI. El destino de los idiomas, su estado actual y futuro es la máxima prioridad para la humanidad, ya que el lenguaje es un sistema de conocimiento sobre el mundo que incorpora la filosofía global en su estructura lingüística y sus reglas gramaticales. En este sentido, el lenguaje es el mundo mismo y su extinción causará daños irreparables a las personas y a su entorno. El artículo tiene como objetivo presentar los resultados del estudio del comportamiento del habla de la minoría étnica alemana que vive en la región de Kirov. La investigación realizada refleja las características específicas manifestadas en el entorno de lenguas extranjeras bajo la influencia de factores sociales y demográficos. Los autores del artículo utilizan los siguientes métodos: métodos de campo para recopilar materiales lingüísticos; el método de grabación continua de materiales de dialecto con la posterior transcripción de textos; el método de cuestionario sociolingüístico y entrevistas, etc. Al usar estos métodos para analizar los materiales mencionados anteriormente, los autores aseguraron un alto grado de objetividad y confiabilidad. Según sus estudios, la distribución del alemán y el ruso entre los alemanes étnicos que viven en la región de Kirov, así como la elección de su idioma nativo, está determinada por varios factores extralingüísticos, en particular, sociales y demográficos: edad, educación, estado civil, y género. Los autores creen que este artículo será de interés para los estudiosos que estudian los dialectos alemanes de la isla.

**Palabras clave:** Alemanes bilingües, comportamiento del habla, edad, educación, estado civil, diferencias de género.

## Introduction

The history, culture and language of Russian Germans have long been the subject of close attention to Russian and foreign scholars. Since the study of dialects has its long traditions in Russia the inhabitants of language islands and their dialects have always been in scientific focus.

Native speakers of different German dialects live at closed "language islands" that have survived to this day. Their ancestors migrated to Russia from Germany between the second half of the 18th and the early 19th centuries and their dialects are mostly described. However, there are also Russian German settlements that are understudied or not studied at all. The list of insufficiently explored settlements includes the former deportation villages of Sozimsky and Chernigovsky located in the Verkhnekamsky District of the Kirov Region. The German dialects of the above-mentioned settlements represent two main dialectal areas: Low German and High German that acquired a wide range of specific phonetic, morphological, syntactic and lexical features due to their separation from the main ethnic language. At the same time, their structure is still influenced by foreign-language environment (the Russian language), which causes specific changes and intensifies processes of alignment and unification.

We pay particular attention to the study of socio-demographic parameters that affect the speech behavior of the Russian Germans living in the Kirov Region surrounded by foreign languages and dialects. The relevance and novelty of this research conducted in the Kirov Region is determined by the general linguistic, historical-linguistic and sociolinguistic significance of island dialects associated with studying the specific development and functioning of dialects (languages) in a different dialect, foreign-language and foreign-national environment, i.e. a situation when some ethnic groups live separately from the main linguistic population.

## Methods

While studying the socio-demographic parameters and speech behavior of the Russian Germans living in the Kirov Region, we used the following methods: field methods for collecting linguistic materials; the auditory analysis of speech in the conditions of natural communication and speech recorded on magnetic and digital media; the method of continuous recording of dialectological materials with the

subsequent transcription of texts; the method of sociolinguistic questioning and interviewing of respondents; the method of socially differentiated analysis of the linguistic material under study, including the observation of the Russian-German languages in different communication situations. Due to these methods, we have managed to consider the above-mentioned phenomena in their entirety with a high degree of objectivity and reliability.

The article is based on the following linguistic material obtained in the course of field research: the decrypted phonetic records of respondents living in the villages of Sozimsky and Chernigovsky of the Kirov Region who have preserved and still use their native dialects (idiolects) in everyday life. The total number of speakers is 71.

## Research description

The concept of "speech behavior" is usually considered in the framework of speech activity and is defined as the process of choosing the best option for constructing a socially correct expression in the conditions determined by a certain communication situation, emotions, actions and deeds (Schweitzer, 1978; Leontev, 2003; Vinokur, 2005). In this article, we define the speech behavior of the Russian Germans as the behavior determined by speech activity that reflects the features manifested under the influence of internal and external factors of the foreign-language environment.

Internal factors can be represented as proper linguistic, while external factors belong to extralinguistic. In addition, extralinguistic factors are divided into 1) socio-demographic factors (socio-historical, socio-economic, geographical conditions, the absence or presence of cross marriages, demographic parameters (gender, age), nationality, cultural factor (education level), living environment, occupation, participation in public life); 2) variable factors (theme, situation, relations between communicants, their social status). One should keep in mind that not all speech actions and language tools can be explained regardless of numerous extralinguistic factors since language can be used in an expressive manner and some moments can be interpreted only due to individual psychological motivation or should be considered as errors, involuntary deviations and violations of rules (Schweitzer, 1978, p. 162). Thus, extralinguistic factors can reveal and

explain the principles of speech behavior, processes of linguistic interaction and mutual influence in the situation of bilingualism. The study and consideration of these factors for analyzing the bilingual's speech behavior provide an objective basis for the proper assessment of linguistic phenomena.

### **1. Socio-demographic parameters: age and education**

As mentioned above, the most significant socio-demographic factors that influence the bilingual's speech behavior are age and education. The linguistic material collected in the Kirov Region demonstrates that the scope of functions of the German language differs among the older, middle-aged and younger generation.

As a result, age correlates with different stages of bilingualism. Each age group of the Russian Germans living in the Kirov Region has their own typical features formed during different historic periods. Their use of language systems should be considered with due regard to the crucial historical events of a certain time that greatly influenced the speech behavior of ethnic Germans and linguistic characteristics common to different age groups. Therefore, we can distinguish the linguistic behavior of a certain generation. A similar opinion is shared by P. Hilkes, V.A. Manykin and L.I. Moskalyuk (Hilkes, 1989; Manykin, 1992, Moskalyuk, 2000).

It should be noted that the older generation born before 1933 (the first age subgroup consists of 21 respondents) and before 1956 (the second age subgroup includes 10 respondents) demonstrated the solid knowledge of their native language. When collecting the dialect material in question, we consciously focused on the seniors as they had the highest level of language competence. After analyzing the personal data obtained, we revealed that the Russian Germans from the first subgroup grew up in a more or less homogeneous (German) ethnic environment and studied at national school where all subjects were taught in German. Representatives of the first age subgroup (older generation) came from the Ukrainian (17 people) and Volga (4 people) ethnic settlements. All the above-mentioned areas of compact German settlement had the status of national regions before World War II (except for the Volga German Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic that had maintained its status until August 1941); therefore, the German language was used in almost all spheres of everyday life, including national schools where

all the disciplines were taught in German (Baykova, 2011). The older generation of the Russian Germans noted that they attended German-speaking schools. They had been studying there from one to eight years depending on their age: the younger the respondents are, the less time they studied at national schools. Some representatives of the first age subgroup also attended Ukrainian-speaking schools (5 people – 16%).

The rapid development of the German press in the 1920-1930s both in the Volga and the Black Sea regions where Germans lived, publicly available mass-market fiction in German, national technical colleges and universities in addition to primary and secondary national schools ensured the functioning of German in different spheres of the economic and social life of German settlements, as well as in all language varieties (from local dialects to the literary language). The German generation that grew up in such national "communities" identified themselves with the German nation and preserved the traditions, way of life and culture of their historical homeland. The literary German language was studied at elementary school and only the oldest representatives of the first age subgroup could freely speak it later. Those who learned to write using Latin letters in German-speaking elementary schools had lost this ability after graduation but have preserved some reading skills to this day. The survey has demonstrated that 36.6% of the respondents regularly read the Bible and other spiritual literature in German. In this case, the literary German language is the language of their childhood, school years, parents and national culture.

The second age subgroup comprises respondents born between 1934 and 1956. It was the most tragic period for the Russian Germans, including the years of repression that coincided with the outbreak of World War II and led to the mass deportation of Germans from the European part of the former USSR to the northern and eastern areas in 1941. The year of 1955 was marked by the partial rehabilitation of the German population, the abolition of special commandants supervising the Germans living in deportation villages and the reunification of families separated during the years of repression after the ban on movement through the territory of the former USSR had been lifted. Only the oldest representatives of this generation were born in the pre-war settlements located along the Volga River, in Ukraine or southern Russia. Seven respondents of the second age subgroup called Ukraine their homeland and three respondents

regarded the Volga region as their birth-place. In terms of education, the Germans from this subgroup studied in general Russian-speaking schools where German was taught as a foreign or non-native language, which was confirmed by 10 respondents. The youngest representatives of the subgroup under consideration attended German schools in their native villages for a year or two and later were transferred to Russian-speaking schools in deportation villages where German was taught as a foreign language (7 respondents – 22.5%).

It should be noted that representatives of the second age subgroup whose childhood coincided with the war did not master the written German language at all since their common level of education was elementary Russian-speaking school. It means that they wrote in German using Cyrillic letters, read only in Russian or could not read at all. All representatives of this generation were able to graduate from secondary school and mastered German as a foreign language.

This subgroup experienced a gap between the roles of their native German language in family and at school. All respondents of this age subgroup confirmed that they had learned one of the German dialects as children due to their relatives. As students, they studied German only as a foreign language.

Speakers from the older age group have different levels of dialectal competence. It is conditioned by the place and conditions of learning the German language, as well as the possibility of using their dialect in the intrafamily sphere of communication. All representatives of the first age subgroup have relatively large vocabulary, possess the knowledge of phonological and grammatical dialect systems and use them adequately, which cannot be said about the second subgroup. The speech of the second age subgroup can violate some grammatical rules and is characterized by poor vocabulary. However, representatives of the older generation (the first and second subgroups) more often than not lack active vocabulary and, as a result, switch to Russian. The main distinguishing feature of the speech behavior common to the older generation is the fact that they use the German language in the form of a dialect.

The middle-aged (born between 1956 and 1990 – 20 people) and younger (born after 1990 – 20 people) respondents understand German but in most cases refuse to speak it because they cannot find the right word or cannot reproduce it. Representatives of the middle-aged group

practically do not speak the German language since they do not consider it necessary. Most of them learn the language because they intend to leave for Germany and only a few respondents study or speak the language to communicate with the older generation. Representatives of the younger generation can only speak Russian (even at home) since they have already developed the Russian monolingualism. They consider German as the language of their parents and grandparents or a school discipline but rarely as their mother tongue (according to the latest research). In this case, the German language plays a secondary role since the Russian Germans do not need to use it in their speech. Thus, the German language and all its dialect forms are supplanted not only from everyday use but also from intrafamily communication. As the questionnaire shows, the Russian language has become a form of communication necessary for achieving mutual understanding. While talking about modern life, technology or politics, the respondents use the Russian language, especially if they delve into any chosen topic. As a result, the German dialect that had been the leading linguistic form of communication for the older generation loses its position. The language division between different generations lies at the junction of the older and middle-aged groups.

Thus, we can distinguish between two conditions developing a high level of language competence: mastering the mother tongue in the family from one's birth and its further study at school. These conditions determine the active knowledge of the German language by the older generation. The middle-aged generation had the opportunity to learn German in family but could no longer study it as their native language at school. The younger generation is completely deprived of the opportunity to learn German both in their family and at school. They do not speak German with their relatives and study English at school.

## **2. Socio-demographic parameters: marital status**

Another significant socio-demographic factor is one's marriage or marital status since the nature of marriage often determines speech behavior in family. For instance, ethnically "pure" marriages are common to the older age group using German dialects. We interviewed 31 respondents in the older age group (100%): there was 1 German-Tatar couple (3.2%), 5 German-Ukrainian couples (16.1%), 4 German-Russian couples (12.9%), the remaining marriages stood for 67.8%. Family situations are as follows: 1) both spouses speak the same German dialect or speak

dialects that differ little from each other (17 families – 80.9%); 2) both spouses speak the same German dialect but each has their own variation, which is very different from the other, so the speakers have a difficulty understanding each other (4 families – 19.1%); 3) one of the spouses speaks some German dialect, the other is Russian-, Tatar- or Ukrainian-speaking, i.e. does not speak the above-mentioned German dialect (10 families – 32%). The older generation of the Russian Germans can speak some German dialect with each other but communicate with their children using the Russian language. In the second and third situations, the Russian language becomes a unified means of communication within one family.

We should note that the number of cross marriages in the middle-aged and younger age groups increased in comparison with the questionnaire filled by the older generation. While the Russian Germans have the opportunity to preserve the language, traditions and customs of their ancestors in ethnically "pure" marriages, spouses in cross marriages are "restricted" to use the German language and everything connected with it. Due to the lack of knowledge of the German language, Russian husbands or wives do not welcome family communication in German. Therefore, the respondents cannot preserve and maintain their knowledge of German, traditions and customs of their ethnic culture. The growth of cross marriages decreases connections of the middle-aged and younger age groups with the German language and forces it out of their family life. Based on questionnaires and interviews, we can conclude that cross marriages hinder the preservation of German traditions and norms. The Russian Germans in cross marriages are not able to use German at the intrafamily level, they can communicate in German only with their German-speaking friends, relatives or neighbors.

### **3. Socio-demographic parameters: gender differences**

Besides sociolinguistic studies, this article mentions some gender-related concepts because, first, they complement socio-demographic factors that affect the speech behavior of the Russian Germans living in the Kirov Region and, second, they correlate with general gender-related studies conducted by Russian (Kirilina, 1999, 2003; Potapov, 1997; Sineokova, 2006; Kitaigorodskaya, 1993) and foreign scholars (Fishman, 1978, pp. 397-406; Hartman, 1976; Cameron, 1992; Kramarae, 1981; Eckert, 1992, pp. 461- 490).

Supporting A.V. Kirilina's position, we consider the concept of gender as "an element of the modern scientific 'person' model reflecting the sociocultural aspects of gender expressed by language" (Kirilina, 1999, p. 28; Gritsenko, 2005).

The gender-related factor is of great importance for the older generation. It should be noted that senior men and women are bilingual, which is conditioned by the great social activity of this generation (work in the so-called "labor army"). At the same time, people of this age group have retained the native dialects that they use in everyday life.

The article examines the influence of gender on the linguistic competence of the older generation of the Russian Germans living in the Kirov Region as exemplified by the analyzed stories of 11 respondents – the Russian Germans of the first older subgroup (6 women and 5 men aged between 70 and 95 years) on the topic "The deportation of the Volga and Ukrainian Germans to the Kirov Region".

To determine differences in the speech behavior of men and women, we used the method of direct observation, the method of recording speech on a digital medium and the method of meaningful, functional and statistical analysis of the speech of men and women.

While studying the speech of the Germans living in the Kirov Region, we have revealed that women are much better at speaking their native German language. In this case, females speak the above-mentioned dialect as the language of their ancestors, culture and traditions, as well as family communication. The current study shows that only a few male respondents speak their native dialect. Their low language competence is conditioned by weaker communication activity. On the contrary, women easily make contact, enter a conversation and, as many scholars note (Kirilina, 1999, p. 28), make much of communication. Unlike women, men take their speech partner and the topic of communication much more seriously. Women can quickly adapt to different communication conditions and talk freely, while men are more constrained in choosing a language variety and are sceptical of partners involved in a communication act (cf. Baykova, 2008).

Comparing monologues produced by female and male respondents, we should note that women talk in detail and in an emotional manner about their work in the labor army and willingly quote



their parents. For example, *ejft vo:r viər n kəlxos də vo:r iç tsvəi ja:r on zəkəs mō: on dən hām zə' ons hiərhe:r jəbroxt, vo:r iç n kəlxos, axt ja:r. daməls vo:r s bəsə', viə jəts. frəilijə'. Viər vo:r jɪŋk, ничего не болело, a' jəts zən viər olt jə' vort. fɪ:l ləit hām n volt jə'arbəit. no', ds vo:r... olə' khō:t niç n volt arbəit. vəlç hām jə'fikt n kəlxos, vəlç zən n volt jə'gaŋ. in vəntr zən viər oux n volt jə'vəəsə' fon kəlxos hām viər bāim oux jə'zə:ç. Jəts is fon n volt bəsə'. Jəts zən nui maʃi:n. friər vo:r zə'... Viər hām niç jə'vost, viə mus mən zə:ça' ds holts. no', oləs viəd jə'lēānt. iç ha: (b) воbше niç jə'vost, viə mus mən holts zə:ça'. mainə' tā:tə' vo:r n səbɪr frɪjkt n omsk, i:r mā: vo:r kolək, on hām viər imr gə'fra:x: "non, tā:tə' i:də', viə ha: du' ən bəum g(ə)zə:ç, ds ɛ:r is niç tsrukə'fal".*

However, male respondents express their thoughts with restraint and do not quote others' words. For example, *iç kām: mər ol(ə)s fərstələ'. ɛs kām: frlɑ:s "Wysselenije nemzew Powolshja". Ukas wyshel o wyszellenii. Nu, tam bylo napissano... w swjasi s tem, chto obnarusheny tyschi touzē, touzē, ʃpionə', diʋersantə'... əntouzēnoinhundrəinonfərtsəç vɪr zən ən krasnojarsk gəkām: on əntouzēnoinhundrtsvəionfərtsəç vɪr zən ən kirov həkām: hiər vurdə' vɪr bəvaxt, dort vo:r də' kəməndatur, vɪr mus gɛ:n on zəç apməlda'.*

According to many scholars (Zemskaya et al., 1993), women producing an utterance can often switch to a topic that is not related to the situation in question. For example, while talking about the labor army and the fate of their loved ones, they recall how their family lived before the war in Ukraine: *vər vourda' frɪjɪk ən sujevka ən tsvəonfərtsək jo:r... vər hām n volt jə'arbəit. vər mus zə:ça' ds holts. də' mudr ha:t krāk bənə'...mənə'mama', mən papa' vo:r goudə' mē:ʃə'... vər ləf gōs goud... tə'ɛsa', do'ha:t vər ols... no' gē: vər of n bəzəp, frkofə' botə'ən ɛər. A quick transition from one topic to another is not typical of men; they logically present events of the war years without being distracted by other topics.*

It should be noted that female respondents mostly use the pronoun *wir/мы* (we) in statements on the topic "The deportation of the Volga and Ukrainian Germans to the Kirov Region". In this case, they refer not only to themselves but also to their family, friends and relatives: *zo: vo:r də' za:xə'. no', dən ejft ən vəntr hām viə ən bislə'gəlt gəhab, kontə' viə ziç ənkoufə' on ɛn tswaetə' vəntr hām viə zə'ghungərt. maen krosfa:tr ɛs kɪtourba'. ən krosfa:trs saen pru:dr, vi' iç zaxtə', ɛr ɛs kɪtourba'. diə mama vor ox*

*krank gəvordə'. ən in friə' hat mɛç ən də' trudarmija gənoma', vor iç zəçtsə'ja:r olt. wot, kām: hirhə'of dn sawod, wot, kām: hierher auf den sawod, wot, dr sawod, da'vor jənə'tsaet wojennyj sawod. The stories told by female respondents often utilize the plural form of the first person: un di' tsvɛ' grouəsə' jɪŋs, zi' va:r fon ɛlf un drɛtsə', di' zoltə' fa:ra' mət dm fa:tə'. un dā: hām zə' mɛç, hām zə' uns glasa'. o:br ən drəondrəsəç kām: zə', hām zə' in gnoma' un əiŋstɛk. un ɛa hat gzɛsa' bs mɛarts mō:nət n di' tɪurma. un dā: kām:(m) ɛa n mɛarts tso' houzə'. un ɛa hat glɛ:bt, bɪs ɛa n ju:nɪ' is gɪtoubə, zən vi' olɛn jəbli:bə'. ons ha' mē: os n kəlxos rosgəʃmɪsə'. un dən hām zə' uns, viə' kō:t arbəit n kəlxos jənoma'. nu' tut hām vi' də' frōūʃaft grou. ozə' fa:tə' hat fuftsə' kɪndə'. un di' frōūʃaft, ds hat gholfə'. potom, etot, dr ɛlst bruədr, ozə' fa:tə' va:r koznɛts un ɛa hat di' kɪndr olə' glɛr(n)t koznɛtsom, dr ɛlst bru:dr, ɛa kō:t arbəit fon.*

The monologues of male respondents are mostly based on the singular form of the first person. For instance, their stories revolve only around themselves and their work during the war years: *iç ha:b g(ə)arbəit. hiər vo:r ən zimovkə'. vɪ:rtsə' kə'lo metr. də' ha:b iç də' bo:dn gva:ʃa', on ha:b holts g(ə)ha:k. on, nu' ds vo:r di' obcheshitə', vo:r do:rt di' lait. də' ha:b iç g(ə)arbəit. də' dā: is mama' kronk gvort. Non, hām zə' mɪç n di' posjolok gnoma'.*

While women mostly share their impressions on what they saw and describe numerous details, men base their stories on facts and do not use any emotional evaluations. The speech of men is more informative, they often refer to certain dates, decrees or laws. Thus, the monologue of male respondents mentions the decree on "The deportation of the Volga Germans" and refers to particular dates. If compared to male speech, female communication comprises more proper names (names of villages, surnames, etc.). For example, we learned from the monologue of a female respondent that the village of Chernigovsky where the deported Germans lived was built in the 1920s. Prisoners from other regions of the former USSR (for example, from the Gorky Region) were also allocated there:

*diəzə' zɛdləŋ vurt kbout ɛn onfən tsvontsəxə' ja:r. ɛ:də' tsvontsəxə' ja:r. ɛ:də' tsvontsəxə' ja:r. hiər vor məin prudər... hatə' ɛnə' fro: fon hiə', də' vor os odessa' hiər kɪfikt vordə'. on diə' hat oləs. un də' onrə' vor aus gorkofgəbiət, aus arzamas.*

A great number of repetitions is typical of female speech:

ək bən beza' of daitflənt... vən mənə' krosmutr jəborə' ɛs n saratof, mənə' krosmutr, nɪk mənə' mutr, mənə' krosmutr, dā: hā:m zə'os... nɪk ənkʃout ols daitfə'. vɪr vorn ols fʋartsmɪrdaitfə' ... hā:m zə'os jənən.

vən dr krɪk, конечно, vən dr krɪk nɪk hat ənkfaŋə', vɛr ək ən də'дума, ən mosko'.

no', vo:r ɪç hiər, no' vo:r ɪç hiər n dɪ' banja' g(ə)arbəit, ha:b ɪç n dɪ' banja' kʃɪr fɪər dɪ' lait...ɛast vo:r fɪ:l lait, o' to' vo:r fɪ:l, to' vo:r tso' hais, oləs... əs vo:r fɪ:l lait. on dən zən olə' vɛkjə'fa:ra'. on detdom vo:r dr drouəsə', hā:m dɪ' khɪndr vɛkjə'fa:ra', ol(ə)s, ol(ə)s, dɪ' bolnizə', ol(ə)s vɛkɡmax. on vo' zə' vɛnɪçər. zə' bən ɪç ən də' баня ofgə'voksə', ha:b g(ə)arbəit, g(ə)arbəit. fon dr banja bən ɪç uf dɪ' pensija' (gə)kama'. Vot, ɪn volt ha:b ɪç nɪç g(ə)arbəit, vəl mɪç hatə' zə' nɪç gnoma', ɪç hɛ:r flɛçt, vəl ɪç bən kartzɪçtɪç.

It should be noted that the speech of both genders is characterized by its own linguistic and extralinguistic features. While analyzing the linguistic characteristics typical of the speech behavior of men and women in the region under consideration, we can mainly highlight differences in its grammatical structure: male speech mostly utilizes the singular form of the first person, nouns and verbs. At the same time, female speech is characterized by the following grammatical features: 1) the predominant plural form of the first person; 2) a large number of proper names (names of villages, surnames, etc.); 3) the predominance of adjectives and pronouns; 4) a large number of repetitions.

Extralinguistic features include psychological differences in speech common to a particular gender group, communication style, as well as the goal that men and women pursue when entering into a conversation. The comparative analysis of the speech behavior of bilingual Germans demonstrates that an important feature of male speech behavior is the consistent presentation of events, facts and phenomena, reference to laws and documents and, if needed, quotation of some famous people. Men prefer not using an emotional narrative, evaluating other people, events and phenomena, telling stories about their relatives and friends, as well as quoting their relatives and friends. Men are self-centered and, as a rule, speak exclusively about the things related to them. On the contrary, female speech behavior conveys an emotional message about facts and phenomena, a personal

assessment of individuals and events. Women often describe their feelings and experiences in a conversation. They mostly discuss typical female occupations, including cooking, raising children, talking about relatives. In addition, women often mention relatives and friends in their stories.

However, we do not make any extrapolations and do not claim that such differences cannot be regarded as permanent characteristics of male or female speech. These features reflect only the specifics of male and female speech of the Russian Germans living in the Kirov Region. An important role in speech behavior is played by social context, psychological and physiological characteristics of men and women. Perception, way of thinking and speech are closely connected and differ in men and women. Thus, the same situations can be described differently since different key points are highlighted by male and female groups. Taking into account all these factors, we can explain gender-related differences in speech behavior in a more objective manner.

## Conclusion

Thus, the distribution of German and Russian among the ethnic Germans living in the Kirov Region, as well as the choice of their native language, is determined by various extralinguistic factors, in particular, social and demographic: age, education, marital status (nature of marriages) and gender.

It should be noted that the possibility of learning German in family and at school as a necessary condition for high-level language competence and the possibility of its full-fledged use in all spheres of everyday life mostly depends on the socio-political conditions<sup>6</sup> in which this or that ethnic community exists.

Speaking about the Russian Germans of the former Soviet Union, we should note that the older generation of this ethnic group had both opportunities, whose realization was ensured by administrative independence – the Volga German Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic and national regions within the European part of the USSR. The possibility of studying and using the German language in everyday life are sharply limited or practically reduced to zero for the following generations of ethnic Germans.

## Disclosure statement

All the authors have no conflict of interest to report.

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